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THE ARCHER




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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Northern line to shut at weekends

By John Lawrence

The Northern line will close at weekends for Tube users in East Finchley as London Underground carries out a major programme of upgrading work.

Severe disruption will be caused as passengers are diverted onto bus replacement services. They are being warned that their journey could take up to 40 minutes longer.

Sections of the Northern line will be suspended during virtually every weekend during 2006, starting from Easter, to accelerate the track renewal work being carried out by Tube Lines, the private company that runs the line.

Original plans to shut the Northern line entirely for three weeks in August were scrapped in favour of the weekend closures, after protests from local councillors and passengers.

Tube user Martin Earl, of

Leslie Road, said: "Whatever way they choose to do it, this is going to mean massive disruption for people trying to get into London at weekends, especially families. I imagine most won't bother."

George McNulty, London Underground Service Director, said: "We recognise that the Northern line's performance is not as we would like, but we are looking forward to Tube Lines taking this opportunity to accelerate the amount of track renewal work undertaken. This will mean some disruption for passengers."

Tube travellers are being urged to check for any likely disruption to their journey before setting out.

See page 3 for how your journey will be affected



Protesters make themselves heard outside the library. Photo by Erini Rodis

Library service cuts go ahead

By Daphne Chamberlain

Barnet Council is set to cut East Finchley's library services with little explanation despite more than 1,400 signatures on a petition and over 100 letters of protest.

The Library Users' Group presented its petition before the Council's budget-setting meeting last month, but the administration secured enough votes to enable the cuts to be made in the coming financial year.

From 3 April, the library will shut from 1-2pm each day and will close on Thursday evenings at 5pm instead of 8pm. The library's status will be downgraded from 'Town Centre' to 'Community'.

Local Labour Councillor Colin Rogers told the meeting: "There has been a massive response against library cuts in East Finchley. These cuts will make it easier to close the library or to cut even further in future."

"Why has East Finchley been singled out so unfairly, against the Council's own statistics? Why are reasons not given? The East Finchley people in the gallery tonight care enough about this issue

to show up in the rain."

Councillor John Marshall dismissed this as "nonsense", saying there were no plans to close the library, and users were fewer than at Mill Hill.

Liberal Democrat councillor Susette Palmer said she "could do anger for England" at the way Barnet has decimated library services.

Attacking the plan to downgrade East Finchley's library, Labour Leader and local councillor Alison Moore said: "If East Finchley isn't a town centre, I don't know what is. The Tories believe that people are not interested in libraries, only in council tax. That's not what I hear on doorsteps." She said cuts to the library service would be reversed if Labour won control of the Council next month.

Battle of the statistics

Barnet Council's own statistics reveal that East Finchley is not the lowest-ranking Town Centre library either in terms of visitors or of loans. East Barnet has 13% fewer visitors (but has higher loan figures), while Mill Hill loans 10.4% less (but has more visitors). Both of these libraries retain their Town Centre designation. Nevertheless, supporters of East Finchley library point out that they do not want to see any library in the borough downgraded.

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Your contributions

If you have a story for us, please contact us at the above address.

Comments to THE ARCHER may be published unless clearly marked 'Not for publication' within the text.

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Employment Service 020 8258 3900
Haringey Council 020 8489 0000

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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

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National Express 08705 808080
Heathrow Airport 0870 000 0123

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Barnet MENCAP 020 8203 6688
Cancer Support 020 8202 2211
Carers' Line 0808 808 7777
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Drugs Helpline 0800 776600
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MIND 020 8343 5700
National Blood Ctr. 0845 7711 7711

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Coppetts Wood 020 8883 9792
Finchley Memorial 020 8349 6300
Oak Lane Clinic 020 8346 9343
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St Luke's 020 8219 1800
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❖ **Careers advice**, Green Man, Community Centre 020 8883 4916
❖ **Toy library**, Muswell Hill 020 8444 0244/ 8489 8774

Bed-blocker ordered out of hospital

An elderly man who refused to leave Finchley Memorial Hospital for nearly three years, despite needing no medical or nursing care, was ordered out by a High Court judge.

Mr Justice Wilkie gave the 72-year-old unnamed man 14 days to leave and ordered him to pay £10,000 towards the legal bill run up by Barnet Primary Care Trust in its battle to remove him.

The hearing in early March was told that it was the first time a hospital authority had sought a possession order against a patient and the court action had been launched as a last resort after he repeatedly refused to leave.

The man was first admitted to the hospital suffering from mobility problems in December 2002. He can now move about with a Zimmer frame and the judge said the view of experts was that he should be cared for in a residential home. His own home was under refurbishment but was described as uninhabitable.

Police warning after crime surge

By Craig Johnson

People living in East Finchley are being urged to lock away their valuables when they leave their vehicles and to make sure they are properly secure after a spate of vehicle crimes in roads adjacent to East End Road like Sedgemere Avenue and Manor Park Road.

Barnet Police also warn that it is important to lock doors and windows as there have been several burglaries in Sedgemere Avenue with thieves breaking in through unlocked windows using crow bars.

Drivers who leave valuables on display in their vehicles could receive warning letters through the post in a bid to combat car crime. Community Police officers and Barnet Council enforcement officers are noting down the registration numbers of those vehicles containing items that could be targets for thefts. Under the council's Safer Communities Partnership, the information is then passed on to the DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency), which will send letters and crime prevention leaflets to the registered owners.

Last autumn, Barnet recorded the second-highest number of car-related crimes

in London with Global Positioning Satellite systems, or GPS for short, being the item most often stolen.

Crooked callers

Another pressing issue in Barnet is the amount of so-called artifice crime, when crooks pose as gas and water officials, or even as police officers, knocking on the doors of the elderly and most vulnerable people in our borough and robbing them of their life savings and other personal items of high value such as jewellery.

Please remember to check the ID cards of callers, always double-checking with a telephone call to the company while the person waits outside. The big utility companies should have your details on file on a database so there will be no need to hand over bills or personal details at the front door.

Finally, if you are receiving unwanted junk mail or unwanted calls, the Mail Preference Service can help you eliminate them by registering for data protection, free, at www.mpsonline.org.uk or by calling the MPS Registration line on 0845 703 4599.

Easter Services in East Finchley

St. John's Christian Spiritualist Church

Palm Sunday 9 April: service at 6.30pm. Easter Day service, Sunday 16 April at 6.30pm.

Holy Trinity Church

Palm Sunday 9 April: Parish Communion and Blessing of Palms at 10am.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday of Holy Week: Holy Eucharist at 7pm. Maundy Thursday 13 April: Eucharist of The Last Supper at 8pm, followed by the vigil before the altar of repose until 10pm.

Good Friday 14 April: Good Friday Liturgy at 10pm.

Easter Sunday 16 April: First Eucharist of Easter and the lighting of the Paschal Candle at 10am.

East Finchley Methodist Church

Good Friday 14 April at 10.30am: a service of meditation and reflection.

Easter Sunday 16 April at 10.30am: Easter service of celebration.

All Saints' Church

Palm Sunday 9 April: Solemn Mass with Blessing of Palms, Procession and Sung Passion at 10am.

Maundy Thursday 13 April: Mass of the Lord's Supper at 8pm.

Good Friday 14 April: Sung Celebration of the Lord's Passion at 3pm.

Holy Saturday 15 April: The Easter Vigil at 8pm.

Easter Sunday 16 April: Parish Mass of Easter Day at 10am.

Planning Applications

East Finchley Tube Station, Great North Road, N2

Installation of gate to match existing glass barriers to The Causeway. Replacement of sign within station.

Holy Trinity Church, Church Lane, N2

Installation of three radio antennae within the bell tower.

St Pancras Court, High Road, N2

New wall to front boundary.

127C High Road, N2

Change of use from restaurant and café (Class A3) to barber shop.

7 Huntingdon Road, N2

Single-storey side/rear extension.

472A Long Lane, N2

Submission of details for materials pursuant to Condition 3 of appeal decision APP/N5090/A/04/1162955, dated 15.04.05.

53 Abbots Gardens, N2

First floor side extension.

2 Abbots Gardens, N2

Part single, part two-storey front and side extensions. New front porch. Single-storey rear side extension. Alterations to roof, including side and rear dormer windows.

26 Norrice Lea, N2

Part single, part two-storey rear extension. Two-storey side extension. Alterations to roof, including addition of dormer windows to roof slope, to facilitate loft conversion.

60 Bancroft Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Alterations to roof, including replacement dormer with Juliet balcony.

Makeover for station

By John Lawrence

East Finchley tube station is to be given a substantial makeover to improve facilities for customers and staff.

A new CCTV system, public address system and customer help points will be installed as well as tactile strips on platforms and stairs for partially-sighted and blind travellers.

