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Local News is our Aim

# THE ARCHER




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*A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.*

## Save our library from these cuts

By Daphne Chamberlain and Sheila Armstrong

**People who care about the future of East Finchley library are being urged to join the campaign against proposed budget cuts that will result in fewer staff, shorter opening hours and a reduced service.**

In an open letter (see page 11), the East Finchley Library Users' Group warns there is little time left to fight the proposals to cut Barnet's library budget by £326,000. A final decision is expected to be made by the council in March.

East Finchley library would be the worst-affected single library, with its funding cut by £57,000. To achieve this, the plan is to close the library every day from 1-2pm and one evening a week, and to

reduce the staff by two.

Barnet would make the rest of the savings by slashing £200,000 from the borough's media fund used to stock library shelves with new books, CDs and DVDs, by reducing other library posts, by replacing the libraries network and by cutting school library resources.

In the letter Adam Gee and Polly Napper write of the "severe" cuts that will see East Finchley

downgraded to a community library, making it vulnerable to future cutbacks.

"These cuts are not yet final, but we do not have much time to fight them," they write. Urging everyone to contact council leaders before it is too late, they say: "Letter writing is not a glamorous campaigning activity, but it really does make a difference in sufficient quantities."

Leslie Gilbert, a member of the borough-wide Friends of Barnet Libraries, told *THE ARCHER* that he began using East Finchley library 48 years ago and had never seen the staff as over-stretched as they are now.

He said: "Now, on top of last year's cuts, the council is proposing to reduce the staff by a further two full-time posts. If this is allowed to go on, what will become of our lovely library? It is not too late to demand that the proposal should be abandoned."

A Barnet Council spokesman said library cuts were due but that every effort would be made to ensure the same range of stock and availability through all libraries.



In too deep. Photo by Paul Chapman

### Rising tides in Muswell Hill

By Paul Chapman

**Maintenance work on a water main led to some flooding for local residents at the bottom of Muswell Hill Road in December. Sandbags were needed to protect some houses in the area and the traffic was blocked on this route between Highgate and Muswell Hill.**

### Firearms discovered in The Grange

**The Barnet Homes team on The Grange estate were shocked to discover a cache of firearms while they were preparing for the weekly refuse collection, just before Christmas.**

On 18 December, they were moving the large rubbish bins out of their alcoves in each building, ready for collection. At Hilton House a sawn-off shotgun, complete with ammunition, was found hidden behind the bins, and at Middleton House an antique muzzle-loading pistol was found.

The police were called, and the local Neighbourhood team attended. They decided to call the Police Firearms group, who made the weapons safe and took them away. The police investigation is on-going.



East Finchley library photo by Erini Rodis

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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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## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

### Leisure

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

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**Barnet MENCAP** 020 8203 6688  
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**Carers' Line** 0808 808 7777  
**Drinkline** 0800 917 8282  
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**Health Info Service** 0800 665544  
**MIND** 020 8343 5700  
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**Mus. Hill Police Stn.** 02083452148  
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❖ **Careers advice**, Green Man, Community Centre 020 8883 4916  
❖ **Toy library**, Muswell Hill 020 8444 0244/ 8489 8774

## Attack on family leads to nine ASBOs

**Nine people have been served with Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) in connection with a racially-motivated attack on a family in North Finchley.**

The orders were secured by Barnet Council, Barnet Homes and the police, following the attack on the Desai family, of Ingleway, N12.

The nine individuals are prohibited from contacting the family. Six of them may not enter Ingleway and three are forbidden to stand outside the Desais' property.

If any of the individuals served with the interim ASBOs are convicted of a breach of the order, they could be imprisoned for up to five years.

Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council and

chairman of the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership, said, "The council, working with its partners the police and Barnet Homes, will not tolerate racial harassment of any of our residents, and the securing of these nine ASBOs demonstrates our determination to stop racist behaviour."

If anyone sees people acting suspiciously, or in an anti-social manner, in the area of Ingleway, they should contact the Community Safety Unit at Colindale Police Station on 020 8733 4465, or call 999 in an emergency.

## New property? Mark it now

**Now is a good time to look at the new items of property you may have acquired over Christmas and the January sales and to do something about helping to keep them safe.**

Property marking is a way of giving the items that are important to you an indelible identification, showing your postcode and house or flat number or the first two letters of the house name. Marking makes it harder for thieves to sell on stolen property and easier for police to trace it back to you if found. Sounds like a good idea! How do I do it? Firstly, identify those items that can be safely marked and are of value to you. Remember, it's not just monetary value we are talking about; you should include any treasured possessions regardless of their cost.

Then, using a permanent etching tool or an ultra violet (UV) pen, write your postcode and house number. Use the UV pen if etching would reduce the value of the item but remember that the UV mark will fade if exposed to sunlight for a long time and can be washed off certain items.

Ceramic marking pens have been developed to mark permanently glass, china or any glazed surface. They do

not cut or scratch the surface. UV pens, ceramic markers and etching equipment can all be found in the home security sections of most DIY stores. Make a note of the serial numbers of all TVs, videos, stereos, computers and camera equipment and keep the numbers in a safe place together with make and model numbers. Marking jewellery and antiques is difficult and could reduce their value. A simple way to keep a record of items like this is to take photographs, using a non-reflective background and putting a ruler next to the item to give an indication of size. Make sure the light is good and the item is in focus.

You don't have to give a name and address when getting the photos developed in a chemist or photographic shop. Keep the photos in a safe place or ask a close friend or relative to look after them for you. Do not send them to the police unless any of your items have been stolen. Finally, remember to mark all items of property in your shed or garage using the same methods.

## Muggers steal designer watch

**A 54-year-old woman had her designer watch worth over £1,000 stolen in a New Year street robbery in East Finchley.**

The victim was getting out of her car in Leopold Road on Sunday 1 January at 1.30am when she was approached by two men who asked for directions to Trinity Road. As the victim began to give directions, one of the males grabbed the victim's arm and attempted to remove her Tag Heuer watch.

Fearing for her safety the victim took off her watch and handed it to the man. The other male then punched the victim in the face and stole her handbag worth £200. Both suspects then walked off towards Leslie Road and the victim contacted police. The first suspect is described as a black male aged 20 and 5'11" tall. He was wearing a green parka-style jacket with a fur collar. The second suspect is described as a black male aged 20 and 5'6" tall. He was wearing dark clothing.

## Parking nightmare

By Betti Blatman

**Shop owners in Aylmer Parade fear they are losing customers because parking nearby has become so difficult.**

Aylmer Parade is a narrow side road at the busy junction of Aylmer Road with the Great North Road and is home to a parade of shops.

Parking spaces were already limited after parking restrictions were placed on a road behind the row of shops and nearby garages were rented out for commercial storage.

But parking problems have escalated during the past few months, particularly since Haringey Council implemented a single yellow line in nearby Woodside Avenue. Apparently this was done to keep the site

## Planning Applications

**Old Barn Community Centre, 20 Fallows Close, off Tarling Road, N2**

Enclosure of existing walkway to provide additional office space. Creation of additional office space with existing community centre.

**Land rear of Sherwood Hall, East End Road, N2**

Erection of a single-storey building to form two self-contained flats and associated parking.

**NatWest building, 85 High Road, N2**

Retention to existing ramp and steps outside the premises.

**61 Bedford Road, N2**

Alteration to roof, including rear dormer window to facilitate loft conversion.

**First Floor Flat, 36 Chandos Road, N2**

Hip to gable and rear dormer window to facilitate loft conversion.

**Upper Flat, 228 East End Road, N2**

Alteration to roof, including rear and side windows to facilitate loft conversion.

**385-401, High Road, N2**

Installation of various illuminated signs to three elevations (eight in total), and one non-illuminated sign to east elevation.

entrance clear for large lorries that visit twice daily carrying building materials for the Northern Line development work.

Aylmer Parade traders say they are disappointed they were not consulted about the parking changes, which have caused significant damage to their businesses.

