



Letters to the editor

Don't blame the black cabs

Dear Editor,

I was surprised to read the letter in the May issue regarding black cabs at the tube station (*Black cab hazard*). This in my opinion is a very selfish attitude from a car driver. The writer should try walking through the station forecourt during rush hour when all the cars are trying to drop off. Those cars are the ones that cause problems and create a possibly dangerous situation, not the cabs that are usually parked out of the way. Maybe this driver should try walking to the station. After all, it is more healthy than driving, better for the environment and means one less car on the road.

Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied

Ugly bridge is a danger

Dear Editor

I would like to change the bridge over the railway in East End Road. It is ugly, unfriendly and dangerous. The pavements are very narrow. The panels covered in graffiti should be replaced with large mesh, as used in the next three bridges to the north. How about building a pedestrian bridge on the north side?

Yours faithfully
John Findell
Prospect Place, N2

Footnote: THE ARCHER is aware that many people are worried about walking along this section of East End Road. We have publicised this concern several times, and two local people have asked at the Finchley Forum for improvements to the bridge. They suggested several solutions, and received the following response from Barnet in January 2000.

The council stated that the bridge itself belongs to London Underground, while Barnet is responsible for surface maintenance and drainage of the road and footway. Barnet's chief traffic engineer at that time said he had been told that the bridge could not be extended. Attaching a footway would mean re-locating LUL cables, which run on the outside of the bridge. LUL had already vetoed a similar proposal for the bridge at Finchley Central, because of interference to their cables.

The minimum cost of installing a separate footbridge at that time (seven years ago) would have been £200,000, and Barnet said there was "no accident justification" for that expense.

A suggestion to remove one pavement and widen the other was dismissed because it would entail expensive structural work to prevent the bridge slewing to one side.

Acknowledging that safety issues concerning the bridge had been raised a number of times, Barnet said the only option they could consider would be widening both pavements, which would obviously narrow the roadway. The official statement said there was probably no other interim solution until the bridge needs replacing, or money becomes available through a local development.

Do you have any ideas for improving the look and safety of the East End Road bridge? Please send your comments to THE ARCHER, PO Box 3699, London N28JA or email the-archer@lineone.net.

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

Phone masts are multiplying

Dear Editor,

Outside the Five Bells Public House on East End Road there are two mobile phone masts. One, the smaller one, has been there for a long time, the other, newly erected, owned by 02, is gigantic. Barnet Council turned down applications for their erection but because of some weakness in the legislation was powerless to stop the companies going ahead anyway. The council tried to negotiate with them but they just ignored them.

In this little corner of East Finchley, there are also two more applications going on: one for a mast outside Nazareth House, a hundred yards from the Five Bells, and the other in the spire of Holy Trinity Church on Church Lane. The battle against this latter mast has been going on for some time between the church and the residents. The church wants this mast so that it will gain them extra income.

The masts on the pavement outside the Five Bells are a few feet away from the garden of the pub where, particularly in summer months, families sit outside with their children to eat and drink. There are at least seven schools in the vicinity and East End Road is the regular route for children walking to their various schools. This is also a residential area with families with children.

Why do we need more and more masts? We must admit we find very useful on occasions but it has worked perfectly adequately for years. While there are questions about the safety of these masts which have never so far been answered successfully, we feel there should be safeguards against where they are placed.

Yours faithfully,
Jenny Cohen and Liz Cohen,
Talbot Avenue, N2.

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A trip back to Tudor times

Marian Bunzl gives us an update on life inside the North London Chorus. When we heard that our summer programme would include *Tudor Portraits* by Ralph Vaughan Williams we thought: doublet and hose and headless wives, what fun! But we soon discovered that the people we are singing about are much earthier and much more peculiar.

Based on 16th century poems by John Skelton, we have to portray, among others, a disreputable alehouse keeper and her questionable methods of brewing, an equally disreputable priest, and a bereaved spinster lamenting an unhealthy relationship with her recently deceased sparrow. Another interesting rehearsal period for us.

But perhaps the most interesting thing about our June concert is the venue. We are

performing at the artsdepot in Finchley. The choir will be very pampered: no more changing in a freezing crypt. There are spacious dressing rooms, with showers and full-length mirrors, hairdryers and plugs for heated rollers, and that's just for the men.

No more hard pews and craning necks for the audience. There are raked tiers and cushioned seats. For once there are plentiful loos so no more queuing for the one and only toilet.

So, never mind the music, feel the comfort, and come and see us perform this unusual and lively work. The bar is not under our control, so unfortunately we cannot repeat our offer of a free glass of wine for ARCHER readers but we will be able to renew it at Christmas.

The North London Chorus performs *Tudor Portraits* on Saturday 30 June at artsdepot, North Finchley at 7.30pm. For tickets, call the box office on 020 8369 5454.

THE ARCHER: volunteers needed

THE ARCHER is produced entirely by volunteers for the benefit of the community in East Finchley. We currently have two vacancies on our team:

Online Editor

We're looking for someone who has the skills to redesign our website www.the-archer.co.uk and to keep it up to date.

Photo Editor

We need someone who can co-ordinate the photographs submitted to us each month and prepare them for printing. Our stock of images from previous editions is also in need of organisation. Must be proficient in Photoshop or similar.

Could you give some time each month to fill one of these roles? If so, we'd love to hear from you. Come and meet our friendly team any Saturday at 11am in Maddens pub, High Road, or visit our stall at East Finchley Festival in Cherry Tree Wood on 24 June to find out more. You can also email the-archer@lineone.net or leave a message on our phone line 08717 334465 and we'll get back to you.

Cyclists wanted to prove their mettle

By Nick Bloom

Keen cyclists are invited to try some challenging rides from East Finchley on Sunday 24 June starting at The Big Chef on the High Road.

The 100km (66 miles) ride goes via Potters Bar into the rolling Hertfordshire countryside and back. Anyone can take part on any bike, tricycle, tandem or recumbent, though under-18s need parental consent. Entry in advance is £4, CTC & AUK members £3. On the line entries £5.

The 200km challenge sneaks north of the Chilterns via the Tea Rooms at Marsworth, to the top of Brill Hill with a view from the windmill of Muswell Hill. Entry in advance is £5, CTC & AUK members £4. On the line entries £7. Further information from 020 8365 3806 / 07768 354010 (nick@saddlesore.org.uk) or Bike and Run on the High Road. Download entry forms and routesheets from www.saddlesore.org.uk.

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