The station control room and ticket hall will be refurbished and all cabling will be concealed to give the station a tidier feel.

While peeling paintwork and broken tiles will be replaced, the work will not involve any structural alterations to the grade 2 listed building.

Tube Lines, which is responsible for the maintenance of the station, has applied for planning permission and hopes to carry out the work in the summer.



Olympic plan to transform East Finchley station

By David Tupman

In confidential papers seen by *THE ARCHER*, a consortium of Transport for London (TfL), Barnet Council and McDonalds are working to transform East Finchley station. Improvements include a new landmark building, new sporting facilities in preparation for the 2012 London Olympics, and enhanced leisure opportunities at no cost to council tax-payers.

At the heart of the scheme will be a spectacular open atrium spanning the entire station forecourt and the entrance to the McDonalds headquarters in the High Road.

One feature of the roof area, which is exciting for Olympic sponsor McDonalds, will be the training facilities envisaged for aerial, high-bar gymnastics, due to be an official sport in 2012. In the next six years many potential Olympic athletes will be training in East Finchley, creating tracksuit-making opportunities for local businesses.

Consultant architects envisage a post-modernist aesthetic using spare roof materials from the Millennium Dome in Greenwich. Purchased by the consortium's procurement unit under a PFI deal, the construction will meet tough EU environmental standards.

Strategically placed anchor points will support the flexible open atrium, but one anchor will necessitate the removal of the famous 'Archie' statue on top of East Finchley station. The confidential papers say that the consortium is very sensitive to local opinion on this potential World Heritage site and will hold an options review of future

uses for the statue.

The frontrunner proposal is that Archie should be rendered down for his rare metals, assisting Barnet Council in reaching its tough recycling targets set by central government.

Income generation

Beneath the atrium canopy, specialized catering outlets will be a key part of the income generation strategy. East Finchley station ticket office will be replaced by an Oyster card charging bay and the space used as a drive-thru Latvian sausage and dumpling bistro bar. Thus a new customer base should be created to tap into the needs of eastern European workers now practising their trades in north London.

As the bistro will boast Soil Association organic accreditation, discriminating local 4x4 drivers will be attracted to use the station car park, boosting TfL revenues. Officials believe that Latvian cuisine will help meet the many diversity and inclusiveness targets listed in the Borough's 2006 strategy action plan as amended on 1st April.

THE ARCHER contacted the consortium but no one was available for comment.



(L-R) PCSO Jan Lovell, PS Alex Kay, Cllr Alison Moore, Fiona Mactaggart MP, PCSO Joseph Mahony, PC Keith Grant and PC Paul Carter in front of the plaque commemorating the opening of the East Finchley Patrol Base. Photo by John Dearing

Police patrol base opens in High Road

By John Dearing

Home Office Minister Fiona Mactaggart MP visited the new East Finchley Police patrol base for the official opening on Tuesday 7 March. The base at 113 High Road is the new home of the East Finchley Safer Neighbourhoods Team, who benefit by not having to commute to and from Golders Green Police station for their patrols.

The former shop has been refurbished, complete with disabled access, and is best described as a bright, modern office. Although it is not a police station, for East Finchley residents and traders it means a heightened police presence in the High Road, and a more visible police commitment to the ward.

At the opening, marked by a plaque near the entrance, Ms Mactaggart talked to virtually everybody present, gaining a perspective on local issues.

Also present were Councillors Colin Rogers and Alison Moore; East Finchley MP Rudi Vis; the Borough Police Commander, Chief Superintendent Mark Ricketts; Inspector Nick Davies; Sergeant Alex Kay and his team, and representatives of local organisations including Barnet Homes.

Locally based and locally responsive

Sergeant Kay, who leads the team, told *THE ARCHER* that the genesis of the patrol base was feedback received at the public consultation meeting in The Old Barn at the end of 2004. He described the Safer Neighbourhoods Initiative as being about listening to local views and concerns, and being based in the local community.

A key part of the initiative is the Community Advisory Panel. There are three for East Finchley, with areas of interest bounded by the High Road, the Northern Line railway and the ward limits. Each panel consists of five members of the public and meets bi-monthly with the police team.

Chief Superintendent

Ricketts said that the Safer Neighbourhoods Initiative would focus on the Borough's policing priorities, which are burglary, motor vehicle crime, robbery, domestic violence and violent crime.

The new patrol base is **not**, however, a police station at which crimes can be reported in person. In case of emergency, call 999, otherwise the East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team can be contacted on 020 8721 2845.

How your journey will be affected

... From page 1

- Between Edgware and Golders Green: Northern line suspended from Good Friday, 14 April until Easter Monday, 17 April. Rail replacement buses will be provided.
- Between Camden Town and Kennington via Charing Cross: Northern line suspended for ten consecutive weekends starting on Saturday 29 April to May Day Bank Holiday Monday 1 May. No replacement buses will run because London Underground says all the stations on this part of the line either interchange with another line, or are a bus ride away, or within walking distance of another Tube station.
- Between East Finchley and Camden Town: Northern line suspended for 11 consecutive weekends starting from Saturday 15 July and, after a two-week break, for two consecutive weekends starting from Saturday 14 October. Rail replacement buses will run between East Finchley and Euston, calling at all stations except for Camden Town. A direct bus service will also run from Finchley Central, connecting with the Northern line at Golders Green.
- Between High Barnet and Finchley Central: Northern line suspended for two consecutive weekends from Saturday 30 September. Rail replacement buses will be provided.

How to check ahead:

Visit the Transport for London website at www.tfl.gov.uk/tubeworks, call the London Travel Info 24-hour telephone helpline on 020 7222 1234, see BBC Ceefax page 436 or ITV Teletext page 164, or look for information on posters, leaflets and the notice board at East Finchley station.

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Young at heart of local issues

By Daphne Chamberlain

Youth provision and green spaces, both of particular interest to East Finchley as the battles over the Herbert Wilmot Centre land and Stanley Field continue, were contentious issues at last month's Barnet Council meeting.

Conservative councillor Mike Freer attacked the opposition for being outdated regarding youth services. He said: "They seem to want to put them in a church hall. What next? Miss Marple cycling round the borough, tackling crime?" He maintained that detached and outreach work was the way to go for youth services. Mobile and street provision, not fixed premises, was the way ahead.

Council Leader Brian Salinger approved of current amenities in Barnet for

children and young people, praising the borough's green spaces and parks, and quoting a child who had put on record how much they enjoyed living here.

Opposition councillors called for more leisure and cultural activities for young people, one speaker drawing attention to the Council's plan for children and young people for the years 2006-2009. In its 23 pages, he said, sport was mentioned twice, and was not mentioned at all in the section on obesity.



Campaigners staged a demonstration outside Holy Trinity Church to protest at the plan to install mobile phone masts. Photo by David Broome

Battle against phone mast heats up

Residents and parents fighting against plans to install mobile phone masts in the bell tower of Holy Trinity Church staged a pavement demonstration.

The group are trying to thwart a second planning application to install three masts in the church in Church Lane. A first application was turned down by Barnet Council in

December.

The Parochial Church Council and Revd Laurence Hill, of Holy Trinity Church, are supporting the installation, which has the potential to bring

in an annual revenue of up to £10,000.

Campaigners have raised their concerns for health and safety, environmental damage and the effect on house prices in the immediate area.

They are asking supporters to write letters of protest to Barnet Council's planning officer Fabien Bernard-Gaudin at Barnet House, 1255 High Road, Whetstone, London N20 0EJ or by email to fabien.bernard@barnet.gov.uk.



Karen the Punk and Fred the clown. Photo by John Lawrence

Sunshine smiles on the Big Fun walkers

The 11th annual Big Fun Walk in aid of the North London Hospice set off in sunshine from East Finchley tube station on Sunday 19 March.

A stream of walkers spent the next four or five hours winding their way down the seven-and-half-mile route through London's green parks to Westminster in some glorious spring-like weather.

Organisers are hoping the sponsored event will beat last year's fundraising total of £130,000 to support the hospice's vital work for patients and their families from all faiths.

A whole new ball game

By Lucy Chamberlain

The former site of Highgate Lawn Tennis Club on Twyford Avenue, empty for over five years, has been earmarked for development.

This prime site, opposite Fortismere School's playing fields and close to Muswell Hill, is due to be converted by Acorn Property Group into nine luxury family homes with private woodland and tennis court.

Romy Summerskill, Acorn's Managing Director, said: "There has been a great deal of speculation over the future of Highgate Lawn Tennis Club and we are pleased to announce our intentions to create the best new development that Muswell Hill has seen." Acorn say they are also keen to reflect local archi-

ture in the new properties.

Local residents, however, are concerned about the development's impact on the area. John Hajdu, Chairman of the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association, said the group would work with locals to make sure the developers keep to their specifications.