Further parking restrictions around East Finchley have brought an overflow of parking nearer to Aylmer Parade and additional parking restrictions in the past five years on the Great North Road have also reduced available parking spaces.



# Stanley Field

## “past the point of compromise”

By Daphne Chamberlain

**The plan to save Stanley Road Playing Field as a sports facility for the community was given virtually unanimous backing at a packed public meeting attended by more than 100 people.**

Concerned residents who attended the meeting at Holy Trinity School heard Paul Allen from the National Playing Fields Association say that his organisation had already recommended that Barnet make the field a protected space (see right).

Local Labour Councillor Colin Rogers said: “This field is irreplaceable. We are facing a stark choice – houses or fields, and we are past the point of compromise.”

### Living in the real world

Councillor Brian Coleman, however, speaking from the floor as the local Greater London Assembly member, blamed the Labour Government for requiring Barnet to build more houses, and said: “You’ve got to live in the real world”. He forecast that the most likely outcome would be a mixed development of housing and recreational space.

“We are in the real world,” said the Green Party’s Mike Gee, insisting that every inch of open space counts. Speaker after speaker said that East Finchley’s infrastructure could not take more housing, and pointed to growing problems of vandalism and drug addiction among young people as a result of recreational facilities being withdrawn.

### How can we save the field?

The National Playing Fields Association outlined how the field could be permanently preserved as a community resource. Asked whether Barnet was not already covenanted to do this, the meeting’s chairman

Roger Chapman, from the East Finchley Development Trust, said that the conditions under which Barnet had acquired the land were being looked into.

Other speakers urging the preservation of the field were Tim Bowden and Sylvia Duthie, Head and Chair of Governors from Holy Trinity School, Philip King from The Walks Residents Association. Architect Chris Hampson had earlier displayed the Trust’s plans for the use of the site as a sports centre.

Campaigners are still waiting for a decision by Barnet Council on the future of the field in Eagans Close which was originally expected as early as January.

### Youth club

Meanwhile, residents in the Helen Close area of East Finchley, off East End Road, met to discuss the lack of youth facilities in the area and to encourage the local community to get involved in creating a Youth Club.

The meeting was opened by Alex Kaye from East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team who introduced various organisations’ representatives who could offer their expertise, including Roger Chapman, East Finchley Development Trust, and Councillor Colin Rogers, East Finchley Labour.

A follow up meeting will be held on 22 February at Paul Byrne House, Helen Close at 6.30pm. For further information, please contact 020 8721 2845 or email eastfinchley.sn@met.police.uk



Hands up all those in favour at the Stanley Field meeting... Photo by Colin Rogers

## How Stanley Field could be saved

By Daphne Chamberlain

**The National Playing Fields Association is a charity which has overseen the protection of about 2,000 sites nationwide. It responds to requests to protect playing fields (i.e. any open space which can be used for recreation) from building development. “Protecting” means that by law the space cannot be developed for non-recreational purposes.**

### How it is done

There are two ways to do this. Either the NPFA can buy the freehold and then lease back to a local management group, or it can arrange a deed of dedication with the owner. No money is exchanged, but the field becomes a charity, with the owner as the trustee. The owner has the right to maintain and operate the space, but can delegate to an interested group. Under both schemes, the land is protected for recreational use.

### Conditions

The field must be available to the public, but not necessarily open to all and sundry all the time. Renting out is encouraged, but revenue can only be spent on the field. The exact recreational use is decided by the needs of the community. The NPFA can give technical and legal support, but is not involved in management.

The NPFA has put a proposal to Barnet, which the council is considering.

### How does this relate to Stanley Field?

The NPFA is interested in buying the freehold of the field, based on its recreational space value per acre. The field would then be leased to the East Finchley Development Trust to manage.

Paul Allen from the NPFA told the Stanley Field public meeting at Holy Trinity School that, where quality of life is an issue, a local authority has an obligation to consider selling at recreational space value rather than at commercial market value.

## Phone mast schemes cut off

By John Lawrence and Daphne Chamberlain  
**Campaigners have won the first round of their battle to prevent three mobile phone masts being installed in Holy Trinity Church in East Finchley.**

Barnet Council considered the proposal but turned it down on the basis that there had not been adequate consideration of alternative sites.

We reported last June that people living close to the church in Church Lane objected to the phone masts being positioned in the bell spire, principally on health grounds. They argued that the risk from the electromagnetic radiation emitted by phone masts was not fully understood.

The Parochial Church Council and Revd Laurence Hill, of Holy Trinity Church, were supporting the installation. It had the potential to allow the church to charge an annual fee, said to be less than £10,000, for hosting the masts.

However, protesters are not yet celebrating victory. The company that would install the masts, QS4, has the right to appeal against the refusal of planning permission.

Meanwhile, mobile phone companies have reportedly asked East Finchley allotment

holders whether they would agree to masts being put up on their plots.

One allotment secretary told us she had received a phone call explaining the companies thought this would be a good way to get round public hostility to these masts. Vale Farm secretary Stella Burnett said she told the caller that she didn’t “go to all this trouble growing organic crops to have them irradiated”.

Ted Green, Secretary of the Federation of Barnet Allotments, says he has been e-mailed by a mobile phone company with the same request.

When *THE ARCHER* reported this to Barnet, a spokesperson said that the council had decided not to allow any new phone masts to be put up on Barnet land.

All allotments in Barnet are owned by the Council, except for the Fuel Lands at East Finchley. Mr Green told us that all the allotments in the borough had voted against the installation of masts.

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Sherwood Hall. Photo by John Dearing

## Sherwood Hall residents fight developers

**The freehold of Sherwood Hall, in East End Road, has been taken over by a property company who want to build flats in the unspoilt gardens, to the dismay of the residents, many of whom have lived there for more than 20 years.**

Last year, the leaseholders were given notice of the forthcoming sale of the freehold, and a group of them sought to buy it. Unfortunately, the necessary notice was not served correctly and the freehold went to auction.

Development company Magnolia Tree Ltd bought it for twice its estimated worth, and later offered to sell for five times this price. Subsequently, Magnolia applied for planning permission to build in the gardens.

The leaseholders' group sought the advice of East

Finchley ward councillor Colin Rogers, and a considerable number of objections were lodged. The application went to the council's planning sub-committee on 17 November, with a recommendation from the planning officer to approve, despite the existing leases giving access to the gardens as a right.

Some of the leaseholders spoke against the application and it was refused, on the grounds that the proposed development would be visually obtrusive, out of character with the area, and would

detract from the use of the gardens.

Magnolia has appealed on the grounds that it had followed the application process correctly. It has also lodged a new planning application, differing little from the original.

The leaseholder group has now begun the complex and lengthy process of enfranchisement, to try to buy the freehold. However, it will need to go to a Leasehold Valuation Tribunal to get a fair price, by which time planning permission may have been granted.

## FINCHLEY FORUM ROUND-UP

By Daphne Chamberlain

**The two current big issues of East Finchley were aired at last month's Finchley Forum at Avenue House.**

### Stanley Field

The Stanley Field steering group reported the huge amount of public support at the meeting in Holy Trinity School. They asked whether Barnet Council would consider an offer for the recreational value of the land equal to the commercial value, and said that the East Finchley Development Trust wanted to work together with the council, looking at all youth issues in the round. Green Party members condemned the demolition of the adjacent Herbert Wilmot Centre, denying that it was unsafe.

### Library

The East Finchley Library Users' Group asked for factual justification for the downgrading of the library, and protested about the complete lack of consultation from Barnet.

### Disabled parking bay retained

In response to an earlier petition, the disabled parking bay outside 4 Fairlawn Avenue, N2, has been retained.

### Cuts in youth service

A petition to restore the cuts in youth services was handed in. Barnet was described as the second-lowest spender in England in this area.

### Coppetts Wood

Barnet was accused of destroying Coppetts Wood, both by incorrect use of pesticides and by inadequate boundaries allowing riding and burning of motorbikes.

### Review of CPZs

Barnet is planning a borough-wide review, which would probably take three to five years. The intention is to contact each community indi-

vidually, but the review is still in the draft stage.

