



Shoes, Trainers, Sandals, Bags and Luggage

Complete Repair Service by a craftsman
Same day if required

Key Cutting

1 Manor Park Rd. N2, behind 88 Church Lane, opposite Trinity Church
Tel: 07956 329 150 Open 12-8pm (not Wednesdays)



Published by East Finchley Newspapers, P.O. Box 3699, London N2 8JA. www.the-archer.co.uk



Private Williams on his 18th birthday, wearing army body armour.

Contact says thank you

By Marian Stratton
On behalf of all of us at East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact we would like to say a big thank you to East Finchley Artists' Open for choosing us as their local charity again this year.

We received a cheque for £710 from them, the donations taken at their highly successful Winter Fair at Martins School on 19 November. This money will pay for a whole year's rental of the venue for the Traditional and Muslim Lunch Clubs. We receive no specific funding towards these costs so it is a great relief to know they will be met.

The Lunch Clubs offer an invaluable opportunity for the local elderly and the more vulnerable members of our community to meet with others and enjoy a home cooked lunch in pleasant surroundings.

Help for smokers

The next few months will be a very busy time for Contact as we have been awarded a number of small grants from the Barnet Renewal Fund for Training of Volunteers and for a Cessation of Smoking Programme for the older adult.

If you are over 55, still smoking and would like help to cut down or stop we invite you to participate in one of our workshops to be held in East Finchley in February and March. If you would like to be included please call us at Contact on 020 8444 1162 as soon as possible.

We are always looking for transport and escort volunteers as well as befrienders, so if you feel you could contribute some of your time during the week or at weekends please call us on the same number.

Youngest soldier to fight for PM and country

By Andy Shirlaw
Private Julio Williams, of Coldfall Wood estate, is just 18 and the youngest soldier in the Queen's infantry regiment, the Royal Green Jackets. He left for Iraq in December to fight for his country, wearing the new boots that he bought out of his own pocket.

The Queen is Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Green Jackets. As the youngest recruit Julio had the honour of being presented to her in September. Julio told her that he was proud to be a soldier.

After training he had to wait three months to turn 18 and be sent to the war zone, where he is one of the youngest British soldiers in Iraq. After six months in Basra he will have another six in Afghanistan. Julio likes the army and the comradeship in his unit but he has reservations about going to fight in Iraq.

He proudly showed me his uniform and body armour. He told me about the terrific weight of equipment some infantry soldiers carry as they go into battle. Then he told me about the 126 deaths the UK forces have suffered in Iraq and the hundreds of soldiers of the Princess of Wales regiment in Afghanistan

who returned injured, out of a total fighting force of 900. There is growing anger in the ranks about the level of compensation paid to injured troops. Julio said: "One soldier only got £97 compensation from the Army, after being so badly injured he became paraplegic, and is now fighting his case in court." Stories like this have led to a shortfall of 5,000 troops in the British armed forces.

Julio says British soldiers feel undervalued and poorly supported. The clothing and equipment issued to them is sometimes sub-standard.

"The US army is better supported and better equipped," he said. "My mates plan to swap some of their kit with American soldiers. They get more training and support and they have access to the internet. I had to buy my own boots as I refused to take the re-issued pair of boots."

STEWART DUNCAN

OPTICIANS, SINCE 1962

- EYE EXAMINATIONS
- DESIGNER EYEWEAR
- CONTACT LENSES
- LATE NIGHT
- DYSLEXIA CLINIC
- DVLA APPROVED
- OLD FASHIONED SERVICE

020 8883-2020

126 HIGH ROAD, EAST FINCHLEY



Stride out through London's green spaces

Walkers are being invited to sign up for the annual Big Fun Walk on Sunday 25 March to raise much-needed money for the North London Hospice. This year will be the 12th time the walk has been held.

Walkers will set off from East Finchley station from 9.30 am onwards and follow a fascinating route through London's green spaces, with a brief stretch down busy Baker Street, to finish at Westminster, a distance of just over seven miles.

There's plenty of fun along the way through Cherry Tree Wood, Highgate Wood, Parliament Hill, Belsize Park, Primrose Hill, Regent's Park, Green Park and St James' Park. Everyone enjoys the biscuit stop at Belsize Park and the picnic in Regent's Park, all laid on by the organisers. Fancy dress is optional.

Hundreds of adults and children, and some dogs, take part in the walk every year. Last year's event raised more than £150,000 for the multi-faith hospice in Woodside Park, which needs £4 million every year to meet its running costs. Only a quarter of this comes from the NHS.

You can register online at www.bigfunwalk.co.uk and download a sponsor form and check-in form, or contact the 24-hour Big Fun Walk line on 020 8202 5586, or write to Vivienne Bentley, 11 Westchester Drive, London NW4 1RD.



Walkers at the start of the 2004 Big Fun Walk. Photo by Toni Morgan

SECUREBASE

DOMESTIC COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL SECURITY

Est 1988

CCTV
Access Control

Intercom Systems

Intruder Alarms

Locks Doors

Safes Grilles



+ EMERGENCY LOCKSMITHS

WHY NOT HAVE
Your Security Problems Solved!
A FREE ALARM SURVEY



0800 279 0792

112 High Rd • East Finchley • London N2

www.securebase.co.uk