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Sculptor plants Tree of Life

By Sheila Armstrong

Everybody needs good neighbours, or so the song goes. Kevin McKellar, headteacher at Hendon School, has a good neighbour in prize-winning construction designer and East Finchley resident Melvyn Friend. Melvyn has recently collaborated with the school and other art professionals to create a focal point for the school.

Pupils asked the head if they could have something to improve "the climate for learning and the environment", pointing out that all great places for learning are beautiful places to be.

One lucky deputy head was dispatched to Finland, known for its striking architecture and contemplative spaces - think Alvar Aalto - to look at schools there. The Finns place great importance on the positive contribution of the environment to learning and most pupils there stay on for A levels.

Team work

At about the same time Melvyn Friend and his son Kit, artist-in-residence at Hendon, came on board, fusing ideas about improving the school courtyard, incorporating research done in Finland and the pupils' requests.

They suggested using the work of sculptor Mehrdad Tafreshi, using a piece from his Tree of Life series. Over the winter months this was installed in the school courtyard, and has transformed it.

Lit at night, the copper sculpture of a tree has water cascading down its leaves. Benches surround it, making it a focal point for the school and a place to meet at lunch times. Melvyn's work in putting together this project has been received positively by all. The area is well used and appreciated.

For further details, or enquiries about other creative projects, contact Melvyn Friend on 07973 719986 or melvyn_friend@hotmail.com. Mehrdad Tafreshi can be contacted on 08703 215038 or enquiries@quist.co.uk, or www.quist.co.uk.



I lava The Archer

There are times when you've just got to catch up with events in East Finchley, even if you're sitting on the slopes of New Zealand's most active volcano.

Ken Behan took time out to read *The Archer* during a visit to Mount Tongariro on New Zealand's North Island. His partner Anita Rai took the photo.

The volcano behind him is Mount Ngauruhoe, which erupted 45 times in the 20th century. Thankfully, it last blew its top in 1975 so Ken's reading was undisturbed.

Fans of *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy will recognise the volcano as the backdrop for the scenes on the slopes of Mount Doom.

The Archer needs a volunteer distributor for Fairlawn Ave, Deansway, Bancroft Ave & The Bishops Ave

Distribution takes place once a month. A typical round takes 30-45 mins to deliver. For details contact 020 8883 0433 or distribution@the-archer.co.uk

Picnic in the park?

By Diana Cormack

People living near Cherry Tree Wood have received a questionnaire from Barnet Council regarding a proposed "early evening family concert" to be held on Sunday 16 September.

Although the letter does not make it clear, the concert would follow on from the annual Muswell Hill Festival and be organised by The Hornsey Trust, who raise funds for children with cerebral palsy. They already run a successful event at the festival, where they benefit from the Hornsey Round Table organising a Donkey Derby.

Local celebrities connected with the area, such as Amy Winehouse, Maureen Lipman and Lesley Garrett, will be invited to perform. The Trust would employ a security firm to stay in the park overnight.

Effects on neighbourhood

Several residents pointed out to *THE ARCHER* that no mention is made of security and litter problems outside the park, or of parking or traffic control. They also wonder why a Haringey park could not have been used.

In the consultation Barnet Council says "your views are extremely important to us". However, some recipients doubt the level of importance because no returning envelope was provided, which may discourage people from replying.

Whilst some residents object, others feel that it is a good thing

to make more use of the park. Let *THE ARCHER* know what you think and, if you agree, tell us what sort of events you would like to be held there. Contact details are on page 2.

More help needed

Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association may be becoming a victim of its own success. Chair John Hajdu is asking for more active help from the association's 600 members. As MHFGA gets more involved in many issues, ranging from transport and planning to the environment, the committee is finding itself overburdened.

If you think you could spare a few hours to help, please contact John on 020 8883 8114 or hajdu.clarion@talk21.com.

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