### Artsdepot

Building work going on at the moment has nothing to do with underpinning. It is routine, and being paid for by the developers. Following a fatal accident in the bus station, questions were asked about the safety of the present traffic procedures there. As a connected issue, the bus stop opposite Waitrose may be restored.

### Next Forum

The next Finchley Forum will be held at 6.30pm on Wednesday 5 April at the Green Man Centre, Strawberry Vale.

A friendly welcome awaits you

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## What will the library cuts mean?

By Daphne Chamberlain

**East Finchley has been earmarked to take the brunt of Barnet's proposed cuts to the library service. Here we answer some key questions.**

**Q: Why is our library lined up for relegation to the status of a "community" branch – the lowest of the borough's three categories of library?**

A: Barnet Council says that the status of a library is decided by its use, but *THE ARCHER* has seen official statistics showing that East Finchley is better used than the comparable branch of East Barnet, which is retaining its "town centre" status. What's more, East Finchley's statistics of use are rising. *THE ARCHER* has not received any explanation from Barnet for their decision.

**Q: What will this decision mean?**

A: As well as the loss of two staff and the reduction of opening hours to just 33 a week, the library will no longer be run by a qualified manager, and outreach activities, including the regular coffee morning talks on many subjects, will probably be cut.

**Q: What is Barnet Council saying about the cuts?**

A: Councillor John Marshall, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, told this paper: "Once changes have come into effect, the

service provision will still be substantial. East Finchley is following in the footsteps of other Barnet libraries by closing at lunchtimes, and once the changes have come into effect, residents will recognise that the council is committed to their library."

**Q: Could the library become a true centre for the community?**

A: Councillor Marshall, who has admitted visiting East Finchley library only once, said that the under-utilised first floor could be used as a community facility. Asked to elaborate, he said he had nothing specific in mind, and that there were no plans either to move another community service permanently into the library or to install a lift. At last month's Area Forum, he speculated about the library and the neighbouring Martin Schools sharing a caretaker service to facilitate community activities.

**Q: When will a decision on East Finchley library be made?**

A: Barnet Council will vote on the proposed library service cuts on 7 March.

## Is this helping the aged?

By Diana Cormack

**An elderly lady's recent hospital experiences have caused some concern to her neighbours in Cherry Tree Road.**

Ninety-year-old Miss Frieda Schweitzer was taken to the Whittington Hospital by ambulance, having felt unwell at a lunchtime gathering. At 8pm that evening a neighbour spotted an ambulance bringing her home and, as Frieda lives alone, went to see if she needed any help. An asthmatic attack had been diagnosed but Frieda was happy to be left in her armchair with her medication at hand.

After 11pm, however, feeling afraid to go to bed in case she should be taken ill during the night, Miss Schweitzer phoned her neighbour for help. The neighbour wanted her to be seen by a doctor and called Barn Doc. A receptionist took the details, saying that a nurse would get in touch. About 20 minutes later a nurse rang to say that a doctor would get in touch. Nearly an hour later the neighbour, growing worried about Frieda's condition, spoke to the receptionist again and was assured that a doctor would phone. Eventually, after a brief

conversation, the doctor's advice was to call an ambulance.

### To and fro

At 1am the ambulance staff arrived to collect Frieda and told the neighbour to phone the Whittington Hospital in a couple of hours for information. In fact, trusting that a 90-year-old would be looked after in hospital overnight, her neighbour did not phone until the morning. She discovered that Frieda had been brought back home at 5am and had been left alone in her house once again.

A spokeswoman for Whittington Hospital said Mrs. (sic) Schweitzer had been brought home because doctors had indicated she was settled, felt safer and better and could go home when she wanted.

She said: "We would normally keep patients until the morning unless they had specifically requested to go home. If Mrs Schweitzer, indeed, had not wanted to go home we do apologise."



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## Seen and heard

# A Court by any other name...

Look carefully at the name sign over the entrance to Mulberry Court, in Bedford Road.



Spot the difference... McCarthy & Stone seem to have had problems with their spellchecker!  
Photos by John Dearing



L-R: Yvonne Johnson, Mayor Andreas Tambourides and Sonia Singham. Photo by Craig Johnson

# Honoured for a helping hand

By Craig Johnson

Two East Finchley residents have been recognised for making a significant contribution to the local community in the Barnet Civic Awards Ceremony.

Yvonne Johnson has been a dedicated care worker with the Borough of Barnet since 1995. She received recognition for her hard work as a care worker for the elderly and in the mental health field in the borough.

Former Holy Trinity School headteacher Sonia Singham has been a volunteer at East Finchley Neighbourhood CONTACT since June 2004. During this time she has cared

for many families but the most notable support she has given was caring for an elderly, terminally ill husband and wife. Her dedication to their well being in the last few months of their lives was said to be outstanding and deserving of recognition.

Presentations were made by the Mayor, Councillor Andreas Tambourides, in a ceremony at Hendon Town Hall.

# Walk up and smell the coffee

By Diana Cormack



Eileen serves Richard Brooks and his dog Missy. Photo by Diana Cormack

On 14 January, more than three years after it was burnt down, the café in Cherry Tree Wood re-opened. It is hoped that, being more substantial than the previous kiosk, it will be more vandal-proof as well.

Regular park-users have been delighted to see the friendly face of Eileen Cannon behind the counter and have expressed their pleasure at her return.

"There have been so many well-wishers," Eileen told *THE ARCHER*. "Kids coming to play football, mums with their babies, people walking their dogs : I didn't realise how much I'd been missed."

Until Easter the café will be open at the following times: Monday from 12 noon to 3.30pm; Tuesday - Sunday from 9am to 3.30pm.

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## Could you help the Hornsey Trust?

By Linda Soper

**A North London charity shop is looking for volunteer staff to help support its fundraising for a valued children's centre in Muswell Hill.**

The Hornsey Trust recently opened a charity shop in Tufnell Park to support the work of its Conductive Education Centre for children with cerebral palsy.

Children who attend are helped with movement, co-ordination, balance and motor control as well as focusing on speech and skills like dressing and feeding. The structured training allows the individual to make choices and move towards independence.

The skilled staff give regular support and guidance once a week for babies and small children. Children who are 18

months to three-years-old work in groups of six with their parents to develop their abilities and apply the skills learnt to their daily lives. Once the children are three they work with the National Curriculum to key stage 1.

The Hornsey Trust's charity shop has been open for a couple of months in Fortress Road, Tufnell Park. The trust is looking for volunteers to help them so if you are interested in this worthwhile work contact them on 020 8444 7242, or email [info@hornseytrust.org.uk](mailto:info@hornseytrust.org.uk). For more information, visit [www.hornseytrust.org.uk](http://www.hornseytrust.org.uk).

## Allotments escape sewage leak

By Daphne Chamberlain

**Vale Farm allotments and the adjacent footpath over the North Circular escaped their usual Christmas sewage overflow this year - but for how long will their luck last?**

When Catalyst Housing Association, potential developer of the neighbouring Lonsdale House site in Tarling Road, recently put a camera down the drains, they found foul sewer pipe junctions overgrown with tree and plant roots and grease debris.

Engineer Tim Trotman told *THE ARCHER*, "It's a common problem with these old sewers". He said that a report was sent to the owner of the pipes. However, when we asked Thames Water, who are responsible for the foul sewer, what action was being taken, they said they could not locate a report at that time.

### Why no leaflet drop?

Meanwhile, Vale Farm Allotment Secretary Stella Burnett is wondering what happened to Barnet Council's promised pre-Christmas leaflet drop, warning local people not to overload their drains with

grease. Barnet confirmed to *THE ARCHER* (September edition) that this would be done, but has now told us that they did not do the letterbox drop after all.

### Health hazard

Ms Burnett told us, "We were mercifully free of the sewage lake this year, but it is a continuing public health hazard." The 47 elderly residents of Lonsdale House will be moved to other accommodation this April, and local residents want the malfunctioning sewer to be put right before the new development goes up on the site.