Haringey Council's planning permission came with obligations of, among other things, payments to the Council of £300 towards legal fees and £58,441 towards 'educational costs'. Work is expected to start soon.

Treasure a good cause

At the back of almost everyone's dressing table or drawer there is usually a piece of unwanted jewellery. It can be anything from a few links of broken bracelet to a watch that ceased to work years ago. It's of little use, but too good to throw away.

If you have some items like these, or can collect any, the Alzheimer's Society will be grateful for them. They will raise much-needed funds to help support people with all forms of dementia, their families and carers. The Society will be pleased to receive your items and happy to make it as easy as possible for you to send them.

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Seen and heard

Heck of a Wash Launderette on the High Road has a sign in its window giving its closing time in SEVEN languages.

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Children's centre survives and thrives

A popular children's playgroup that nearly closed down after a massive council rent hike has survived and is still going strong.

The Pavilion Children's Centre provides an energetic and creative play and learning environment for toddlers and their parents and carers at the Cricket Pavilion in Lyttelton Playing Fields.

A year ago Barnet Council, who own the building, wanted to raise the rent and to put the group on a longer lease, which it couldn't afford.

Parents and playgroup leaders joined forces to put pressure on the council to change its mind. After

months of campaigning, they persuaded the council to abandon the long lease and to reduce the rent increase significantly.

Pavilion chairperson Orly Cohen says, "The good news is that the Pavilion is still open, so come along and join the fun."

Around 20 youngsters attend the playgroup each weekday morning from 9.45am to 12.15pm but there is room for more. Contact the group during opening hours on 020 8458 0630.



Out of the woods?

By Ann Bronkhorst

With work on the improvements to Coldfall Wood due to start this month, questions are still being raised both about the immediate plans and about the long-term strategy. At a recent meeting of the Friends of Coldfall Woods, Nick Michael, Conservation Officer for Haringey, and Tony Healey, of their Parks Department, responded to some of the queries.

A major concern is, of course, money. The Heritage Lottery Fund grant (*THE ARCHER*, January 2006) will meet the costs of the main proposals but paths, bridges, railings and benches, as well as the natural features of the wood, require regular maintenance. How will those future costs be met?

From the sale of the Lynx depot, north of the playing field, the woodland project is guaranteed £36,000 under the section 106 agreement, with the possibility of several thousands more. The Friends are approaching Lynne Featherstone MP and local councillors for support in retaining and ring-fencing that money for specific local needs now and in the future.

Other long-term issues are maintenance and security in the woods. One hopeful national trend, endorsed by the government, is the return of park keepers to public parks. Tony Healey assured the Friends that Haringey is aware of the concerns about Coldfall Wood's long-term maintenance but said that appointing park keep-

ers might take some time. He will consider the feasibility of some woodland maintenance being carried out by people completing community service sentences, under supervision. Haringey parks police have a newly-appointed head who will meet the Friends and who may have constructive suggestions.

Partly to forestall vandalism, the Friends wanted schools to be actively involved with the whole project at an early stage and Nick Michael agreed. Children who are engaged in what is happening are more likely to feel protective towards "their" wood. Talks will be given to two schools each year and organised walks will take place twice a year; a signposted nature trail for walkers will also be available.

When work begins this spring, temporary signs should provide information about what is being done but the Friends still want people who use the wood to make their views known. Contact info@coldfallwood.info or Nick Michael on 020 8348 6005.

Crop, snip and a jump for Gus

By John Lawrence

After 21 years in his current premises on the High Road, Gus and his team of barbers are on the move - but they're not going far.

On 2 May Gus and the guys are moving four doors up to a smart new shop at 127c High Road, once occupied by the Mahavir sweet mart.

It will be business as usual for the whole team, except one. Gus's pet iguana, Arnold 2, needs a new home because there's no room for him in the new premises.

Gus said: "Arnold 2 has lived at the back of the shop for two years after taking over from the original Arnold. He's easy to look after and no bother. He'll sit next to you and watch TV and only eats vegetables. If I can't find a good home for him, I'll have to contact the RSPCA or the zoo."

So why the move for such a long-established business? The new shop is slightly longer and narrower than the existing one but will be the same set-up, with brand new granite floors and surfaces.

Gus said: "We wanted to make a modern barbershop and to do that here would have meant closing for two months or more, which was not possible. So I'm very lucky that a shop became available so close to where we are now."

The future of the existing Gus shop has not been decided although it has been rumoured that there is interest in turning it into a bakery-style café.

If you would like to offer a home to Arnold 2, please visit Gus at his shop.



Arnold 2 the iguana, awaits a new home. Photo by Erini Rodis

Setting out the stalls for friendship

By Ann Bronkhorst

Children danced in a circle, clapping hands; children sang 'Light One Candle' and 'Absolutely Everybody'. They seemed to symbolise the hope of all those present, hope for a future of friendships made across the barriers of nationality.

It was a wet afternoon on 8 March, at the Town Hall, and the Mayor of Barnet, Andreas Tambourides, was hosting the Open Day of the borough's Twinning Associations, all eight of them.

This occasion was very much his idea, as municipal twinning is a concept he strongly supports. He wasn't unique, however; mayors seemed to be everywhere, from homely places like Bromley and Enfield to more exotic ones such as France, Cyprus and America. Some had come to share and pick up ideas, while others represented the foreign towns linked with Barnet. The Associations provided volunteers who manned the stalls and gave out information with tireless enthusiasm. And the

children were the delightful icing on the cake.

Why get involved? One man said (and he wasn't joking) it was to prevent future wars. Another wondered (and he was joking) whether the Associations needed to start a war to attract more members. For there is concern about scant resources for twinning groups and about the apparent reluctance of young people to commit time and effort to voluntary activities. It was heartening to hear that some French schoolchildren from Chaville were expected later in the month, hosted by pupils at Friern Barnet School. It is rumoured that the government wants each secondary school in the nation to acquire a foreign 'twin' during the next decade.

Will foreign language teaching be resourced to meet the challenge?

Susan Handley from the Local Government International Bureau was optimistic about "breathing new life into old links". In an inspirational talk, she outlined the development of municipal twinning, gave practical suggestions for overcoming some of the obstacles and emphasised that, while twinning can bring 'hard' economic benefits to the community, it isn't possible to put a price on the excitement and sense of discovery felt by individuals who do get involved.

For information about Barnet's Twin Town Associations in Germany, France, Uganda, Israel, Cyprus and America, telephone 020 8359 2010.

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Dedicated follower of The Kinks

The Clissold Arms pub on Fortis Green is designated one of only 14 Pubs in Time in Britain by the Campaign for Real Ale, thanks to its historic connection with Ray and Dave Davies from The Kinks. Here Sippy Azizollah remembers her own encounters with the 1960s band.



At the tender age of 13, I first saw The Kinks on Ready Steady Go. I fell madly in love with Dave and Ray Davies.

I bought all the band's singles, LPs and EPs as they were released. In my bedroom at my parents' house in Cockfosters, with my old tennis racquet for a guitar and my reel-to-reel tape recorder as an amplifier, I imagined I could play as brilliantly as Dave.

All my school books were plastered with scribbles of 'Sip luvs Dave' and 'Kinkettes Rule'. Every word that started with the letter C, I'd replace with a K. I was Completely and utterly Kinks Crazy. I'd have given anything to see them in concert.

Two years later, my friend Jo told me that Dave Davies lived just down the road and, if we could think of a good excuse, she'd take me to meet him. We bought a sponge and bucket, and knocked on his door supposedly to wash his car. My hero opened the door and my knees turned to jelly. I was speechless.

Jo asked him if he'd like his car washed. With a wry smile



1965: Dave with my schoolfriend Yvonne Lawrence

he pointed to a new, navy blue E-type Jaguar no more than two feet away from us. He thanked us for asking and said maybe another day.

While I was still trying to locate my voice Jo told him I was a songwriter. He asked me to bring a demo tape and he'd listen to it and tell us what he thought. A week later, having given Dave a cassette of three of my compositions, we returned. He said they were good and that if I was serious about my songs, I should never give up, no matter how many rejections I received.

I clung to those words

through my teens and twenties and, on the strength of them, carved out a successful career as a singer/songwriter, session singer and performer.

In 1993 I moved to a disabled-friendly flat in East Finchley due to ill health, and became a regular at the Five Bells pub across the road. Who did I spy sitting no more than three feet away from me in the pub? You guessed it, Dave, the guy who'd encouraged me all those years ago, was once more just down the road.

I've yet to meet Ray but who knows, maybe I'll meet him one day too, just down the road.

Keeping memories alive

Many people must have memories of the Finchley and Friern Barnet area in times past and the Finchley Society is keen to capture them for posterity.

