



YOUNG ARCHER

Saint Pancras

By Diana Cormack

After years of rebuilding work costing an enormous amount of money, the stunning station St Pancras International is now open. As the British base for the Eurostar train, its name is becoming known throughout Europe and the rest of the world. But who was Pancras and why was he made a saint?

Apparently there were two. One was from Taormina in Sicily, but the one we are interested in was from elsewhere in Italy. He was born in Phrygia around 289 AD. His mother died giving birth to him and then, when Pancras was eight, his father passed away. He was taken care of by an uncle and they moved to a villa in Rome. Here the two of them were converted to Christianity and Pancras was particularly religious.

But the Christians were being persecuted and around 303 AD Pancras was ordered by the authorities to perform a sacrifice to the Roman gods. Pancras refused. Impressed by the boy's resistance the emperor promised to give him wealth and power if he did what they wanted, but Pancras still said no. Eventually the emperor gave the order for Pancras to be beheaded. This happened on 12 May, which is now celebrated as his feast day.

Over the years various stories spread about the young martyr and how he died. Some of his relics were brought to this country and many churches were named after him. People prayed to Saint Pancras for his help against cramp, headache, false witness and perjury. He is also the patron saint of children.

Many cultures, one community

A storytelling festival in leafy Hampstead Garden Suburb brought together children with close connections to the diverse community through traditional storytelling. Hosted by The Henrietta Barnett School, the event was a huge success, drawing a total audience of over 700 adults and children.

Over 150 children from 10 local schools and youth organisations took part. The festival included stories from Africa, Asia and Europe as well as from Hindu, Jewish and Christian traditions. Brookland Infant School told an African tale called *Handa's Surprise* using colourful props, costumes, percussion music and song. Brookland Junior School told the story of Rama and Sita from the Indian epic *The Mahabharata* using choral speaking and classic storytelling techniques.

The Iranian tale *Sam and Zaal* was told by The Rustam Iranian School, which is based at Christ's College on Saturdays.

One of the most charming aspects of the festival was the fact that all the children in each group performance sat on stage together. When not performing, they were as engrossed in each performance as the audience and it was a joy to watch their faces as each tale unfolded. Jane Pendry, teacher at Brookland Junior School and one of the event organisers, explained: "When communities share their stories they discover common values and can celebrate the richness of their respective cultures. Storytelling festivals celebrate many cultures, but one inclusive community."



Rustam Iranian School performing *Sam and Zaal* from *Shamaneh*. Photographs courtesy Jane Pendry

Bishop Douglass annual residents' party

By Pamela Kent

Year 10 pupils of Bishop Douglass School held a Christmas party on 13 December for around 70 people. Residents from Nazareth House, Paul Byrne House and some from the roads around the school gathered for a fun-filled evening.

Each guest was escorted by a pupil to their seat and welcomed with a glass of wine or

soft drink. The event started with entertainment by the pupils and teachers. Christmas songs from year 7 choir were followed by excellent flute and guitar solos. Mr Foley rose to the occasion and played his guitar whilst singing a couple of festive songs, together with a rendition of 'Twas the night before Christmas'.

Pupils waited at the tables to serve a three-course Christmas dinner, which was followed by

a game of bingo. The evening ended with everyone receiving a gift from Father Christmas. Judging by the merry atmosphere and happy faces, it was all a great success and it is hoped that even more residents will attend next year.

Danger around the corner

By Ruth Brown

Last month, THE ARCHER reported that a cyclist was injured in a collision at the junction of Creighton Avenue and High Road. Parents and pupils at nearby Martin Primary School, who cross the junction every day, are campaigning for measures that force traffic to slow down.

A recent meeting of Martin School Council discussed walking to school. Some of the oldest pupils walk to school by themselves and said that crossing Creighton Avenue was sometimes frightening.

Children's experiences

Year 6 School Council member, Markha, said it was risky crossing Creighton Avenue: "You can't judge when they're going to turn, they don't always indicate."

Drivers are in too much of a hurry at this corner. "Loads of drivers don't stop to let you cross. Sometimes a driver stops and lets you pass, but then shoots off behind you while you're still crossing the road."

Barnet Council has said it will work with parents and staff at the school to improve safety at the junction if possible.

Sweet success for school fair

By Rebecca Smith

Pupils and parents at Holy Trinity School kicked off their Christmas festivities with their annual Christmas Fair. The cake stall, tombola and food stall did particularly brisk business.

The highlight of the event was a visit to Santa's Grotto. Other crowd-pullers included the 'children only' Secret Santa room, where youngsters

could make a surprise present for members of their family. The fair raised more than £2,500, which will go towards funding the school's newly updated ICT facilities.

Claire Chapman, Chair of the Holy Trinity School Association, said: "We had a fantastic afternoon with everyone enjoying themselves; it was a great way to start our Christmas celebrations."

Headteacher Tim Bowden said: "I would like to thank everyone who came to support our fair and to everyone who helped make it such a successful event."

Other events included two trips to Holy Trinity Church, one for the school's annual carol service and a second for the Christingle Service.

Parents also enjoyed the infants' nativity play *Manger Mouse*, while the juniors took part in a production of *Aladdin*.



The cake stall was a big draw
Photo by Mark Franklin

PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

Holy Trinity

The school choir sang carols for the elderly residents of Homefield at their Christmas party and also at Tesco to raise money for the North London Hospice.

A cake sale for the BBC's Children in Need appeal raised £89.

A total of 127 shoeboxes full of donated presents were sent to Operation Christmas Child.

The Christmas Fair raised around £2,600 which will be used to fund projects around the school.

Children who took part in the quiz with nine other Barnet schools held at Martin Primary did well.

Money from the School Travel Plan grant, which aims to promote travelling to school by non-motorised transport, has been used to build a playground shelter. This is for children to use in the day and for parents to wait in before and after school. Hopefully it will encourage them to walk to school with their children.

Martin Primary

A grand opening ceremony for the new Martin Primary School will be held on Thursday 31 January. This is to coincide with the 95th anniversary of the original opening in 1913.

The school hosted the regional quiz heats and did really well with their team achieving third place.

The school teams are continuing to do well. In the first rugby tournament of the season the boys lost in the final by just one try whilst the girls still have an unbroken record in their football matches. The swimming team swam extremely well in Cophthall Baths at Barnet's swimming gala.

In the East Finchley Open Winter Arts Fair, held at the school, the PTA ran an Arts Café and raised £600.

Year 6 girls devised and ran a treasure map hunt to raise money for Marie Curie Cancer Care in memory of Lynn Cornelius, a much-loved former member of staff.

Manorside School

Hot on the heels of the violin concert of 5 December was the steel drums concert on 10 December; both were a huge success.

A team of juniors enjoyed representing the school at the Quiz hosted by Martin School. The entire school visited artsdepot to see *Fungus the Bogeyman* for the annual Christmas outing.

The Infant Concert was another great show in the Manorside tradition, and was followed by another great school tradition: end of Christmas term parties.

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East Finchley Baptist Church

Just off the High Road in Creighton Avenue N2

Sundays at 11.00 am and 6.30 pm

For more information

please contact the Church Office

Tel: 8883 1544 (Minister: Simon Dyke)

Visitors always welcome