Catalyst's Chief Project Manager, Gordon Cooper, suggested that the burden on the drains might be less because many residents in the new development would be out at work. He agreed, nevertheless, that the situation would only get worse if nothing was done.

## A walk back in time

By John Lawrence

**Walking through East Finchley now means traffic fumes, frighteningly busy road junctions and an ever-growing numbers of hazards clogging our pavements.**

A century ago the experience would have been entirely different. Just how different is captured in a ramblers' guide book of 1896 that gives a fascinating insight into the East Finchley of those days.

The book, entitled *Over the Northern Heights: A series of rambles by field-path and hedgerow through North Middlesex, Herts and Bucks.*, was shown to *THE ARCHER* by one of our former distributors, Mike Bassett of Neale Close.

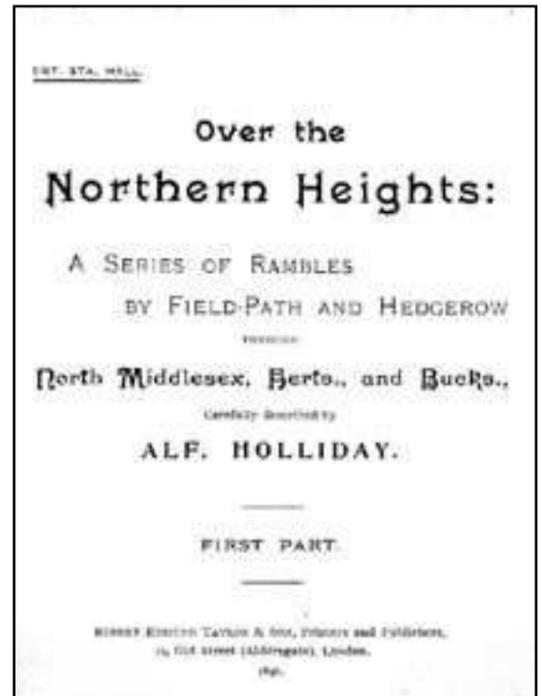
In it the author, Alfred Holliday, carefully describes a four-mile ramble from East Finchley railway station to Hendon railway station, much of it through a landscape of farm roads, fields and country cottages, well away from the main roads where motorised vehicles were just beginning to be a danger.

Below is his description of the first mile through East Finchley with our own notes to show how the landscape has changed 110 years later.

### The walk begins

Mr Holliday informs his readers that East Finchley has a station on the High Barnet branch of the Great Northern Railway and is connected by omnibus with the tramway terminus at the Archway Tavern.

He writes: "Upon leaving the booking-office at the station, cross the yard and take a broad footpath right opposite. The path comes out into a street, which cross, proceeding by way of another street on the other side." (This will be the route that currently takes pedestrians through the tube station car park and up Chalice Court to East End Road before crossing over to Market Place).



The title page to Alfred Holliday's 1896 guided walk through East Finchley

"This leads through an old-fashioned district known as Finchley Market, where, in front of the post-office, the main-road narrows very considerably, while a broad road turns off to the right. This latter is to be followed. It soon turns to the left, then sharply to the right, and leads into the North Road, when turn to the left." (This seems to describe the walk up Market Place, past the Royal Mail sorting office and then the twists and turns of Park Road before it joins the High Road).



Even in 1896, the roads were a hazardous place - an illustration from the book

"Keep to the road until after the entrance-gates of the Islington and St Pancras Cemeteries have been passed on the right. Then look out upon the left for Oak Lane, marked by a letter box in the adjacent wall. The name of the street will be found painted upon the white collection-tablet of the box." (Pedestrians looking for Oak Lane now will find no letter box but will find it easy to spot the council's road signs, one up high on a post and one lower down on a brick wall).

### Lanes and fields

"The lane gently rises, and at the top will be found upon the right, opposite Lochleven House, a narrow lane, by which the ramble is to be continued." (Oak Lane still rises gently but is now packed with the cars of residents on the Grange estate. Although Lochleven House has gone, the same name has been

given to one of the estate's housing blocks; the narrow lane is now the broad entrance to Tarling Road).

"Standing back from the path are a few neat red-brick almshouses. Two fields are passed through, and a road is entered by a swing-gate." (The almshouses, still well cared-for and now called Cleave House, sit behind green railings in Wilmot Close. Ploughman's Walk is the name of the modern footpath to Long Lane. The once-open fields are now home to the residents of Font Hills, The Mead, Thackrah Close and Brendon Grove).

"In this road, turn to the right and on the left, just before a terrace of cottages is reached facing the road, is a cart-road leading to another row of cottages, eighteen in number, at right-angles to the main road.

Proceed by this cart-road but as soon as the first cottage is reached, leave it by a footpath on the right, passing through a swing-gate and crossing the field by a gravelled path." (All these cottages on Long Lane and Manor Cottages Approach are still there but the footpath has gone, covered by the embankment below the elevated North Circular Road).

### Leaving East Finchley

Here we must part company with Mr Holliday as he leaves N2 and describes the rest of the walk to Hendon through fields past the "plain-looking" Finchley Manor House, now the Sternberg Centre on East End Road.

He signs off by writing: "The author will be pleased to receive from ramblers notice of any alteration of paths, way-marks etc in this book." If only he knew.

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## East Finchley link to exotic islands

The exotic islands of Galapagos, with their strange, unique creatures, may be thousands of miles away but several times a year, Galapagos comes to East Finchley. For East Finchley is home to the Executive Director of the UK charity, the Galapagos Conservation Trust.

Leonor Stjepic explains: "The Galapagos Conservation Trust is the only UK charity raising funds to protect the Galapagos. We work with the key conservation groups there, as well as with the other independent friends of Galapagos charities throughout the world. We all save funds by staying in each other's houses when we have meetings."

Galapagos visitors to East Finchley have included scientists, award-winning wildlife photographers, school pupils visiting the UK for a conference, and colleagues from friends of Galapagos charities worldwide.

### Dream destination threatened

Many people only know the Galapagos Islands, in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Ecuador, as one of the places that they have visited or would like to visit one day; what is little known is that it is under threat.

The Galapagos Islands are a microcosm of the social, political, ecological and economic changes occurring in the world. In Galapagos, biodiversity is susceptible to invasive species, over-harvesting, climate change and major pollution events. The major threat to native terrestrial biodiversity today is invasive species. 24% of plant species and 50% of vertebrate species on the islands are still considered



Sally Lightfoot Crab. Picture courtesy Galapagos Conservation Trust

as endangered. Some of the new potential threats, including malaria spread by birds, West Nile Fever and bird flu, may have highly damaging and unpredictable consequences. Furthermore, external markets for tourism, sea cucumbers and shark fins are driving business growth in the Galapagos.

Leonor told *THE ARCHER* "The next five years are vital for Galapagos conservation. If we don't act quickly we could see the end of Galapagos as one of the few, almost pristine, places left on Earth. If we cannot save Galapagos, what hope do we have for the other natural spaces on this planet?"

For further information about the Galapagos Conservation Trust, log on to [www.gct.org](http://www.gct.org) or call Leonor on 020 7629 5049.



Galapagos Sea Lion. Picture courtesy Galapagos Conservation Trust

## Searching for stained glass

Helene Davidian is looking out for stained glass in windows and doors. She will report on her survey to The Finchley Society on 27 April.

Finchley still has some interesting examples, including a window in Christ Church, North Finchley, by a brother of the painter, John Constable. If you know of any stained glass windows or doors, please contact Helene on 020 8444 3669.

## A cyclist's tale

By Alisha Davies

**Pedal, pedal, pedal. Watch out for the potholes, pedestrians, cars turning left, red lights, amber lights. OUCH! That's the second pothole of the day. I won't be able to sit down until lunch.**

Come rain or shine, every day I'm overtaken by the Tour de France reject tearing down Highgate Hill, setting off the speed cameras and revelling in speeding past us novices who cycle along in old T-shirts, red-faced and sweaty. His attire is aerodynamic Lycra from head to toe. Not very flattering to view from the front or rear but, oh, what I would give for a pair of those padded shorts to combat the pain inflicted by potholes.

