



How the Phoenix Cinema will be transformed

By John Lawrence

If all goes according to plan with the Phoenix's £1 million refurbishment project, East Finchley will see its oldest entertainment attraction evolve into a venue that combines the beauty of the old with the wow factor of the new.

Chief among the new features for this 98-year-old building will be a snazzy glass-fronted café and bar area built on a first floor terrace at the front of the building in space currently occupied by offices.

The prospect excites the Phoenix's chief executive Paul Homer. "The terrace will overlook the High Road so will be a pleasant place for people to relax before or after a film," he says. "And if you're walking down the High Road from Fortis Green, you'll be on the same level as the bar. It will be a startling effect and will help to market the whole cinema."

Sensitivity to neighbours

Special sound barriers will be incorporated to ensure that no noise escapes from the new bar to neighbouring flats. This is one example of how Highgate-based architects HMDW have had to tread sensitively in this historic Grade II listed building. English Heritage have been consulted along the way.

Paul believes the project will restore the Phoenix to its glory days. He says: "The building currently looks interesting but it has seen better days and people feel sorry for it. When the work's done, it's going to be an exciting and vibrant place and people will be knocked out by it."

"It's unrealistic to think that a 1910 building can adequately serve customers in 2010. We need better food and drink facilities, for one thing. What we are doing will be in sympathy with the building. It has

been through many changes in its 98 years and this is its next evolution."

Refurbished inside and out

Inside, the auditorium will be repaired, completely relit and given a new paint scheme. The Phoenix's art deco features dating from the 1930s will be restored too and the whole of the exterior given a facelift.

The Phoenix is run as a charitable trust and Paul is calling on local people to help it reach its £280,000 fundraising target.

He says: "This is a really important project for East Finchley and for north London. The Phoenix has served the area for nearly 100 years and we try to give a lot back to the community by working with schools and other groups. We really hope people will want to do what they can to help."

You can find details about how to make a donation in our story on page 10.



Architects' drawings showing how the front (above) and side (below left) of the Phoenix could look by 2010. Courtesy Phoenix Cinema

Help restore the glory of the Phoenix

Film director backs plan
Ken Loach said: "The Phoenix is a special cinema with a special atmosphere. People's enjoyment of films is enhanced by the building itself. It is excellent news that it may be restored but it will only happen if the money is raised. Those of us who live near the Phoenix are very lucky; let's hope everyone can support this project."

Donations can be made online at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk/support/campaigns, by post to Phoenix Cinema, 52 High Road, London N2 9PJ, or by contacting Paul Homer through the box office on 020 8444 6789 or info@phoenixcinema.co.uk.

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Donations of all sizes are welcome. Gifts over £500 will be recognized on the 100 Years of the Phoenix: 1910-2010 timeline featuring the donor's name alongside their chosen year and the title of a film released that year.

Schools on the list

In August 2007, ex-Bishop Douglass pupil Mike Hughes, together with local businesses collectively known as REEF (Regeneration and Enhancement of East Finchley), launched community website east-finchley.com.

Mike has received a number of requests from schools to be listed on the site, so he is creating a new section for local schools, which will show the school logo and an introductory paragraph (60-100 words), along with a link to the school's website. Schools who would like to be listed can contact Mike at info@east-finchley.com.

Bomb victims remembered

Five residents of Abbots Gardens who were killed in a V2 rocket attack in 1944 were remembered in a special commemoration on Saturday 15 November.

Some of the area's present day residents gathered to mark the anniversary of the bombing that destroyed houses in Abbots Gardens and damaged many more in surrounding roads.

Those killed in the attack were Arthur John Fulford, aged five, Alice Helen Payton, aged 64, June Lamperd, aged 14, and Ruby Lamperd, aged 39. Florence Anne Eveleigh (age unknown) was taken to hospital after the bombing and died five weeks later.

THE ARCHER will carry a full account of the bombing and its impact on the local community next month.

Artist defends free speech

By Ann Bronkhorst

Those politicians and bankers implicated in the current financial chaos get short shrift from British cartoonists. We have a tradition of witty, even savage ridicule, but try that in some other countries and the artist, comedian or writer can end up in jail.

East Finchley artist Charles Thomson, founder of the Stuckism movement (see *THE ARCHER*, August 2008) often speaks out about politics and the art world. He and the Stuckists have campaigned for two years on behalf of fellow artist Michael Dickinson, who has been facing a charge of 'insulting the dignity' of the Turkish prime minister.

In 2006 Dickinson, who lives in Turkey, displayed a collage entitled *Good Boy* in which a dog had the head of the prime minister, a nuclear missile for a tail and a stars-and-stripes lead. Piles of banknotes underlined the artist's view of Turkey's relationship with the USA. The Turkish authorities took offence.

Charges dropped

After several court hearings Dickinson was acquitted of criminal charges at the end of September. The court decided *Good Boy* was "within the limits of criticism". Charles Thomson suggests that Turkey's hopes for membership of the European Union may have influenced this verdict. He adds: "Freedom of expression and the right to comment on political leaders are principles essential for any EU member state."

Michael Dickinson, expressing his thanks, said that without the support of Charles and the Stuckists the verdict could have been quite different: a two-year prison sentence.

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

Durham Road, East Finchley, N2

Sunday 21 December

6.30 p.m. Christmas Carol Service
followed by mulled wine and mince pies

Wednesday 24 December

3.00 p.m. Children's Service
with carols

11.30 p.m. Midnight Mass of Christmas
*with Procession of the Christ Child
and Blessing of the Crib*

Thursday 25 December

8.00 a.m. Mass of the Dawn

10.00 a.m. Mass of Christmas Day
with carols

www.allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk

DO JOIN US THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON

EAST FINCHLEY METHODIST CHURCH

197 High Road, London N2 (opp. Creighton Ave.)

www.eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk

Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 21 December, 6.30 p.m.

Christmas Day Family Service - 10.30 a.m.

tel: 020 8346 1700

e-mail: info@eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk