



The photograph shows (from left to right) Gillian Palmer, John Pickering, Maggie Driscoll and Katie Dawbarn with the Martin Bird cake. Photograph courtesy Catrin Dillon.

## New school flies high

By Catrin Dillon

**The motto of the recently amalgamated Martin Primary School is "Flying High", and nowhere was that more apparent than during the school's official opening celebrations on Thursday 31 January.**

The day began with a special assembly attended by the children, staff and governors of the school. The hall looked stunning with a special display depicting the "Flying High" motto with hundreds of beautiful and imaginative birds, created by the children.

The assembly consisted of very apt and moving speeches by headteacher Maggie Driscoll, chair of governors Helen Drake and our special guest, Gillian Palmer, head of children's services for Barnet Council.

They were interspersed by rousing and enthusiastic singing by the children of a collection of songs about the school composed by music teacher Alan Gruner, teaching assistant Jade Townsend and indeed the children themselves.

Deputy head Katie Dawbarn introduced the songs, whilst deputy head John Pickering gave a fascinating overview of the school's 95 year history, including details of punishments meted out in years gone by: definitely a thing of the past to the relief of all present.

### Balloons fly high

The rain did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of the school community as they assembled in the playground to witness the release of 500 yellow and blue balloons. Great cheers accompanied the balloons as they shot into the sky, aided by strong gusts of wind.

There were parties for the children in the afternoon, including the cutting (and rapid devouring) of two enormous and delicious cakes beautifully decorated with the Martin Primary School bird, specially made by Martin School grandmother Margaret Bates.

The school has thanked Budgens for their generous donation of goodies for the children's parties, and Tony's Continental for sourcing so many delicious clementines.

Headteacher Maggie Driscoll commented: "The celebration of the new school was a very special day, an opportunity to thank our staff for a smooth transition from two schools into one, and a chance to create an enjoyable occasion that the children will remember for the rest of their lives."

## Stern teachers and hurdles in the road

*Last month, we reported that Martin Primary School is looking for people to share their memories of the school in preparation for centenary celebrations in 2013. Here, Gwendolen Dale, of Leopold Road, recalls life at the school in the 1920s and 1930s.*

**I was most interested to read about memories of the Martin School. In my day, it was named The Great North Road School and there was an infants school, a junior school and a senior school. I went there when I was five.**

My first teacher was Miss Abson, then came Miss Cooper, Miss Beaupré, Miss Moody, Miss Dollin and Miss Gillette. Somewhere along the line, I remember a Miss Franklin and a Miss Wescott, although I wasn't in their class.

During my first days in school, I remember Miss Abson teaching us the alphabet, putting a piece of paper into the shape of a pipe for the letter P. Thanks to my parents, I already knew the alphabet and could tell the time.

On my first day at school, I was seated in the front row of desks next to a boy called Charlie Euridge. When I showed him a picture of a boat I'd drawn, he said "Not bad". I remember names of several pupils I became friendly with: Peggy Adams, Molly Allen, Iris Gabriel, and one in my class called Jack Wilde.

### Teachers, stern or smiling

In the mornings, we marched into the main hall to music played on the piano by Miss Dollin. As we marched along, Miss Moody would be standing outside her classroom tapping one foot in time to the music. She always looked so stern and, regretfully, I did not enjoy being in her class when I was nine.

I can remember Miss Cooper teaching us to knit a purl stitch, saying "Put the needle through the back". Miss Beaupré was nice but stern. I can see her now with her white hair tightly drawn back into a bun.

At age 10, I was in Miss Dollin's class. I liked her very much. She smiled a lot and was a kindly soul. She wore her hair in a big plait around her head. It was in her class that I tried to master decimalisation.

I was 11 when I went into Miss Gillette's class. She was a genial lady and I remember her efforts to teach me sewing, something I have not yet mastered.

### Slave for a week

Then, in that year came the experience I did not enjoy. Each of Miss Gillette's pupils had to act as monitor for a week to Miss Piggott. I can still hear

her stentorian tone calling "MONITOR!" The poor little slave had to leave her desk in a lonely position near the stairway to rush to carry out Miss Piggott's orders. I expect she was really a nice lady but I was terrified of her.

As far as I can remember, I don't think I was too badly behaved except for throwing one pupil's cap over the wall dividing the playground from the allotments. But what a vivid memory I have of taking part in sports. I can see myself hurtling over the hurdles put out along the road running by the side of the school. 'Elf and Safety' wouldn't allow that today.

### Remembering and moving on

Whenever I go to vote at Martin Primary School now, all the memories come flooding back. It's extremely doubtful if I shall be here for the school's centenary in 2013. I am going on 88 now and shall be moving to a flat near my dear relatives in Broadstairs. This is due to a combination of age and infirmity. I have rheumatoid arthritis which puts quite a different slant on life. Yes, I shall miss my dear East Finchley where I was born and this house in which I have lived for almost 70 years. But one of the lessons life has taught me is that, in spite of emotional feelings, it is practicality which is needed if one is to survive. I am hoping to be able to arrange for *THE ARCHER* to be sent to me.

## Parakeets aplenty

***THE ARCHER* recorded parakeets in East Finchley nearly a decade ago and, according to The Finchley Society, they have been in Kenwood for nearly as long.**

The odd one or two have been spotted all round Finchley, but 15 of them have now flocked to Woodside Park, and seven to West Finchley.

## Shoppers speak out on Budgens

By Diana Cormack

**Many local Budgens stores are now owned by independent retailers working in partnership with the Budgens company. Shoppers at their High Road premises have got used to seeing the name Mulberry Enterprises at the top of till receipts. Owner Shalil Bhatessa is planning a refit to the supermarket later this year, prior to which he is seeking the views of local customers about what they would like to see there. He has commissioned a series of survey evenings involving a cross-section of shoppers.**

Organised and led by independent marketing manager Stephanie Rice the first meeting, which was held in the Institute, was attended by a representative group who were not afraid to voice their opinions, whether good, bad or ugly! It seemed that every possible related topic came under discussion. Other shops on the High Road were praised for the quality of their produce and the younger people in the group were particularly keen to see home-grown goods on offer. Crouch End's 'green' Budgens was much admired.

Obviously the High Road store has limitations because of its size, but there were suggestions of what could be got rid of to create more space and to supply what the people of East Finchley really want. If most of the group had their way, one of the first things to go would be the plastic carrier bags.

## In the Fore

**By Sheila Armstrong**  
**The Noble Sage Gallery hosted its second *In the Fore* exhibition in February featuring the same artists from South India as previously. These vibrant works are mainly abstract and show well in the gallery's attractive modern space.**

The artists, who have all exhibited extensively in India and are personally known to gallery director Jana Manuelpillai, include Achuthan Kudallar, one of the first artists to show at the Noble Sage when it opened in 2006.

At the crowded private view on 30 January there was a flash auction when three of the works were offered for sale to the highest bidders.

### All Saints' Church, Durham Road, East Finchley Church of England

Sunday masses at 8.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m.  
Weekday masses at 10.00 a.m.  
Prayer requests are gladly accepted.

The Parish has a flourishing social life.  
Contact the Vicar, Fr Christopher Hardy,  
on 020 8883 9315.

All Saints' also has a strong musical tradition and an enthusiastic choir of both adults and children.  
Experienced singers are always welcome.  
Contact Geoffrey Hanson on 020 8444 9214.

<http://www.allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk>

A friendly welcome awaits you

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