I become blinded by the fluorescent glare of the next regular cyclist I encounter on my journey to work: Mr Safety. I'm sure I can see him shake his head in despair as Monsieur Tour de France cycles past at speeds unsuitable for London roads. Mr Safety is a candidate for closet cycle rage. I have witnessed him point out to other cyclists the error of their ways. Did they forget their helmet and lights? One day he will be pushed too far and switch his cycle lights on to blinking mode to flash at bad drivers cutting him up. A small protest, but a valid one for the avid city cyclist.

Closer to Camden, Mr Safety and I part company and I'm halfway to my final destination. Now I must pedal faster to get ahead of the Casual Cyclist before we reach the narrow cycle lane. I'll have no chance of passing her there and I'll miss my timeslot to get into the shower at work.

Being stuck behind the

Casual Cyclist is sheer frustration, forced to cycle little faster than walking pace. The Casual Cyclist sits bolt upright on her ancient bicycle. It nearly passes as a Penny Farthing, but she cycles in a cloud of romanticism, fuelled by listening to softening tunes on her iPod. The Casual Cyclist never wears a helmet (it might ruin her hair) and wouldn't be seen dead in fluorescent outfits.

At Euston, I encounter my last fellow cyclist, the Commuter. Riding a bicycle that can be folded up for ease of transport, the Commuter, like myself, avoids all potholes. I think it is for fear that if he hit one at full pace his bicycle would suddenly fold up, trapping him within the wheels.

The Commuter spends all his hard-earned cash on an annual train pass to commute from the countryside. There is no way he is going to fork out another small fortune on a Tube pass, so he arrives in Euston, unfolds his bike and off he cycles to the office.

Crossing over Euston Road, we all head off our separate ways, only to come together again, same place, sometime tomorrow (unless it's raining, in which case Casual Cyclist won't be joining us). Reading this, you may be wondering what type of cyclist I am. I'm the one too busy looking around at everyone else to notice all the potholes. OUCH! Strike three!



Red Footed Booby. Picture courtesy Galapagos Conservation Trust

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## Hawk hunts in Hertford Road

By John Lawrence

How's this for wildlife on your doorstep? Hertford Road resident Peter Cox looked out of his back window to see a sparrow hawk feasting on his lawn.



Close encounter - the sparrow hawk. Photo by Peter Cox

The bird of prey had swooped down on a wood pigeon that had been attracted by the seeds Mr Cox scattered on his grass.

The gardens of Hertford Road are mostly back-to-back with those of adjacent roads but there certainly seemed to be enough open space for this hawk to home in on his quarry.

Mr Cox spotted the flying visitor at around 3pm on a Thursday in early January and suspected the concentration of feathers in one spot meant the pigeon had been killed as it fed.

He said, "I've been here

since 1977 and have only ever seen a sparrow hawk once, last year, flying between two houses in Durham Road.

"It was a huge piece of luck that I got the sighting. I work in the front of the house and hardly ever look out of the back in daylight at this time of the year."

Linda Mitchell, who writes *THE ARCHER's* Wildlife Diary, has twice reported seeing a sparrow hawk in the area, most recently in November 2004 when it tried but failed to take a pigeon. Linda, who lives in Fordington Road, also spotted a kestrel late last year.

## New sports centre for Bishop Douglass

By Toni Morgan

**Bishop Douglass School officially opened its new sports hall, fitness centre and dance studio on 19 January. An invited audience included representatives from the Board of Governors, Barnet Council, the contractors and neighbouring residents, who were later given a tour of the facilities by the students.**

Barnet Council was praised for supporting the building project as were the builders for their excellent standard of work and the neighbours of the school for their forbearance while the project was being carried out. Head Teacher Angela Murphy was particularly praised for her vision and energy in taking forward the project, which she described as a real partnership.

### Seen and heard

Ever wanted to get around more quickly in London? Try the RAC website's route finder service. Motorists using it to find the best route from East Finchley to Islington may be taken aback to see the estimated time for the five-mile journey is NINE minutes. Get the helicopter out, darling, I'm going in to town.

### East Finchley Baptist Church

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Visitors always welcome

## Me and my Shadow

By Anna Davies

An article in *THE ARCHER* article last summer inspired 12-year-old Anna, of Summerlee Gardens, to try a new sport. Here she tells us how she is getting on:

I saw your article about Fishers Green Sailing Club in June ("A life on the reservoir wave") and went along to the open day on 9 July because I liked the idea of sailing. I'd never sailed before. I am now helming my own boat, *Shadow*.

Every Saturday we head out for the 30-minute drive to the Lea Valley. It certainly doesn't feel like a Saturday driving off before nine o'clock, but once you're there, it feels like you're on holiday. When the day ends (around 4:00pm) you are happily exhausted and ready to go home.

### Don't capsize

One of the first things you need to learn is how to capsize. It's important to know what to do and how to get your boat back up. Naturally the lake is quite cold (it's not heated like a swimming pool!) so if you capsize you get rather *cold*. In the summer the sailors capsize to cool off, but in the colder seasons (spring, autumn and winter) the water is a lot *colder*, so the aim is "Don't capsize".

So, to be allowed to go sailing in winter, you need to be equipped with the right things. In summer all you need is a wetsuit and a life jacket. In the



Anna sailing in her 'Shadow'.

winter, however, you either need a full-length wetsuit or a dry suit (designed to keep you *dry* rather than *wet*) worn over thermal clothing, and a life jacket. Though sometimes even all that doesn't keep you warm!

I started off by crewing for more experienced sailors. Cadets are boats for two

children aged seven-17 and are 3m 20cm long, with three sails. I moved on to helming in September and did a six-week training course. I bought my own boat to race in the open day, along with 50 or so other cadets. I came 41<sup>st</sup>!

To view Fishers Green Sailing Club website visit [www.fishersgreensc.org.uk](http://www.fishersgreensc.org.uk)

## YOUNG ARCHER

### Long lost lovers

By Diana Cormack

**February 14, St Valentine's Day, has long been accepted as a special day for lovers and St Valentine can be traced back to the third century AD. But in recent years another name has emerged on the romantic scene, and one that does not trip so easily off the tongue.**

Dwynwen was the daughter of a Welsh fifth century king. There are many different versions of her name, just as there are of her story. But, as with most ancient tales, they all agree that Dwynwen was a beautiful, pious and virtuous girl who had set her heart on becoming a nun. A young man called Maelon fell in love with her and wanted to marry her. Although she loved him in return, Dwynwen rejected him because of her determination to become a nun.

She dreamed she was given a sweet drink that turned Maelon to ice and saved her from his attentions. However, Dwynwen realised that Maelon could not help his feelings for her and so prayed that he would be restored to life. She also prayed that all lovers should find happiness but that she herself would never have the desire for marriage.

Dwynwen did become a nun. She lived on an island off the coast of Anglesey, north Wales, in an area only reached at low tide. Her well

was a fresh-water spring that became a wishing well and a place of pilgrimage, especially for lovers when they heard her story. The tradition grew that a fish or eel in the well could advise lovers. By scattering crumbs on the water, then laying a handkerchief on the surface, women believed that if the fish disturbed it their lover would

be faithful. This tradition also led to a belief that Dwynwen could intercede to help heal sick animals.

There are churches dedicated to St Dwynwen in Wales and Cornwall. Her special day is 25 January and some shops in Wales have begun selling cards to send on her day, just as on St Valentine's Day.

### All Saints' Church, Durham Road, East Finchley Church of England

Sunday masses at 8.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m.  
Weekday masses at 10.00 a.m.  
Prayer requests are gladly accepted.

