



First aid for children

The Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute, in its new campus at East Finchley, is pioneering a course to support the government's proposal for good quality childcare. A First Aid Course for Children and Babies is being run on two evenings from 7.30-9.30 pm on Monday 19 and Tuesday 20 March.

At a cost of £28 you can ensure that the person who looks after your child, whether parent, grand parent, child carer, au pair or nanny, is trained in life saving skills (including CPR and resuscitation) and knows how to deal with choking, unconsciousness, bleeding and fractures. Some common childhood conditions will also be covered. There will be practical work on child and baby manikins and students will be taught to use basic first aid equipment.

There are no special entry requirements, and the course is open to everybody. The Institute can also give on-going support with writing and English skills through its popular literacy and English classes. Register at 11 High Road or call Ruth Smith on 8829 4133 for more information.

High Road drama

By Francis Atkinson
At Finchley Youth Theatre in the High Road there are Tuesday and Thursday groups. The Tuesday group mixes young children with disabilities and those without. It is run by workers from Inclusive Play Opportunities Project which is a group doing many activities like this.

The group is for 8-10 year olds and runs from 4-5:30pm. It works well in giving children of every ability a chance to do drama in a good environment.

The phone number is 020 8883 9957 or you can visit at 124 High Road or e-mail at theatre@FYTheatre.org.

See next month's ARCHER for news of the Thursday Group and a performance of *Alice In Wonderland*.



Kate Grant (on the right) talks to teaching assistant Fay Jenkins, an experienced "Fifteen Minutes a Day" practitioner. Picture by Helen Drake.

Nurturing young readers

By Helen Drake

At the end of January, parents and teaching staff from Martin Infant School gathered to be trained by Kate Grant, author of *Supporting Literacy*, and the originator of the 'Fifteen Minutes a Day' reading scheme used in 340 schools throughout London.

Aimed at children who are in the earliest stages of learning to read, the 'Fifteen Minutes a Day' structured programme supports emerging literacy skills in a fun way, using a wide range of books from different publishers.

By playing the Word Card game daily, at the beginning of each session, children become familiar with seeing and writing the high frequency words they need to know to extend their reading, and gain confidence.

Acting Deputy Head Janine Waterman, who manages the scheme for the Infant School, commented: "Often I find a child only needs this 12-week intervention to boost their reading and start them on the road to fluency and a love of books. I am grateful to our wonderful team of parents and teaching assistants who, over the years, have made such a difference to so many children".

Alice Arohanson, whose youngest child currently benefits from the scheme, enthused: "My daughter looks forward to her fifteen minute session and it has become a very important part of her day; she sees it as her 'special time'. We were doing as much as we could at home but she was really struggling with her reading and becoming despondent. Since starting on the programme her confidence has increased and she is now enjoying books both at home

and at school."

To become a 'Fifteen Minutes' volunteer, contact Janine Waterman on 020 8883 1455.

If you are interested in helping slightly older children with their reading, Martin Junior School would like to hear from you. Maggie Driscoll, Head Teacher, said: "Although our English results are above the national average, all children benefit enormously from sharing books with adults, one-to-one, on a regular basis. If you have time to spare, please contact us." Phone the Junior School office on 020 8883 7404.

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Wild Youth

Hi there, welcome to teenage wasteland, welcome to the rubbish tip of life, welcome to the worst country in Europe to be young in. Welcome to teen pregnancy, binge drinking, drug-taking teenage Britain. Welcome to Asbo central, full of anti-social, depressed teenagers oozing like toxic slime across the country - and, guess what, I love it; it's what makes Britain great.

Unlike the terrifyingly polite Germans and Dutch teens with their buttock-clenching sincerity, growing up here has always been about being stropic and awkward. It's in the blood, along with booze and drugs and attitude. It's never going to appeal to number-crunching pollsters from Brussels or anywhere else because they just don't understand.

Call it rock'n'roll attitude if you like, but toxic Britain has done more for music than the rest of Europe put together. Can you think of a French rock band? Gong don't count, they just sang about teapots, and France's answer to punk, Plastique Bertrand, was Belgian. The big star in France's rock'n'roll universe is Johnny Halliday, a kind of pensioned-off Cliff Richard without the god bothering.

Germany's no better - clean streets, clean cut kids and the closest thing to rock'n'roll is a bunch of nerds fiddling with computers. And what have the Dutch contributed? Sweet nothing. The Scandinavians aren't much better, all they can offer is the squeaky cleanness of Abba and Aha and I don't call that rock'n'roll.

Britain's different, Britain's where kids spent the 50s slashing seats to the sound of Bill Haley, the 60s screaming to the Beatles and the Stones, the 70s going from glam to punk, the 80s chilling out, the 90s... Well need I go on.

Unicef may reckon that this is toxic central, but where are the Dutch version of Arctic Monkeys? Has anyone seen the German Razorlight? What's the French for Kaiser Chiefs? And has anyone ever said to some polite Euro-teen: 'I didn't fight in the war so that you could listen to that'? I think not.

Let's get real, let's get stropic, let's tell Unicef to get lost, while we get stoned and make rock'n'roll mean something. You just know it still makes sense.

Fix your fashion sense

By Viviana Lotti

Brent Cross Shopping Centre has just signed up Finchley fashion stylist Denise Pia's company, The Fashionfix, to offer a dedicated personal styling service to shoppers.

Denise (pictured), who featured in THE ARCHER's September issue, has more than 20 years' experience in fashion and will provide a complete and personalised styling service, ideal



for men and women who need advice or simply lack time to hunt for the right clothes.

Denise will research all the stores based on the client's needs and preferences, then go shopping with them, saving the client time and providing them with the perfect outfits.

The Fashionfix is offering three personal styling packages: four-hour shopping at £175, six hours at £260 and eight hours at £350. Corresponding gift vouchers are also available (valid for six months).

For further information call Denise Pia on 020 8346 1486 or mobile 0798 0408181, or visit www.thefashionfix.co.uk.

Three burials and a mystery

By Ann Bronkhorst

In the late autumn a heavy black holdall was dumped towards the western side of Coldfall Wood. No surprise there: people drop and dump litter constantly. Then some brave soul investigated, partially opening the holdall and revealing a dead black dog.

Haringey Council was told and local people understood that the dog would be buried in situ or removed as 'clinical waste'. The holdall and its contents remained above ground for several weeks, however, naturally attracting the attentions of foxes, flies and passing dogs.

After two unsuccessful shallow burials and re-appearances the poor dog was finally buried deep enough. Logs were piled on top of its grave to deter the

foxes. The sad little episode was over.

It leaves several questions, however. Whose dog was it, and how did it die? Why wasn't it buried properly or taken to a vet for disposal? Who was so callous about the dog, and so impervious to the feelings of people walking in the wood?

And how quickly and effectively would Haringey have dealt with such a health hazard if it had happened in, say, July?

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ANIMAL AID AND ADVICE
48 HIGH ROAD EAST FINCHLEY
OR PHONE 7607 1723

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Cree Godfrey Wood Solicitors

Commissioners for Oaths

Hours: 9.30am to 5.30pm.

email: admin@creegodfreyandwood.co.uk

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Tel: 020 8883 9414 / 9496 / 0989

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