What was your life like in Finchley between the 1920s and 1970s, your schools, your shops, your workplace and homes?

The Finchley Society's history group is appealing for anyone with memories to get in touch so that they can be permanently recorded for the society's archives.

Spokesman Robert Winton said they would welcome any recollections that add to the picture of Finchley as it was.

He said: "Maybe people ran a shop or worked in one of the local industries, or on the local trams and trolleybuses. It could be anything to do with Finchley life up to the 1970s. We are very keen that we don't lose these

precious memories."

Anyone who can help would have their memories recorded on audio tape. Photographs, postcards and historical documents would also be welcome.

The Finchley Society has already published the popular book *Finchley Remembered* drawing on its archives. Any new material could potentially be used for a future publication.

If you would like to record your memories for posterity, please contact Robert on 020 8883 2633.

The society would also welcome new members on to its committee to help with projects of historical or local interest.

A very Welsh singer

By Daphne Chamberlain

"I'll walk beside you", sang this beautiful voice, and in the register office near Swansea there was hardly a dry eye. We were listening to the recorded voice of David Hughes, 1950s pop star turned opera singer, but this wasn't a fan club convention. It was a family wedding, and across the aisle was his sister, Mary, who keeps his memory alive.

As a boy of 18, David Hughes had sung that same song at Mary's wedding, and now his voice was accompanying her granddaughter, Bethan, as she prepared to make her vows.

How did I, with no Welsh connections, come to be there? Bethan was marrying my nephew, Geoff. Coincidentally, David Hughes, often called "Mr Heart Throb", was christened Geoffrey Paddison, a Birmingham boy from a very Welsh, music-loving family. Whether working as a railway goods clerk or serving in the RAF, he just carried on singing, eventually studying at the Wigmore Hall and the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

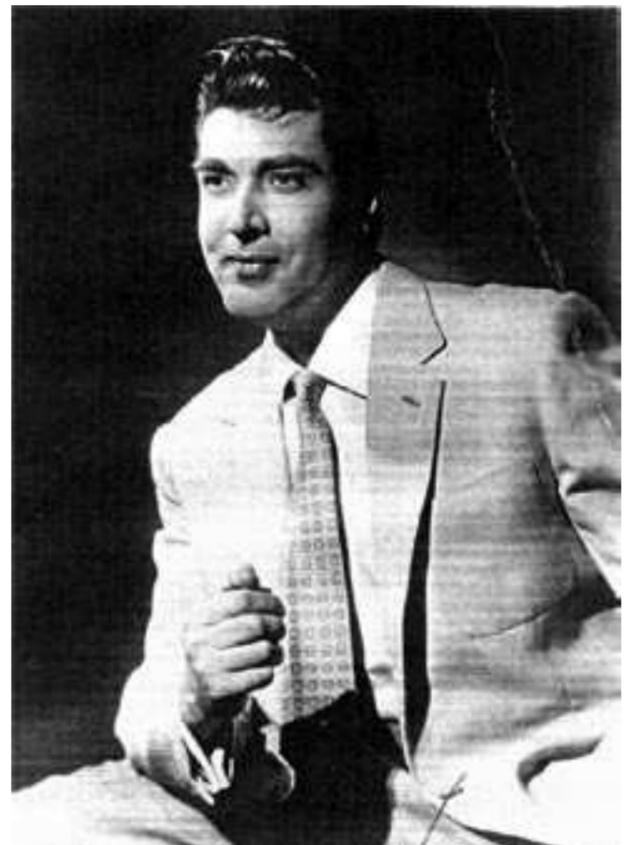
It was in 1951, when appearing on the radio programme, Henry Hall's Guest Night, that Geoffrey became David Hughes, his late father's first two names.

Then came a record contract, an enormous fan club, West End musical leads, and his own television show, "Make Mine Music". He appeared opposite Ginger Rogers, and topped variety bills which included Roy Castle and Morecambe and Wise.

His kind of music

The first of several heart attacks gave him other priorities. Deciding to spend the rest of his life "singing the kind of music I always set out to", he became an opera singer, making his debut at Glyndebourne in 1964 with the young Pavarotti.

In 1972, David became ill while singing as Pinkerton in 'Madam Butterfly', at



David Hughes. Photo courtesy of Mary Wothers

the London Coliseum. Knowing that this time it was "the big one", he somehow sang through the final act. That night, Pinkerton's collapse over Butterfly's body at the end was all too real. David died the following day, at the age of 47.

Over 30 years after his death, the music of David Hughes is still available. It certainly helped to make one wedding day especially memorable. You can find out more on www.davidhughesnor.co.uk.

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Small shops v supermarket giants

By Stella Parkinson

Seventy-five per cent of our grocery needs are now met by the four major supermarkets in Britain: Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda/Wal-Mart and Morrisons. With this alarming statistic in mind, I decided to find out how the shops on the High Road in East Finchley compete with these four shopping giants.

Guilty of being one of the 75%, I was overwhelmed by the quality, variety and, perhaps surprisingly, value of the goods I found in local shops. From everyday necessities to fresh fish, fruit, vegetables, pasta and a whole range of organic produce, the High Road met and surpassed my needs every time. What really stood out for me was the taste and quality of the fresh goods I bought compared with most supermarket produce.

Michael Paphitis, of Tony's Continental, renowned for their huge range of fresh fruit and vegetables, not to mention recipe tips, says that this is a

major attraction of shopping locally. He said: "Supermarkets generally aren't able to compete with the fresh produce we provide. We carefully select our goods from the markets every morning, the same ones we have gone to for 25 years".

And the price test? My shopping basket came to £14.02 on the High Road, compared with an average of £11.61 in the supermarkets. So that was a little over £2 extra in this personal sample but the clinchers for me were the variety, quality and personal service I got on the High Road. I am converted and aim not to be one of the 75% any longer!

Fired to fame

One luxury house on the outskirts of East Finchley has been fired to superstardom by its role in the hit BBC TV series The Apprentice.

Gable Lodge, just the other side of the A1 on The Bishops Avenue, has been acting as home away from home for the 14 contestants in the BBC show.

When they're not facing the wrath of Sir Alan Sugar - catchphrase "You're fired" - the business hopefuls can enjoy Gable Lodge's eight bed-

rooms, eight bathrooms, three reception rooms, 140ft garden and swimming pool.

Filming was completed at the house last year and it is now on the market for a cool £5.25 million. At that price, even Sir Alan might have to think twice.



Photo by Erini Rodis

Digging for garden treasures

Is your garden a hidden gem? The National Gardens Scheme (NGS) is looking for gardeners in East Finchley who would be willing to open their patch to the public.

The NGS is a national charity that encourages garden owners to share their passion and creativity in aid of charity.

A first for East Finchley this year will be Paul Harrington and Patsy Joseph's cottage-style garden in Elm Gardens, which won them the title of Daily Mail Plantsman of the Year in 2005.

Packed with Mediterranean and tender exotic plants, the garden will be open for viewing on Sunday 6 August from 12-6pm.

For a glimpse of another green oasis, visit actress Maureen Lipman's favourite garden in Muswell Hill which opens to the public on Sunday 30 April from 2-7pm.

Owned by Susan Bennett and Earl Hyde, the garden in St Regis Close is described as a magical retreat behind a 1960s terrace, complete with ponds, waterfalls, archways and an oriental pagoda.

Admission will be £2.50 with children admitted for free. Plants and homemade teas will be on sale.

To enrol your garden with the scheme or to get details of all local events, contact Susan and Earl on 020 8883 8540 or visit www.ngs.org.uk.

Park House future unresolved

By Diana Cormack

The future of Park House, opposite the tube station, is still uncertain as discussions about its possible sale continue.

The HGS Institute, which occupies the site, has moved its main offices and many of its classes across the road into the McDonalds headquarters. It is not certain if the Institute will retain offices in Park House.

The Institute Arts Centre, now under construction on the old Neurological Hospital site on the other side of the station, should be completed in November.

Memorial service for Lynn Cornelius

Many readers of THE ARCHER will be aware of the death last November of Lynn Cornelius, former teacher and art and special needs coordinator.

Martin Junior School is holding a memorial service to celebrate Lynn's life on Wednesday 26 April at 7pm in the school hall.

Many former pupils and their families have already expressed a wish to join with staff on this occasion. Invitations have been sent to some people where the school still holds postal details, but there may be many more who knew Lynn who will wish to be present.

If you have not received an invitation and would like to be there, please telephone the school office by 6 April on 020 8883 7404.

Library space needs ideas

By Daphne Chamberlain

The meeting room on the first floor of East Finchley library is largely under-used. Lack of disabled access, plus non-availability of attendants, are two reasons.

Local councillor Colin Rogers also blames the hire charge. Speaking at last month's Barnet Council budget meeting, he said the cost of £31 per hour deterred community use.

Adam Gee, Chair of East Finchley Library Users' Group, would like Barnet to use the

space as a commercial development, which he believes would be a more effective cost-saver than reducing already overstretched library staff.

THE ARCHER would welcome your suggestions for making the best use of our library meeting-room (contact details on page 2).

Art for Stanley Field

Members of the East Finchley Open art group are working on an exhibition about the past, present and future of Stanley Field to be shown at the new police office in the High Road in May.

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PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

By Diana Cormack

Holy Trinity

Pancakes were on the menu at lunchtime on Shrove Tuesday and the children who take school meals were delighted to have pancake races in the playground.

Ash Wednesday was marked by a whole school service at Holy Trinity Church led by Father Hill.

All are welcome to an afternoon service at Holy Trinity Church on 6 April when pupils will be using their dramatic and musical talents to celebrate Easter.

A toddler group has been launched at the school and it is to be held on a regular basis.

Every child was given a £1 book voucher to mark World Book Day. These could be used to buy books at the school Book Fair which took place during Book Week. The children enjoyed a variety of special events that week, including book making, listening to a story teller, writing book reviews and dressing up as characters from books. The staff joined in this activity.

The school has been raising money for the Water Aid charity by collecting coins in plastic bottles. Meanwhile, a coffee and cake afternoon with plenty of homemade contributions raised £160.

Parents whose children have school dinners can see exactly what's on the menu each week by visiting the Restaurant Ecole website at www.restaurant-ecole.com.

Martin Schools

Martin Schools' Open Afternoon gave new and existing parents the chance to see what really happens in the classroom and to inspect the wide range of facilities and learning activities available. Visitors were also able to ask questions of the staff and children as they toured the schools before meeting for a welcome tea provided by the PTA.

Martin Junior girls gave a brilliant performance at Barnet's 16th Dance Festival, held in the arts depot. Twelve Year 6 children danced to *All That Jazz* from the musical *Chicago* and kept up the school's proud tradition at this annual event.

A small group from Martin Junior School choir have been invited to join Jan Trott, who leads the choir, in a performance of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* at a church in Sloane Square on Palm Sunday. The children will sing with Canticum, one of Britain's leading chamber choirs.

Many children from Years 5 and 6 have joined the Latin Club, an unusual addition to the wealth of different clubs at the school. As well as starting to learn Latin, they are also creating art from the ancient world. A series of sketches which they performed in assembly wearing appropriate Roman costume transfixed the audience, who were given a translation of the Latin script.

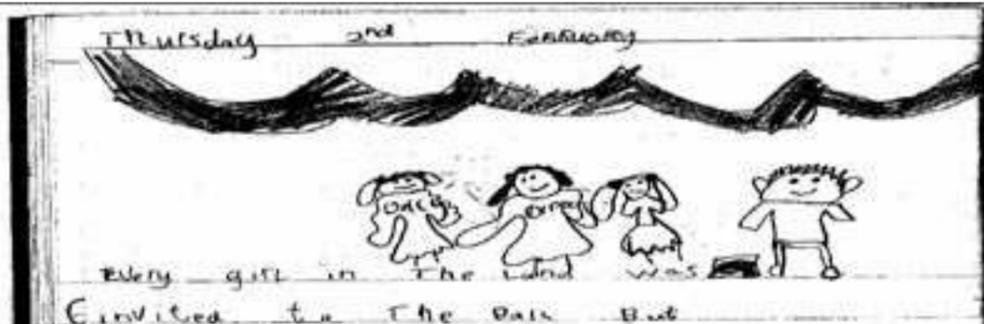
Martin Infant School supported the Daffodil Appeal in aid of the Marie Curie Cancer Care Trust.

Children and staff celebrated World Book Day by coming to school dressed as a favourite book character for the day. £1 book vouchers were given to all the children. They also had an after-school Book Fair.

Parents who attended the Annual General Meeting were able to enjoy a Restaurant Ecole meal and experience what their children do every day. The hall was prepared and decorated for the event by the PTA.

YOUNG ARCHER Cinderella re-told

Year One pupils at Holy Trinity School have been learning about traditional stories this term. Here, pupil Jessica Baker-Goldsmith writes and illustrates her own version of the Cinderella story.



Once upon a time there lived a lovely and very pretty girl called Cinderella. She had two mean sisters called Dippy and Dolly. They were mean to Cinderella. She hated her sisters. They were so mean they made her do all the housework. They were so ugly.

That morning in the post there was an invitation. Every girl in the land was invited to the ball but Cinderella's sisters would not let her go.

"Help me dress, Cinderella," said Dippy. "Do my hair," said Dolly. When Dippy and Dolly had gone, there was a flash of light and a magical fairy appeared. She made Cinderella a magical dress, some magical

shoes and a magical crown.

So in the end Cinderella got to go to the ball but the fairy nearly forgot to tell Cinderella at twelve o'clock she should leave and if she didn't she would turn into a toad.

When Cinderella left she forgot to take one of her shoes but the Prince married Cinderella and they lived together.



Hagrid, Harry Potter, Captain Underpants and a spaceman line up for World Book Day. Photo by John Lawrence

World Book Day weaves its magic

By Helen Drake

Judging by the costumes being worn, popular stories such as *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *The Cat in a Hat*, *Peter Pan* and the Harry Potter series had been a great source of inspiration for the children and staff at East Finchley's primary schools when they dressed up as their favourite book characters to celebrate World Book Day.

Both Holy Trinity School and Martin Infants School encouraged their children to come to school dressed as their favourite book character - and the teachers weren't left out either.

Captain Underpants, alias Tim Bowden, Head teacher at Holy Trinity, said: "Everyone made a fantastic effort to come in costume. It shows that books can be enjoyed for life, not just in Book Week."

Hogwarts' own Professor McGonagall, aka Katie Dawbarn, Deputy Head of Martin Infants School, said: "Asking the children to dress as their favourite book character really promotes their interest in books. It also inspires them to try new books."

So what makes a particular story special? At Martin Infants,

Salma said she liked the Lola and Charlie books by Lauren Child because the stories are about "real things". Casie was fond of Snow White because "she wears nice clothes and is kind to the dwarves". Zannat thought the Topsy and Tim books were special because "they are about a brother and sister and they are nice to each other". Differing views emerged about Harry Potter. Jake liked the Hogwarts pupil because "he can do magic" but Tom gave a reason you can't argue with: "It's because he's a wizard and I'm a wizard".

World Book Day is the biggest annual event supporting books and reading in the UK and Ireland. All children in participating schools receive a £1 book token.

Schools' rugby challenge

The Easter school term ends with a venture which could launch a new East Finchley tradition.

The headteachers at Holy Trinity and Martin Juniors have decided to join forces in a Tag Rugby competition for several local schools. Tim Bowden at Holy Trinity is organising the competition while Martin Juniors will host the event on the school field on 7 April.

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Zayd Idrissi, captain of Phone City team. Photo by Paul Chapman

Goals Galore triumph for Phone City team

By Paul Chapman

East Finchley football team Phone City achieved success this season in the Mobile Goals Galore Five-a-side football competition.

The shield trophy and a Goals Galore magazine report on their success can be seen in the shop window at Phone City on the High Road.

Legendary football manager Ron Atkinson was present to commentate and award the trophies for the tournament.

Phone City's successful squad has a very international flavour and competed against other teams from the UK as well as an experienced team, Avenir from Belgium.

Phone City was the only team to emerge undefeated from their

encounter with Avenir. Other draws in their group games put them in the plate competition but wins over four teams including Avenir put them in the final against MoCo.

Penalties went Phone City's way and they were eventual winners of the Goals Galore Plate for 2005.

Team captain Zayd Idrissi said next season's competition was scheduled for autumn 2006. Perhaps by then Arsenal will be European Champions and England will be World Cup winners?

Phoenix tribute to Mike Cohen

By Diana Cormack

The brand new seats at the Phoenix were filled to capacity for the screening of two films shown in tribute to the late Mike Cohen, of Talbot Road, who died last September. For more than ten years Mike chaired the cinema's Board of Trustees and this seating, along with the new foyer and disabled access, are visible evidence of Mike's devotion to the development and survival of the oldest operating cinema in the country.

Alan Richardson, Chair of Phoenix Cinema Trust, told the audience on 12 March about Mike's invaluable input, not only his financial skills but also his far-sighted views about giving and sustaining people's access to film. Mike's brainchild of a café bar at the front of the community-based cinema will be their next major project.

Another plan of which Mike would have been proud is to return this listed building to its original glory, said Gerry Turvey, vice-chair of the Trust. In a brief history of the Phoenix he emphasised the threats of closure the cinema had survived and spoke of Mike's unstinting work. "He is certainly proving a hard act to follow," Gerry declared.