The Parish has a flourishing social life.  
Contact the Vicar, Fr Christopher Hardy,  
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>



Left to right - Sylvia, Reuby, Norma (a club member) and Rene at the party.  
Photo by Toni Morgan

## They'll meet again

By Daphne Chamberlain

**For 18 years, Reuby and Rene Hyams and Sylvia Lee ran the Fairacres Monday Club, bringing entertainers, speakers and quizzes to the East End Road home for Jewish blind and disabled, but they have now decided to call it a day. In December, club regulars, past and present helpers, guests and friends turned out for their final party, with Hetty Benjamin at the piano.**

### Part of the family

Originally the Wednesday Club, the group was actually the brainchild of one of the guests, Judy Curtis. Though not themselves Fairacres residents, Reuby, Rene and Sylvia have been, in Judy's words, stalwarts in running the show ever since. Fairacres staff contributed their own words: "We will miss them very much. They're part of the family."

Reuby told everyone: "It's sad to finish, but I enjoyed it all. It was sometimes a pain in the neck coming up with something every week, but I was always glad I did." He thanked everyone for their help, especially resident Michael Solomons for organising some wonderful programmes.

Club members made a very generous collection and a giant thank you letter in verse, and there were bouquets from Jewish Blind and Disabled and the League of Jewish Women.

The League's president, Penny Conway, asked Reuby, "What will you do on Monday afternoons now?" "There's always washing and ironing," he

told her, but in reality the stalwarts will still be busy with outside activities, including the Muswell Hill Friendship Club.

### Surprise

#### announcement

Finishing on an up-note, Malcolm Ozin, from the Jewish Blind and Disabled Association, sprang a popular surprise. He proposed six-monthly reunions, with JBD providing funding and publicity.

The Monday Club's outstanding kitty was divided between North London Hospice (for whom Rene has baked cakes for 16 years), Cancer Research and JBD.

### Thanks for the help

Rene had a nasty fall in the High Road at midday on 7 September between Iceland and Ruse Chemists. She told us: "Four ladies gave me a lot of help, including phoning for an ambulance and letting my husband know. The ambulance driver was really good too. He collected my shopping and put it in the freezer for me."

Rene spent some time in hospital, but is making an excellent recovery, and wants to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who went to her assistance.

## Have you got the bowls?

By Toni Morgan

**Now we're in the middle of winter, perhaps you're thinking about starting some decorating but can't quite raise the enthusiasm. Well, it is dark and cold and summer seems a long way away.**

So what about trying something much more enjoyable that would give you the opportunity to get out of the house, meet new people and take some exercise?

Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club in Summers Lane, Finchley, provides one of the best indoor bowling facilities in north London.

Besides welcoming experienced new members, the club is always looking to introduce more people of all ages to the game. It is extremely easy to learn and can be played actively after a very short period of instruction.

All ages from eight to 80 plus can play bowls. Mums, dads, children and grandparents can all play in the same team if they want!

Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club has eight rinks, a licensed bar and a restaurant where meals can be enjoyed at a very modest price, as well as a large car park for members' use. Potential new members are given two free "introduction to bowls" lessons with equipment provided by the club and tuition is continually provided during the indoor season.

The club is open daily from 9.30 am until 10.30 pm, October to April. For further details, contact the Secretary on 020 8446 2090.

## Preserved in Lavender

By Viviana Lotti

**A restaurant with a 'time twin', their name bridging the 70 years between them: that's not the only unusual thing about Lavender Lady.**

The restaurant, in North Finchley High Road, opened in May last year. Owner Joan Ferguson, from the Isle of Uist, in the Hebrides, wants Lavender Lady to be an oasis of calm for people to relax, away from London's "buzzy madness".

Joan had another name planned, but discovered that over 70 years ago the same site had been a restaurant called Lavender Lady. "My chosen name went out of the window and that was it," she said.

Joan learned more about her 'predecessor' from older diners, who recall its original decor of Lloyd Loom chairs and lavender gingham tablecloths and curtains.

The food is British cuisine with a twist. For example, the black pudding, from Uist, is made with lamb's blood instead of the usual pig's blood. The wholly organic ingredients

make a real difference to traditional favourites. The sirloin steak is tender and flavoursome, with superb homemade chunky chips. The sticky toffee pudding is heaven on a plate: a moist, light sponge with a generous amount of toffee sauce mixing happily with the accompanying vanilla ice-cream.

The restaurant serves lunches, dinners, English breakfasts and afternoon teas. There are vegetarian and gluten-free menu choices and the lactose-intolerant are also catered for, with soya and rice milk available.

Joan herself trained as a chef, but prefers to work front of house. She and waitress Elizabeth work hard to ensure all the diners are happy. Asked to sum up Lavender Lady, Joan says, "The whole place is about passion, caring and homeliness".



## Finchley in the frame

**This study of Cherry Tree (above) is one of the paintings on show at an exhibition at the Old White Lion pub.**

Painter and illustrator Cristina Rinaldi-Ward is showing a number of her paintings inspired by sights in East Finchley and North Finchley.

Cristina is a well-established illustrator of children's books, who moved to East Finchley a year ago after living in Japan for two years, where she studied traditional Japanese painting.

She is a member of the East Finchley Open art group and had her first painting exhibition at the Old Truman Brewery in East London soon after arriving in Britain.

Cristina's paintings will be on show at the Old White Lion, next to the Tube station, throughout February.



Cristina Rinaldi-Ward

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## Regular Events

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- ❖ **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** - 6 & 20 Feb 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.

# When Finchley went to Narnia

By Daphne Chamberlain  
**"We're from Finchley," say the Pevensie children in the new Disney film *The Chronicles of Narnia*. "Oh yes? Since when?" say filmgoers who have read C.S.Lewis's original book *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Did someone making the film simply decide that Finchley sounded solid and conventional, or could there be another reason for mentioning it?**

Truro resident Pete Mitchell, who spent his formative years in Finchley (1946-64), has come up with a possible answer. As he says, it's a convoluted connection, but here goes.

#### Wedding bells

Douglas Gresham, co-producer of the film, is a son of Joy Davidman, who became author C.S.Lewis's wife (remember the film *Shadowlands*?) The Lewises had gone through a civil ceremony in 1956 to keep Joy, an American citizen, in England. She was dying of cancer, but the local bishop would not sanction a religious ceremony because she had been divorced. The problem was solved by the Rev. Peter Bide, a friend and former student of C.S.Lewis, who was then a vicar in Sussex, outside the Bishop of Oxford's jurisdiction. So, after a laying on of hands, he went ahead with the Christian wedding service in 1957. Miraculously, Joy survived another three years.



Pete Mitchell, Truro reader, originally from Finchley.

#### Finchley connection

The Rev. Peter Bide had lived in Stanhope Avenue, N3, in the 1940s and his mother-in-law helped finance the setting up of a nursery school in the Baptist Church Hall in Stanhope Avenue (opposite Avenue House). It was run by a co-operative of mothers, including our informant Pete Mitchell's mother, Mary.

So could Peter Bide, the vicar who helped the Lewises, be the reason for Finchley's celluloid fame?

## Life in the Blitz

**Experienced London guide Brenda Cole will give an illustrated talk on London during the Blitz at Avenue House, East End Road on Thursday 23 February at 2.30pm.**

Brenda, a member of the City of London Guide Lecturers Association, will describe how the City of London and its people prepared for and survived the damage done by enemy bombers between 1939 and 1945.

The talk is being hosted by The Finchley Society but is open to non-members and entry is free.

## New venue for a night out

By Craig Johnson  
**Buried beneath the ancient paving stones of Muswell Hill Broadway, a new subterranean nightclub has thrown open its doors to clubbers.**

Uwish Club is aimed at the gay crowd and sits side by side with the other dozen or so bars of Muswell Hill offering a funky hard house selection from DJ and manager Val.

The décor is both lustrous and comfortingly familiar, a throwback to the glamour days of London's club land, with a warren of massively-mirrored walls, psychedelic lasers and LCD screens.

Drink deals are ensuring

the popularity of Wednesday Karaoke with DJ Dan and Thursday's quiz nights with Richie from Sky TV. Other nights to catch are Friday's Old Skool Disco and Saturday's House Party with resident DJ UWish.

#### Going underground

But Sunday is the night to visit if you want to soak up the vibes from 8pm to 3am. At the end of a night in this beat bunker you can return to the surface of the suburban streets.

