



Esther Copperman (left). Photograph courtesy Harriet Copperman

Woman dies after accident

A woman pedestrian has died after being involved in an accident with a motorcycle at the junction of the High Road and Fortis Green.

Esther Copperman, 93, from East Finchley, was in collision with a red Ducati motorcycle as she crossed the road at about 11.50am on 5 March.

She was taken to the Royal Free Hospital with a head injury and was discharged six days later but sadly died at home the following day. A post mortem held on 13 March gave her head injury as the cause of her death.

The male driver of the motorcycle, aged 37, received minor injuries in

the accident and did not require hospital treatment. Anyone who witnessed the collision is asked to call the collision investigation unit at Alperton on 020 8998 5319.

Contracts exchanged on the future of Park House

By Janet Maitland

Another chapter in the controversial history of Park House has begun. Contracts were exchanged in February between Barnet Council and Cathedral (East Finchley) LTD for the purchase of the site opposite East Finchley tube station.

The freehold includes the narrow strip of land between the boundary of the site and the boundary of Cherry Tree Wood, which currently provides pedestrian access from the High Road to Brompton Grove.

Barnet first agreed to offer Park House for sale back in January 2004. In 2005, local protests led to the withdrawing

of proposals from a developer to build a superstore with parking on the site, including adjoining land up to Baronsmere Road.

At one point it looked as if Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute would buy Park House but they were not able to proceed with the sale and vacated the building when their temporary lease expired last August. In September, Barnet agreed to accept the highest offer on the site, putting it on the market through Savills.

Mixed use scheme likely

"There are as yet no firm plans for development," said Catharine Starling, from Cathedral. "These are very early days. As soon as we do have plans, there will be a consultation with

local people."

The marketing pack for Park House includes some planning guidance for prospective buyers. "This is not binding, but prevents completely unrealistic schemes from being proposed to the Local Planning Authority," said Geoff Collins from Barnet Property Services.

The guidance states that the planners would be receptive to a "mixed use scheme, which could include residential, offices, educational or medical uses", and that a "wholly residential scheme is likely to be deemed unacceptable due to the loss of employment". It also says that a "wholesale retail use on the site is considered unlikely".

Who felt the earthquake?

When last month's earthquake rocked Britain from Scotland to Southampton, East Finchley did not escape. Though most of us either slept through it or were not in its path, THE ARCHER has heard of some locals who felt their homes shake.

So far, we have had reports from the Church Lane area of East End Road and from Cherry Tree Road. Let us know if you felt anything, and we will investigate the lie of the land.

A hawk called Barbara

By Daphne Chamberlain

There have been recent reports of an eagle in Highgate Wood, but a visiting Zoo representative said, "That's no eagle. It's a juvenile American Harris hawk." It was an easy mistake to make, though, as the 10 month-old hawk has a four-foot wingspan and could polish off a crow.

This particular hawk is called Barbara, and she belongs to a local man called Phil. By the time you read this, she may be back in her home aviary with fellow hawk Henry. Phil certainly hopes so.

He had only just bought Barbara when, at the end of October, she refused to come down from a tree in Coppetts Wood. Phil's hawk-breeder friends advised leaving her there for a few hours, but when he returned at 5am with some tempting chicken, Barbara had flown. It may be that she was frightened away by boys with fireworks.

Some time later he had a call from the Independent Bird Register, telling him about the bird in Highgate Wood. The same bird had been regularly visiting Queenswood allotments, and allotment owners were advised

not to put rat poison down. "It certainly is Barbara," Phil told us, "But she hasn't yet come to hand."

Phil, who sometimes shows hawks to the children at his wife's school in Whetstone, hopes that the lure of chicken which she has not caught herself will eventually do the trick.

There was one question I had to ask Phil. Why is she called Barbara? If you want the answer, just compare a hawk's profile with that of a very famous singing star.

How do buses shape up?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Transport for London has asked Chris Baker of West Haringey Buswatch to join an advisory panel on bus design. Chris asked East Finchley Buswatch if they had any ideas, and they came up with the following comments.

On the 263:

1) "Kamikaze" back seats are unsafe. Some of the group said they would rather stand up than sit there.

2) More seats are needed on the entry level, as many bus users are elderly and/or disabled.

3) There is a need for some kind of horizontal bar to hold, as well as the vertical ones.

4) One member thought there was not enough lower back support in the seats.

But the overall design of the 263 received a vote of confidence,

being considered much better than many other services.

On the 143:

There is generally thought to be poor access to the bell.

On the IBus system and Countdown:

A tender has recently gone out for Countdown 2. This new system will bring countdown signs up from 2,000 to 4,000, and will be used by controllers to regulate bus services.

On the 603:

London Buses say that a new contract for route 603 will be

issued in January 2009. They say they will be consulting soon about possible changes to times for this route. Local Buswatch groups expect this will mean possible minor changes and not proposals to make it a regular all-day route. The groups are restating the arguments for an all-day route, which would serve the Royal Free Hospital.

If you would like to get involved with East Finchley Buswatch, contact Hazel Burnett on 020 8444 6824 or hazel.burnett@freeuk.com.

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