This opinion was echoed by Dennis King, who replaced Mike as Chair of St Mungo's,

the charity for the homeless with which Mike was involved for many years. A fund to help the homeless participate in sporting and cultural activities has been set up in his name. All takings from this screening of two of Mike's favourite films, *L'Homme du Train* and *A Bout de Souffle*, for which the distributors did not charge, will be split between St Mungo's and the Phoenix Cinema Trust.

Mike's widow Jenny summed up this special man who was so much involved in helping others when she said of him, "He was selfless, he didn't expect any thanks."

There can be no doubt that Mike would have echoed her closing words to the audience. "The Phoenix is a gem that needs to be treasured." For that is what Mike did, and he is sorely missed.

Myths and marvels

By Helen Drake

Pupils at Martin Infants enjoyed a morning of storytelling when local author and illustrator Jane Ray visited classes on Tuesday 8 March as part of the school's celebrations for World Book Day.

Unicorns, mermaids, centaurs and other mythical creatures sprang to life in the imaginations of the young audience as Jane read from her books and talked to the children about how she writes her stories and what inspires her illustrative work.

Opening up her "special box" Jane showed everyone the scraps of unusually-patterned paper, textured paper and gold leaf she collects for her collage work. Inspiration also comes, she explained, from her notebook in which she sketches images when she sees them for later use in her paintings.

Displaying some of the original artwork from her books *Can You Catch a Mermaid?* and *Jinnie Ghost*, Jane drew attention to the subtle differences between her original paintings and the images which were eventually reproduced on the printed page. The children were also able to see where she had left space in her paintings for



Jane Ray explains how dreams can inspire creative writing. Photo by Helen Drake

the writing.

Teacher Wendy Diamant, who organised the visit, said: "It was a privilege to have Jane in the school. The children were very inspired by the stories and drawings she shared with them. It helped to motivate their crea-

tive writing and imaginative thinking."

Jane Ray has illustrated numerous books including *The King of Capri* by Jeanette Winterson, as well as painting book jackets, posters and greetings cards.

Let's get personal

By Diana Cormack

If you have considered joining a gym but were put off by the image of Lycra-clad fitness fiends pumping weights and pushing pedals, The Health Zone could be just what you are looking for. Recently opened by Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute on the top floor of the McDonald's building next to the tube station, this modern, fully-equipped, air conditioned gym has excellent changing facilities for both men and women, along with a beauty therapy treatment room. And there is a fantastic view!

Manager Dylan Karger told *THE ARCHER* that their aim is to welcome clients of all ages, some of whom may never have used a gym, and for them to feel relaxed and happy in a friendly atmosphere. Although correct footwear is important, he said people could wear suitable clothing in which they felt comfortable.

There are a number of exercise classes, plus fitness programmes designed specifically for the individual and supervised by trainers to ensure safe and correct techniques. A Health Zone Journey eight-week weight management programme, created to be effective for all ages and fitness levels, is available and has a stunning example of its success in the shape of one of the Institute's senior managers, Gaye Ruse.

Admittedly her journey has been much longer, for 18 months ago Gaye was a size 24.

"I spent 17 years yo-yo dieting," she said, "but this time I have taken it slowly, watching what I eat and exercising to get rid of the flab." Having lost well over four stone and now a size 14, Gaye says people walk by without recognising her! She insists she could never have done it without the sup-

portive training from Dylan, with whom she is continuing her journey to fitness and well-being.

The Health Zone prices are competitive for members and non-members. For an explanatory leaflet call in at the Institute or phone the gym office on 020 8829 4140.



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Regular Events

SPORT & FITNESS

- ❖ **Finchley & Hornsey Ramblers Group** Call Vivien 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 8883 5269
- ❖ **Muswell Hill Bowling Club**, Kings Ave, N10. New & experienced bowlers welcome. Tel: 8883 1178.
- ❖ **Pilates** in East Finchley, qualified teacher. Contact Dee on 8883 7029
- ❖ **Pilates class** Wednesdays, 2.15-3.15pm at Youth Theatre, N2. Ring Penny Hill 8444 2882.
- ❖ **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** with four clay courts off Southern Road. Call 8440 6953.
- ❖ **Wood Walk**, meet 10am at Cherry Tree Wood cafe on 1st & 2nd Mon of month for 1 hr walk, Call 8883 8750.
- ❖ **Yoga, breathing & relaxation**. Weekly drop-in classes - N2, N6, N10. Phone Judy on 8444 7783.
- ❖ **Yoga classes** Tuesdays 8-9:30pm at EF Methodist Church. Experienced teacher. Call Rosalind 8444 8134.

DANCE, DRAMA, ART & MUSIC

- ❖ **Art Classes**. For info call Henry on 020 8888 5133.
- ❖ **Ballroom dancing classes**, beginners and improvers. Phone 01707 642 378
- ❖ **Club Dramatika** drama club for kids. Call 8883 7110.
- ❖ **East Finchley Writing Workshops**. Creative writing, poetry and prose. Contact Dennis Evans 8346 9528.
- ❖ **Finchley Jazz Club** - 3 & 17 April at 8pm, Wilf Slack Cricket Pavilion, East End Rd, N3. New members welcome
- ❖ **Line dancing** Tuesdays from 8.30pm at The Constitutional Club. Call Maureen 8440 8530.
- ❖ **Memory Lane Singing Club** - a communal singing club. Call Idit Gold 8458 4508.
- ❖ **Over 60s come dancing** at Ann Owens Centre 8346 8736
- ❖ **Pottery Class** at The Green Man, Call Celia Holmes 8349 9315
- ❖ **Learn to sing** at Finchley Methodist Church. Call 8883 4070 for info.
- ❖ **Street Dance** every Tuesday at Old Barn for children of various ages. Contact Lorna 07976 203669.
- ❖ **SwampRock** events: Call Carole 8810 7454 or Neil 01727 830280 www.swamprock.org.uk
- ❖ **Symphonic Wind Orchestra** of North London, Contact Caroline Egan 8340 2706
- ❖ **Tap Dance** for children beginning at Old Barn every Monday, Contact Sharon 8349 4613

CLUBS & SOCIAL

- ❖ **Contact Lunch Club** Tuesdays at the Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book.
- ❖ **East Finchley National Childbirth Trust**, Contact Sophie on 8444 1890
- ❖ **East Finchley Writers** meet weekly at The Old White Lion. Call Lilian 8444 1793
- ❖ **Finchley & District Philatelic Society**, Contact Brian 8444 3251
- ❖ **Friendly Rubber Bridge** at The Old Barn. Contact 8349 4613
- ❖ **Haringey Recorded Music Society** informal meetings locally. Call David Mouldon on 8361 1696.
- ❖ **North London Bridge Club**, Muswell Hill. Contact 8348 3495
- ❖ **Muswell Hill and Highgate Pensioners' Action Group** Call Bob Cottingham on 8444 7635.
- ❖ **Muswell Hill Tetherdown Bridge**, contact 8883 4390
- ❖ **Old Barn pre-school club**, contact 8349 4613/1961
- ❖ **Parent & Toddler Group**, Green Man Centre, Julia 8444 2276
- ❖ **Probus Lunch Club** for retired professionals. Call Eric 8340 0822.
- ❖ **Stepping Stones**, interactive play session for under 3's. Karen 07957 278860.

Three pairs of London eyes

By Daphne Chamberlain

Off a little courtyard between houses in a North Finchley street is the Picture Gallery. As I arrived there, ballerina Deborah Bull was springing out of a car to open an exhibition, London and Beyond, seen through three very different pairs of eyes.

The London of East Finchley Open Artist Mari I'Anson is there for its people. Hurrying through Green Park, or outside the Ritz, Piccadilly, they draw you into their lives. Mari's work is well known locally, and for me her forté is depicting character.

Photographer John-Martin White shows scenes familiar to London's inhabitants: flats by the Regent's Canal, bridges, office buildings. But his camera shows them, in his words, as watery, wibbly or wobbly, turning solid structures into reflections. His occasional figures by the seashore are dreamlike too, almost from another age or another world.

Mexican Javier Garcia Barrera now lives in Finchley but looks at London as a bohemian-influenced visitor. Tower Bridge, London Bridge, Camden Lock and our own Church End are all there, accurately drawn but in vivid and intense colours. A huge multi-media St Paul's is in the centre of a riot of deli-

cately coloured fireworks. "In Mexico," he told me, "We have fireworks all the time." Javier loves working in the streets of London, "enjoying the cold of winter".