Uwish manager Val says, "We are the first gay club in the area, so come and support us!" Doors are open Sunday to Thursday from 8pm-3am and on Friday and Saturday from 8pm-4am.

For more information, visit [www.clubuwish.com](http://www.clubuwish.com).

## Narnia gets cold shoulder at Phoenix

By Lucy Chamberlain  
***The Chronicles of Narnia* has been a worldwide smash but it failed to set the Phoenix Cinema box office alight.**

All of the Christmas Narnia workshops there for children to make costumes and paint masks were cancelled due to lack of interest.

The film too, which was given rave reviews and had high turnouts at local multiplex cinemas, only attracted mediocre numbers at the Phoenix.

Did CS Lewis's magical tale of four children from Finchley who have adventures in the land of Narnia merit no greater support from their native suburb?

The Saturday morning Kids' Club at the High Road cinema has also been suffering poor turnouts recently and its future is being considered.

Staff suspect a lack of publicity since the departure of two education officers earlier last year has led to a drop in the number of children attending, coupled with the Phoenix's image as an independent venue, predominantly playing repertory rather than mainstream films.

A member of staff, who wished to remain anonymous, said: "From responses we did get to the Narnia workshop, the price (£30 per workshop, including film and a snack) seemed to be a problem. I suppose people are spending a lot of money at that time of year anyway."

## Charity jazz evening

**Finchley Rotary Club is hosting a jazz evening on Saturday 25 February to raise funds for a play park for Oak Lodge Special School.**

The entertainment will be provided by Just the Job Jazz and there will be plenty of turkey, ham, and cheese to eat, plus a vegetarian option if preferred.

The venue is St Mary's Church Hall in Hendon Lane, N3, at 7.30pm. Entry is by ticket only at £15, including supper with dessert. To reserve a place, contact Trevor Williams on 020 8446 3797.

## What's On...

E-mail your listings to [the-archer@lineone.net](mailto:the-archer@lineone.net)

#### Thursday 9 February

The Finchley Society presents a talk on how to research your favourite spot in Finchley by Oliver Natelson at Avenue House, East End Road, at 8pm. The talk is open to non-members and entry is free.

#### Sunday 12 February

Live music at East Finchley Methodist Church, High Road, 8pm: Paraguayan harpist Kike Pedersen plays Latin American, international, classical jazz and Paraguayan music. Admission is free. Collection in aid of the Anglo Paraguayan Society, raising money for needy families in Paraguay. Full disabled access.

#### Wednesday 22 February

Talk by Claire Goodburn, community fundraiser for the Treehouse Trust, celebrating its first anniversary in Woodside Avenue. The trust is hoping to establish a national centre for autism education. Muswell Hill Bowling Club, King's Avenue, N10 at 8pm. Coffee and biscuits provided.

#### Thursday 23 February

Blitz! London during World War Two, an illustrated talk to The Finchley Society by Brenda Cole at Avenue House, East End Road at 2.30pm. Non-members are welcome and entry is free.

#### Saturday 25 February

Charity jazz evening hosted by Finchley's Rotary Club to raise funds for a play park for Oak Lodge Special School. The entertainment will be provided by Just the Job Jazz at St Mary's Church Hall, Hendon Lane, N3 at 7.30pm. Entry is by ticket only - £15.00 including two-course meal - from Trevor Williams on 020 8446 3797.

## 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



Letters to the editor

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page", The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA or e-mail the-archer@lineone.net. Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be reviewed or printed. Contact details can be withheld, however, at publication.

**A girl called Carling**

Dear Editor,  
I enjoyed Ricky Savage's article, Boys named Sue, in your December edition, but I wonder if he's been told yet that one of his fantasies has already come true.

He wrote: "Heaven help the poor child saddled with a name like Gewurtstraminer. I'd pity that kid as much as I'd pity one called Special Brew or Carling".

Well, there was a very good Canadian woman tennis player (I think in the 1990s) called Carling. She was actually from the brewery family. I've forgotten her surname, but maybe someone else out there might remember.

Yours sincerely,  
Valerie Leslie,  
High Road, N2.

**An open letter from the East Finchley Library Users' Group**

We set up our group last year to keep an eye on the well-being of our library, and to ensure we were ready to act if and when it comes under threat. Now is one of those times.

At its draft budget meeting on 20 December, Barnet Council proposed severe cuts to the service at East Finchley Library. In the wake of local resistance against moving our library into a supermarket building, East Finchley is the only community in Barnet whose library is being subjected to such cuts.

Two members of staff (out of a current eight) will be lost. The library will close for an hour at lunchtime and lose one late night a week. This will save the Council £57,000.

It is also proposing to change our branch from a Town Centre Library to a Community Library. There are three categories of library in Barnet: Main, Town Centre and Community, which includes the smallest libraries. The categories are supposed to be determined by usage, and by the area they cover. It is likely that Community Libraries will be the most vulnerable to future cuts.

Last year, Totteridge library was shut down and there was a range of swingeing borough-wide cuts. These included eradication of 20 front-line posts, halving the Mobile Library service, and cutting the books/media budget by £59,000.

This year the Council proposes to cut the borough's media budget by £200,000. That means £200,000 less on books, music, DVD and so on, the very things that libraries should be filled with.

These cuts are not yet final, but we do not have much time to fight them, because the Council will formalise their budget at a meeting in early March.

Letter writing is not a glamorous campaigning activity, but it really does make a difference in sufficient quantities. So, if you care about our library, please write or e-mail the following people, expressing your concerns about the proposed cuts to East Finchley alone, as well as the borough-wide assault on the library service:

Brian Salinger, Leader of Barnet Council, 32 The Ridgeway, N11 3LJ; e-mail cllr.b.salinger@barnet.gov.uk or John Marshall, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, 66 Sandringham Gardens, N12 0PJ; e-mail cllr.j.marshall@barnet.gov.uk.

Please copy your letter to us at pollynapper@btinternet.com, or by post to Flat 2, Elmhurst Court, Elmhurst Avenue, N2 0LU.

We don't have long to act. Please write immediately if you can.

Adam Gee and Polly Napper,  
East Finchley Library Users' Group.

**Fill our empty shops**

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the recent reports in THE ARCHER on the closure of Barclays Bank and changes to Bar XL (December 2005 and January 2006). I've lived in East Finchley for nearly 12 years and seen many changes on the High Road in that time but I never like to see empty shops.

It is to be hoped that a prominent site like Barclays will not stay out of use for long. I'm sure it would be the perfect premises for a new eatery or bar, or how about a new clothes shop to complement the excellent new Lazooli a bit further down?

Meanwhile, up the other end of the High Road, there are a number of unused shops and it's starting to look a bit sorry for itself. The old pharmacy, the former PA Music and the Indian sweet shop have all gone and their shutters are up. Let's hope some bright businessmen or women come along soon to breathe some life back into the top end of the shopping parade.

Yours faithfully,  
Sophie Warrell,  
Creighton Avenue, N2.

**Tube travellers deserve the truth**

Dear Editor,

One thing that spoils living in East Finchley is the dreadful Northern Line. It would be enough to make me move elsewhere, were it not for the high level of civilised behaviour of passengers who bear it all with traditional British reserve.

No matter what cancellations, level of service, misinformation, and disinformation we glumly look to that happy day when we have a regular, rapid, and reliable service. It will probably never come in my lifetime, but in the meantime we have a right to accurate and meaningful information.

Broadcasts and scribbled notes on white boards talk of "minor delays", "severe delays", "good service", but these rarely bear any relation to what's happening on the ground. I wrote to Transport for London suggesting that they at least tell us what percentage of trains are running, for example, 75%, 30%.

But their spokesman was having none of it. I quote the complacent reply: "We've found that the phrase that works best to describe a line where there are no specific delays or disruptions is 'good service'. When staff used the phrase 'normal service' we noticed that customers were commenting wryly that normal means delays!" Too right! We simply don't believe you.

Yesterday evening, I was left hanging about in a packed herd on the platform at Camden Town because trains were terminating at Archway and no-one else could get on the full-to-bursting waiting train. A barely-audible platform announcement was saying that trains were stuck in tunnels and that trains were being held at platforms.

