



Taming the wild wood

By Ann Bronkhorst

At last the 'regeneration' of Coldfall Wood (first reported in *THE ARCHER*, November 2004) seems not only possible, but probable. The mayor of Haringey's press office has issued a press statement confirming the success of the application for Heritage Lottery funding.

Last month, the Friends of the wood and playing fields heard encouraging details of how the money will be used from Haringey Conservation Officer Nich Michael.

The almost invisible woodland paths are to be resurfaced by Transco and the gate by the Transco site will be widened to provide access for the disabled. A broken bridge will be replaced and some railings repaired. A new picnic table and six benches will appear and a nature trail will be established supported by leaflets and information boards.

Visitors may appreciate dry feet, better access and somewhere to sit, but what about the wood as a natural environment? Overgrown branches will be cut back and coppicing will continue as a way of managing the trees and letting in light. The long-standing problem of flooding in the wood will be addressed and the unsavoury

water outfall area tidied up. There are imaginative suggestions for the stream itself, involving dams, clay pools, a reedbed and aquatic plants.

Have your say

The Friends clean up litter in the wood regularly and have campaigned for years for its regeneration. Now they and Nich Michael need the ideas and involvement of all those who care about this unique remnant of ancient woodland. Look out for posters publicising a consultation meeting on 22 January at the Vampires FC (by Coppetts/Trott Road junction). Will the 'access' ideas conflict with the conservation/wildlife-habitat approach? The major works are due to start in April 2006 so not much time is left in which to influence how the money gets spent.

Further information from Haringey Conservation Officer on 020 8348 6005 or info@coldfallwood.info

Recycle your Christmas

By Sheila Armstrong

Now the seasonal bean feast is over, think green and recycle your packaging, cards and trees.

The Royal Mail delivers around one billion Christmas cards and parcels. Cards must not go in the black boxes for kerbside collection. They are recyclable from 2-31 January at WH Smith and Tesco, your local library or the recycling centre at Summers Lane in the special bins provided. Funds raised will go to the Woodlands Trust, the UK's leading woodland conservation charity.

Have a cuppa

More than 17 million jars of mincemeat, pickles and condiments are bought each Christmas. Empty jars can be put in the black boxes or glass recycling bins, as can all your cans. If all the jars were recycled it would save enough energy to boil water for 60 million cups of tea.

And all that wrapping paper, 83 sq km of it, can go in the black box too; but that means just paper and not metal or foil-based wrappings or ribbon.

Back to the earth

At least five million Christmas trees are bought each year. If you are part of the Green Garden Waste Collection Service you can leave them outside on your collection day. Summers Lane will also take trees and they will all be made into organic compost/mulch. Roads having a block cleanse in January or February will have green garden waste containers for the trees.

Barnet Recycling has reminded *THE ARCHER* that the new edition of Yellow Pages was due out in December and that old copies can also go in the black box.

Finally, a plea from our local charity shops who are inundated with an enormous number of donations in the post-Christmas clear out. They do not always have room for all donations given at this time of year so please be patient and stagger your donations over January and February.

For further information e-mail recycling@barnet.gov.uk or call 020 8359 7400.

Seen and heard...

Hay

Trundling down the High Road at the end of November was an open cart stacked with bales of hay. A journey back into time – or maybe just to one of the Christmas ice-rinks?



Bernhard Herzberg. Photo by Ann Bronkhorst

The oldest student in England

By Ann Bronkhorst

A lifetime of questioning, arguing and travelling has shaped Bernhard Herzberg but not settled him down. He has worked in Europe, Canada, the USA, Africa and the UK, written memoirs, stories, articles and theses, and now, at 96 the oldest student in England, he is still, intellectually, on the move.

Bernhard is tackling his second Master's degree course. He began taking university degrees in his 80s, first a BA in German language and literature followed last year by an MA in Refugee studies, and now an MA course in African Economics and Literature at

SOAS, University of London. His life-story explains why he has felt drawn to these subjects.

As a young Jew in Hanover in the 1920s Bernhard witnessed growing anti-semitism and his parents' refusal to recognise its implications. "I anticipated correctly what would happen," he says. He emigrated to South Africa in 1933, returning to Europe a decade later to fight against the Nazis. Now, he says, "the land of my birth exercises a great pull." He has made German friends and given talks in German schools about the Nazi period.

Bernhard spent 60 years in South Africa, and travelled throughout Africa. Having arrived virtually penniless he

worked for, and eventually managed, several chemical and pharmaceutical companies. He was also an active trade unionist and a persistent opponent of 'apartheid' (the racist system of government which collapsed in the late-1980s). Poverty and exploitation still anger him.

At 96, Bernhard finds it tiring to travel from East Finchley to the University and between its various buildings. He seems undaunted, however, by having to produce several essays of 2,000 or 3,000 words, and finds his fellow students quite welcoming. Perhaps they are a little in awe of someone who is the oldest student in England and whose personal experience gives him a unique perspective on the world.

Let there be lights

The dispute between East Finchley traders and Barnet Council that threatened to rob the High Road of its Christmas lights was solved after an anonymous donor stepped forward.

We reported last month how shopkeepers in the High Road were being told by the council that they could not have their festive displays without paying £750 for the cost of installing and storing them. The traders claimed they were not aware of the charge in advance.

But the lights were switched on after an anonymous donor came forward with the money to pay the council bill.

East Finchley Traders' Association spokesman Dino Loizou, of East Finchley Electricals, thanked the donor and said: "We weren't told about the charge until it was too late. This year, we'll make sure we're prepared well in advance."

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