This very interesting exhibition was only on for a couple of weeks, but Mari can be contacted on 020 8346 7011 or mari.artist@uwclub.net, Javier on 07757 087992 or mexicolour@hotmail.com and John-Martin on 07778 767470 or johnnie.martini@mac.com. Mari and Javier both give painting lessons, and Mari will do a portrait of your house.

The Picture Factory is at 44-48 Birkbeck Road, N12. The staff frame pictures, tapestries and embroideries (and even the occasional cricket ball), convert digital images on to block-mounted canvas, and clean and restore oil paintings and watercolours. Open Monday ñ Saturday. 9am ñ 6pm, they can be contacted on 020 8446 3164, 0800 074 8099 or info@picturefactory.co.uk.

Exciting exotica

By Diana Cormack

The Noble Sage art gallery promises to bring its own exotic flavour to East Finchley this month when it opens at 2a Fortis Green. As THE ARCHER reported last November, it is the brainchild of local resident Jana Manuelpillai and will specialise particularly in South Asian contemporary art.

Gallery director Jana says: "I want the gallery to be a portal by which visitors can visit distant lands and cultures, though I also want it to be a platform for talented artists who deserve a worthy UK stage."

The gallery will be launched with an exhibition of unseen works entitled *Chennai Excite: New Work from South India*. It will showcase, for the first time in the UK, paintings, drawings and sculptures by 17 gifted artists, two of whom are women artists, still a relatively rare occurrence in the south of India.

The exhibition is the culmination of a year's research

into the exciting talent found in the art world of Chennai, south India. After the gallery's grand opening on 5 April, *Chennai Excite* will run from 6 April to 1 July 2006.

A British-born Tamil Sri Lankan, Jana leads a new breed of home-grown talent forging fresh and exciting links with the subcontinent from which his family originate. He will be holding director's specialist tours of the exhibition at 2pm on 15 and 29 April, 14 and 28 May and 18 June 2006. The Noble Sage will be open on weekdays from 9am-6.30pm and at weekends from 10am-5pm. Entry is free.

What's On...

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

Sunday 9 April:

Live Music at East Finchley Methodist Church; a concert celebrating the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth and the centenary of the birth of Shostakovich, with Sylvia Craston, Sanae Honda and Bryan Fairfax on violin, Helen Cooper on cello and Caroline Soresby on piano. Methodist Church, High Road, 8pm. Free admission with a collection for North London Hospice. Full disabled access.

Saturday 22 April:

Just Sing It! Workshops where singing coach Judith Silver teaches songs in unison and harmony, from around the world. All welcome but please ring or email in advance to confirm your place; Finchley Reform Synagogue, Fallowcourt Avenue, N12, 2.30-5pm. £15/£10 per session. Contact Judith on 07903 914064 or info@judith.silver.com.

Sunday 23 April

Muswell Hill Bowling Club Open Day from 12noon-4pm, The Green, Kings Avenue, N10. Come and try your hand at bowling, no age limit, families welcome. Instruction given by club members, bowls and shoes loaned. Tea and biscuits provided, no entrance fee.

A jumbo gig

By Linda Soper

Blues and swing band Elephant Shelf are becoming very popular on the concert circuit and they brought their own brand of originality to Maddens on Saturday 12 February.

The group was formed 18 months ago by Vicky Martin, their guitarist / singer, and Glen Basset, who plays rhythm guitar. It took a year to get the right blend of musicians and as they did so, bookings and venues followed.

Lead singer Jessie Pie went through the band's repertoire singing a mixture of blues and swing and there were some lively originals. Jessie was dressed in red velvet and the songs showed the range of her voice and emotions. Every line was delivered with confidence and conviction. She is a good entertainer who puts her heart into her work.

Jessie ad libs with Vicky

and they both come out with some witty one-liners. Vicky's guitar playing is worth seeing in itself. Her fingers gliding over the frets make it look all so easy but anyone who's ever tried to play will appreciate the hard work that goes into getting it looking that way. All in all, the Shelf are unique and excellent performers.

The band have a website www.elephantshelf.com so you can catch up on all their news and venues. It also includes videos of some of their songs so you can play them again.

They were due back in Maddens on 11 March and will no doubt be returning to East Finchley in the near future.

Sounds of South America

By Linda Soper

The sounds of South America filled East Finchley Methodist Church at one of its excellent monthly concerts.

Kike Pedersen, from Paraguay, gave a demonstration of his harp playing. He mixed traditional music with modern and you really felt you were being transported to the Andes, listening to the silvery sounds of the harp. Fellow-musician Roksana joined him with a couple of songs on the violin and the acoustics brought out the marvellous range of the music.

Kike said: "I studied the harp from the age of 11 with my father. I was taught by ear, then I learnt by reading music but I developed my own style and was largely self-taught."

At the age of 14 he made

an album called *Melodias Paraguayas* and went on to produce six CDs, the last including some of his own compositions.

The concert evening was in a good cause because a collection was taken for a Paraguayan aid charity. A large fire in a supermarket in Paraguay last year killed 400 people. Although it happened some time ago, the money raised will help the children and families who were affected by the blaze.

So make a date in your diary for the monthly concerts in East Finchley Methodist Church; see What's On in *THE ARCHER* for details.

Just the Job for Oak Lodge

By Toni Morgan

Finchley Rotary Club hosted another successful jazz evening on 25 February at St Mary's Church Hall in Hendon Lane, to raise funds for a play park for Oak Lodge Special School in East Finchley.

Just The Job Jazz provided the music, members of Finchley Rotary Club supplied an excellent supper and, thanks to the generosity of all those who attended, they more than exceeded their

fundraising target.

For lovers of live jazz, Just The Job play regularly at the Wilf Slack Cricket Pavilion, East End Road on alternate Mondays from 3 April.

Is 2006 the year you learn how to surf the web and use email?

The Green Man Community Centre offers a wide range of courses to help you make the most of new technology. If you just want to learn how to use email or even get a professional qualification we have the course for you.

Learners study at their own pace with a friendly tutor on hand to offer help and advice if needed.

For more information about the courses on offer call Helen on 020 8815 0703.

The Learndirect Centre is managed in conjunction with Barnet College



How to fight the pain of osteoarthritis

Registered osteopath Nicky Sharp, who practises at the Nova Dental Care centre in East End Road, explains the pain of osteoarthritis and how to treat it.

One of the most common conditions I treat as an osteopath is osteoarthritis, which is inflammation resulting from wear and tear of the cartilage on the joint surfaces.

It is mainly found in the large weight-bearing joints, the hips and knees, although it can also occur in the spine, the hands, the finger joints and the big toe.

Sufferers experience pain after prolonged use of the joint and often stiffness first thing in the morning, or after a period of inactivity.

Your gender, genetics, hormones, skeleton, immune function, weight and injuries can all play a part in the onset and progress of this condition. Unfortunately we have no control over our parentage or sex, but we can try to control the other factors.

Available treatment

The main aim of any treatment is to relieve pain and to keep the joint working. This can be achieved by physical therapies such as osteopathy, chiropractic or physiotherapy, as well as hands-on treatment and the prescription of strengthening and stretching exercises. Acupuncture, ultra sound, and electronic stimulation (for example, a TENS machine) have also proved beneficial.

Medical pain relief will range from simple analgesics, anti-inflammatory drugs and creams to steroid injections and surgical replacement.

In addition, dietary supple-

mentation with glucosamine sulphate and essential fatty acids can reduce pain, as can avoiding foods from the nightshade family (aubergine, potatoes, tomatoes and peppers), and reducing your intake of red meat and caffeine.

Tips for managing your arthritis:

- Take regular exercise such as walking or swimming.
- Use a walking stick in the opposite hand to minimise weight-bearing on the affected joint.
- Take a daily supplement of glucosamine sulphate (1,500mg per day). This should be taken with vitamin C to help absorption - vitamin C with flavonoids is best. A period of at least three months should be allowed before the benefits are felt.
- Take a daily supplement of essential fatty acids, either cod liver oil or evening primrose oil. Alternatively, eat grilled or baked fish such as salmon, herring, mackerel or tuna.
- Avoid caffeine, red meat, alcohol and cigarettes.
- Cut down on dairy products, citrus fruit, wheat, fried foods and refined carbohydrates.
- Avoid potatoes, tomatoes, aubergine and peppers.
- Use hydrotherapy on the joint (daily hot and cold showers) to

improve blood flow to the area and reduce inflammation.

To make an appointment with Nicky, contact her on 020 8815 9433.

Party day for Barnet carers

By Daphne Chamberlain
Barnet Carers Centre celebrated its tenth birthday with an Open Day and party at its Ballards Lane headquarters. Among the party balloons were letters and cards of appreciation, including several from children.