But the electronic display was

happily telling us that more trains were due in minutes. Goodness knows how deaf travellers and those who aren't fluent English speakers were to know what on earth was happening and what to do.

Come on! Give us information that is regular, rapid, and reliable, while we wait for the trains to be so.

Yours faithfully,  
Roger Beeson  
Bedford Road, N2.

**Here is the full text of the reply Mr Beeson received from Transport for London to his letter of complaint.**

Dear Mr Beeson,  
Thank you for writing to us about announcements on the Tube. I do understand your frustration at hearing this when there clearly are delays. For some years we've been putting up messages on white boards to tell people about disruptions to our service.

We've found that the phrase that works best to describe a line where there are no specific delays or disruptions is 'good service'. When staff used the phrase 'normal service' we noticed that customers were commenting wryly that normal means delays! We feel that 'good service' communicates the positive message that trains on that particular line will get you where you want to go smoothly and efficiently.

As a regular user of the Tube myself, I know we've still got some way to go before we can claim our service is perfect, but it can still be good. Please contact me again if you need any help in the future.

Yours sincerely,  
Ray Shanahan, Customer Service Advisor, Customer Service Centre

**Where can young people go now?**

Dear Editor,

Barnet Council saw fit last year to close the Herbert Wilmot Youth Centre here in East Finchley. I chaired the management committee of the centre for a number of years and deeply resent this decision.

It cannot come as a surprise that groups of young people now gather on this and other streets with nothing to do and that their high-spirited behaviour annoys older residents.

A first resolution for the council in 2006 should be to provide proper facilities for young people in East Finchley.

John Davies  
Manor Park Road, N2

**Thanks for the donation**

East Finchley resident John O'Sullivan (Harley John) would like to thank the anonymous person who gave him some money following the story in THE ARCHER reporting on his problems with his drag bike. However, John no longer has the bike so would like to return this generous donation. Please could this kind person contact him again or get in touch via THE ARCHER.

**Adverts shouldn't grow on trees**

Dear Editor,

I regularly walk my dog (and my children) around the streets of East Finchley and I've noticed a new blot on the landscape.

Pinned to the trunks of some lovely old trees along my way are a blizzard of advertising messages. Some are postcard-size, others are A4, some in plastic covers, advertising all manner of businesses. One poor tree on Long Lane had three adverts nailed and pinned to it: one for gardening services, one for a man and a van, and the other for a miracle 'get-rich-quick' kind of scheme.

What gets me is that these adverts were plastered over a tree that stands just across the road from a newsagent's window where these messages more properly belong. Goodness knows, there is little enough natural beauty left in our urban environment without our lovely trees becoming advertising hoardings.

Of course, tree trunks are fine places to put a notice if you've lost a much-loved pet but if businesses cannot afford the few pounds it takes to advertise in a local paper or in a shop window then they have no right to blight nature in this way.

So just as they've obviously asked no one if it's ok to pin the adverts up I'm not thinking twice before I take them down as I pass by. Then they end up where they belong - in the bin.

Yours,  
Phil Soper  
Long Lane, N2

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**KALASHNIKOV KULTUR**  
By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

**Scraping barrels**

Whenever February comes around you just know you've survived the insult to intelligence that is the first celeb show of the year. I mean, the celeb calendar is split into two parts, one part for celebs like Madonna, the other for the barrel-scrapings that turn up on things like I'm A Nonentity, Save My Career, or has-been Big Brother.

I'd pay bad money to see real celebs like Kate Moss or Paul McCartney publicly humiliate themselves, but you don't get celebs, you get the Z list of failures, nutters and has-beens, which is why I'm not there.

They asked me. They said they wanted something surreal, they wanted someone like me because when the going gets tough, the weird turn pro and I do weird. Then they told me which has-beens and nonentities had been invited to revive their non-existent careers, and that was when I said no.

When my old mate John Lydon humiliated himself in front of Ant'n'Dec'n'Dec'n'Ant in the jungle I thought it was a whole new low, but when I saw the convict list for Big Brother I knew that John had been doing seriously high art.

This year's collective started with Michael 'where's the pool' Barrymore, followed by a former lover of Madonna, a fly larva and a town in Lancashire, and that's just the blokes. Pete Burns doesn't count as a bloke, he's the halfway house between the men and the women: someone who once had a fling with Sven, the girl who took the glam out of glamour, a Baywatched babe and someone who used to be a rock folly. Just for fun they were sticking in a wannabee from Essex called Basildon Travelodge and they wanted me to make up the numbers.

I was almost tempted by the cash, but I wasn't tempted by the chance to have the embalmed remains of Jimmy Saville turn up. What little artistic integrity I have left deserves more than that. Hell, I'd have done it if the rest of the crew included Pete Doherty, or Germaine Greer, but three weeks with the remains of a faded career was just too much.

So I told them to get someone desperate, someone who needs the publicity, someone who'll make an idiot of themselves and dream of a trip back onto TV. And what did they do, they got someone who confused politics with publicity, they got George Galloway. Oh dear...



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No worries...Pete with his didgeridoo.  
Photo by Erini Rodis

## Lessons from Down Under

By Diana Cormack

A study by Swiss researchers recently published in the online edition of the *British Medical Journal* found that learning to play the didgeridoo can help people with snoring problems and moderate sleep apnoea syndrome. Playing the instrument over a four-month trial period improved their sleep situation (and no doubt that of their sleeping partners).

If your life is being blighted by such a disorder, the good news is that you don't have to splash out on an expensive plane ticket to try the cure. Didgeridoo lessons are available in East Finchley!

Pete Eldred comes from Brisbane but has been living in Strawberry Vale for the past four months and working as a landscape gardener. In Australia Pete is mostly involved in ecology,

but he has had an interest in the didgeridoo since childhood. As a boy he was taught to play the instrument by an Aboriginal friend and he can tell you a great deal about its history and the many beliefs associated with it. He has taught all ages and nationalities since 1999. As well as performing gigs, Pete has done occasional busking on the two didgeridoos he brought with him from Queensland.

### Better breathing

Pete agrees with the Swiss scientists' theory and told *THE ARCHER* he believes it can also help with asthmatic problems. "It opens up your airways, teaches you to breathe and helps to increase your lung capacity," he said.

Once you have mastered the circular breathing, Pete says, the didgeridoo is one of the easiest instruments to learn because there are no rules and it all depends on how you use your lips, tongue and cheeks. But you won't need to buy your own didgeridoo to learn to play. Pete recommends a visit to your local builders' merchant for a piece of plastic piping.

If you are interested in learning or listening to the didgeridoo, you can contact Pete on 0772 206 4107

## Rockin' to the Barnet Beat

Over the last six decades, a multitude of stars of modern music have either lived in or struck a connection with the borough of Barnet, and Church Farmhouse Museum is planning an exhibition to remember them in the summer of 2006.

Musicians including The Kinks, the Bee Gees, Spice Girls, Oasis and Peter Green have all at some point had links with the borough. Venues such as the former Torrington pub in North Finchley played host to bands including The Stranglers and Eddie & the Hot Rods in the early days of punk, while the LMS pub in Hendon was home to Psychobilly bands like the Meteors in the late 1980s.

Staff at Church Farmhouse Museum, in Greyhound Hill, Hendon, are eager to hear residents' memories and borrow memorabilia, to bring alive Barnet's vibrant musical past. The museum is also planning to use its garden space to fill the air with live music from local bands, new and old.

If you have old ticket stubs, photographs, autographs or any other items of interest, or are a member of a Barnet-based band which would like some involvement in the exhibition, contact museum curator Gerrard Roots on 020 8203 0130 or e-mail gerrard.roots@barnet.gov.uk.

Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council, said: "This exhibition will showcase the rich cultural heritage that Barnet has, as well as looking to the future with some of the borough's best up-and-coming acts performing in Church Farmhouse Museum gardens. I urge residents to dig through their old memorabilia and get in touch with us."

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