A surprisingly large number of young people aged between five and 18 years care or help care for a relative, and BYCAS (Barnet Young Carers and Siblings) supports them with clubs, parties, outings, newsletters, help with homework, and general advice and friendship. The siblings are young people who, though they may not themselves provide care, are affected by brothers or sisters who need it. BYCAS is one of several specialised services available from the Centre.

Another is help and support for carers of people with mental health problems, and the Centre is looking at setting up a practical, problem-solving course for coping with dementia. Carers of adults with learning disabilities will be welcomed at Valuing Carers Day, 10am-3pm, Wednesday 26 April, at Avenue House, N3.

As we reported last month, there are currently 3,000 carers registered on Barnet's database, but the last census revealed ten times that number in the borough. 98% are reached through GPs, and the Trust is looking for outreach volunteers to help identify carers in their local surgeries.

Staff at the Centre were pleased with the response to the Open Day. Their aim is to build up a friendly, helpful relationship with carers, which will continue even if those cared for die or move away.

For more information, or to help in any way, please contact Barnet Carers Centre on 020 8343 9698, or e-mail admin@barnetcarers.org.

Were you fooled?

This being the April edition of *THE ARCHER* we thought we'd pull your leg with one of our stories. Did you spot the April Fool? Thanks to David Tupman for his entirely fictional account of plans to bring an Olympic training centre to East Finchley on page 3.

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be reviewed or printed. Contact details can be withheld, however, at publication.

Letters to the editor

Medical emergency, office hours only

Dear Editor,

I sympathise with Miss Schweizer, who waited an hour and a half for a response from Barn Doc, the local medical telephone service, and was then advised to call an ambulance (*THE ARCHER*, February 2006).

Recently, after accidentally taking a second dose of my daily medication, I called NHS Direct. It was midnight, and I was anxious. The instructions issued with the medication tell you to get medical advice immediately if anything like this happens. I waited over half an hour before anyone took my call, with a recorded message telling me that this was a busy time. Between nine and five was a better time to call, the message said.

Eventually, a receptionist asked me the required questions, and then said a nurse would phone me back in up to an hour's time. It was, in fact, an hour before this happened. She told me that there was probably not too much to worry about, but if any adverse symptoms appeared to call back.

"What, wait another hour and a half, with symptoms this time?" The nurse was pleasant and sympathetic. She apologised for the delays, blaming shortage of staff.

Would I have done better to have phoned a hospital A&E department? Apparently not. I was told they would only have referred me to NHS Direct.

As I hung up, I thought of all the accounts we hear of ambulances being called out needlessly. Like most people, I hope I would never do this, but for the first time, I could imagine that someone perhaps elderly, infirm, very nervous, without transport or money for a cab, might be driven to do so. And that is a sobering thought.

Yours faithfully,
Eveline Nicholas,
High Road, N2.

CCTV to protect our property

Dear Editor,

We have had two cars broken into within the last month outside our home at the tube station end of East Finchley and one car broken into at the end of last year. The break-ins occur either on a Friday or over the weekend and it is costing a great deal of time and money to repair the broken windows and regain the use of our cars. Apart from receiving a crime number, nothing appears to be done to stop this criminal vandalism.

As a payer of a high council tax and a payer for parking permits, I feel that we should have some protection from criminals in this area and hope that CCTV could be installed, as the police force is spread so thinly in the area.

Regards
Deanna Kaye
Address supplied

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

An accident waiting to happen

Dear Editor,

We have a number of one-way streets in East Finchley designed to keep traffic moving smoothly. I've been alarmed recently to see No Entry signs being openly flouted.

At the bottom end of Trinity Road, cars are forbidden to turn right into Church Lane over the railway bridge towards East End Road but I've often seen a morning driver do just that (the same culprit each time).

He or she turns right where they shouldn't and goes over the one-lane bridge into the face of oncoming traffic. Not only are they disobeying the law but they are putting the lives of other motorists and pedestrians at extreme risk, all to cut a couple of minutes off their journey, I suspect. This is criminal recklessness.

I've seen the same disregard of one-way systems and No Entry signs on Park Road and Market Place near Holy Trinity School where many cars seem to drift through the No Entry sign without caring. Needless to say, this is particularly dangerous near a primary school where there will be a large number of children and parents crossing the road.

Please, all drivers, take notice of the road signs. They are there for a reason, not to make your life difficult. If you don't, it's simply an accident waiting to happen.

Yours faithfully,
Ian Chavasse
Leslie Road, N2.

Overloaded barrister seeks administrative assistance in E. Finchley, a few hours a week. Would suit retired legal sec. with common sense. Must be unfappable. Call: 020 8883 4395

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KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Hope I die before I get old

Welcome to the world of eternal youth where 50 is the new 30 and 30 is just a new pair of trainers away from teenage kicks. So what if The Who hoped to die before they got old, now what's left of them is getting in another tour before they collect their bus passes. But I can live with that, what I can't live with is my youthful excesses turning up on BBC4 as a history programme.

The thought police at brainwashing house destroyed another outpost of rebellion by sanitising the history of the NME and allowing the historians to poke around in the entrails. OK, so they allowed Nick Kent to be the licensed joker amongst the apologists and nostalgia merchants. It wasn't pretty, but that's never worried the NME before, so why should it now?

That's the problem with the Getting Old business, what starts out as being dangerous and edgy ends up as nostalgia. What was banned by Radio 1 when it was released is now someone's record of the week on the 'do you remember this?' show on Radio Back End of Beyond, somewhere between the Carpenters and Westlife. Even the Pistols re-formed for the money, but John Lydon had the honesty to admit it was a nightmare. All right, maybe not his, he got paid, but it sure was mine.

Rebellion has gone the same way. There are kids out there who grew up hearing their parents' Jam and Buzzcocks 45s. How do they rebel against rebels like that? They can't refuse to wear anything but black because their dad did that; they can't even bring home a Green Day disc because their mum will nick it to play in the Volvo. Fair bets a tattoo won't faze mum and dad because they got matching ones at Glastonbury back in '85.

See, that's the problem with rebellion. It gets turned into nostalgia and leaves you with nothing left. The only way to really wind up the oldies is to embrace something bland and as safe as possible. Maybe that explains Dido, James Blunt and this sudden interest in the long-dead Nick Drake. Who cares? I'm going to wind up the kids with the Only Ones and then hit the streets. The Buzzcocks are playing and it really is yesterday once more...



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Soldiers, currant buns, speckled frogs, little stars and staff pose for the camera at Scribbles. Photo by Helen Drake.

Little chatterboxes!

By Helen Drake

If you walked past Scribbles Nursery on Hertford Road one day in late February you might have heard the joyful noise of children singing well-known nursery rhymes in even louder voices than usual.

They were being sponsored to take part in the Chatterbox Challenge for I CAN, the national charity that helps children communicate. Celebrities such as Zoe Ball, Jon Snow and the comedy actress Catherine Tate are supporting the 'Make Chatter Matter' campaign, of which the Chatterbox Challenge is part.

Helen Grieve, room leader at Scribbles, said, "The children have been busy in the weeks leading up to the challenge making costumes and practising for the big day." She added that preparing for

the Chatterbox Challenge had helped the children focus at circle time and learning the new songs had expanded their knowledge.

Shareenah Cemal, who organised the event on 28 February, explained that taking part in the challenge had helped all children at the nursery develop their communication skills.

"The Grand Old Duke of York" was given an extra edge as the 10,000 men in the song were joined by a real soldier in uniform. David, husband of one of the Scribbles staff, and a member of the Scots Guards,

put on his bearskin and marched up and down the imaginary hill with the children.

I CAN say that one in 10 children have a communication disability: that's 1.2 million children across the UK. The charity provides specialist therapy and education for children who struggle to communicate, free information for parents and training and advice for teachers and other professionals.

For more information on I CAN go to www.ican.org.uk. To contact Scribbles Nursery, phone 020 8883 8546.

Park outside your own house!

Having someone else's vehicle taking up the parking space outside your home can be an annoyance but having it there for 11 months seems like a downright liberty.

A green Ford Transit van has been parked in the same spot on Creighton Avenue since May 2005 and residents are furious that it has never been moved.

Michelle Huberman, who runs her own craft materials business from home, said the owner was being plain anti-social.

She said: "The vehicle is taxed and it's not illegally parked so the council or police have no power to move it on, but it is extremely anti-social. It's a large green van that just hasn't moved for 11 months. The assumption is that someone is just using it for cheap



Photo by Michelle Huberman

storage and we're all so sick of it."

The position of the van means deliveries to Michelle's home must park some doors down and, in recent weeks, it has been causing traffic congestion while Creighton Avenue was being dug up alongside it

for pipe-laying work.

Residents say the vehicle is believed to belong to someone who lives in Hertford Road. Are you the owner or do you know who is? Get in touch with us here at *THE ARCHER*. You'll find our contact details on page 2.

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