



## Matinée shocker

Graham Chambers lives within walking distance of the Phoenix Cinema but recently drove to Muswell Hill to see a film at the Odeon. As he explains, it turned out to be an expensive afternoon out.

Early last year I read *The Kite Runner* and found it absorbing, informative and rather sad. Recently I mentioned to my wife that the film of the novel was showing at the Odeon in Muswell Hill.

"Fine," she said, having been responsible for me reading the book (after her). "We'll go on Tuesday afternoon, get concessions for ancient people, put the car in the car park, tear the parking ticket in half, give the bottom half in at the cashier's desk and get the parking charge refunded."

All of the above seemed okay, and we did just that. Unknown to me our problems started when I inserted the funds into the parking machine in the Odeon car park. We received the ticket, tore off the perforated end, and presented it to the cashier's desk. A chap behind the desk passed over £1.50, and we bought two tickets for old people, then joined the other four people seated in the auditorium to see the 2.15pm showing.

The film had all the qualities of the book and we both left satisfied and happy, until we got to the car and found that it was clamped.

### Your time's up

At first I thought I had parked in a restricted area, but a swift

glance showed that was not the case. Then I realised that £1.50 did not cover the 120 minutes of the film, in fact it only covered one hour. *Mea culpa*.

However, I did wonder whether the cashier, returning £1.50 to me, had assumed that we OAPs had paid £11 for two tickets with the intention of leaving the auditorium halfway through the film? I didn't pursue this question. I have found that when you get past 70, there are a number of things that you no longer pursue.

So we had a quiet word with the manager who I think was convinced that we were not trying to rob Odeon Cinemas of £2 in parking fees. He telephoned the clamping company to release the car. He also very kindly reduced the fine from £100 to £50.

As interesting as the film was, I am not yet convinced that it was actually worth £61.00 for two tickets (concessions) and the use of the car park, particularly as the clumper only took about an hour and ten minutes to return and release the car.



Jeanette Thornton retiring as chair of East Finchley Advice Service. Photograph by Janet Maitland

## A passion for social justice

By Janet Maitland

**"If you've got money you're okay, but if not, you don't even get the things you're entitled to," declares Jeanette Thornton, who has just retired as chair of East Finchley Advice Service in Church Lane.**

Jeanette describes her motivation for voluntary work as just the need to "get out of the house." But she has a passion for social justice that must form the backbone of the Advice Service and the many other organisations she is involved in, such as Barnet Law Service and Camden Tribunal Unit.

Jeanette's voluntary work has been informed not only by her experience as a magistrate, but also by living in Malaysia for many years. This has given her an insight into what it must be like to be faced with the complexity of housing, immigration and benefits law when English is not your first language, and when "even the Income Support application form is 32 pages long".

Despite having to survive on a very tight budget, the Advice Service helped more than 3,000 people last year. Its funding from Barnet Council, the Milly

Apthorp Charitable Trust and The Lottery Fund pays for just three part-time workers. It would not survive at all without the 30 volunteers who man the centre every weekday and the 12 volunteer solicitors who run the legal advice sessions every Tuesday evening. The management committee is also entirely made up of volunteers.

As Jeanette's 20 years of service to this vital local resource comes to an end, she asked *THE ARCHER* to stress that new volunteers are always needed and that the future of the service depends on them. So if you have a few hours a month to spare, please contact the manager on 020 8444 6265. The website is [www.efas.org.uk](http://www.efas.org.uk). Full training is provided.

## Life begins in the

## Third Age

March is North London University of the Third Age Awareness Month, when members volunteer to help and welcome prospective new recruits.

If you are retired or semi-retired and would like to continue adult learning in a relaxed and easy manner, you can visit East Finchley Library on 12 March from 10am to 12 noon where members will be on hand to answer your questions.

There are more than 50 groups to choose from, including French/Italian languages, History, Bridge, Science, Handicrafts, Music, Architecture and many more. Groups also visit galleries, exhibitions and the theatre.

You do not need any kind of degree, just an interest in furthering or adding knowledge to a subject you never had time to either finish or begin. Or better still, you can share your knowledge with others, the true meaning of university.

There are no exams and no pressures, just the chance to meet like-minded men and women, and all at a very reasonable cost.

Other libraries hosting the awareness days, again from 10am to 12 noon, are: Highgate on 8 March, North Finchley on 15 March, Archway on 15 March, Muswell Hill on 15 March and Hendon on 22 March. If you cannot make these dates, phone membership secretary Barry Davis on 020 7226 7658.

## Silents, please

As part of its Silent Film series the Phoenix Cinema is offering a unique opportunity to screen your own short film. The Phoenix wants film-makers of all backgrounds, both established and aspiring, to enter its Silent Film Competition, with the winning entry being shown before a screening of Eisenstein's classic *Battleship Potemkin*, the last in the silent film series, in November.

The cinema is looking for interesting, innovative pieces of work that make the most of the silent film format. Entries can be black and white or colour, digital or film and do not have to be brand new productions. There is no need for a musical accompaniment. Films must be no longer than ten minutes in duration.

Submit your entries on DVD

format - along with clear contact details and a short biography about yourself - to Silent Film Competition, The Phoenix Cinema, 52 High Road, London, N2 9PJ, by no later than 30 June 2008.

For more information about the competition or the silent film series, please contact Mike, Katrin or Paul at The Phoenix on [marketing@phoenixcinema.co.uk](mailto:marketing@phoenixcinema.co.uk) or 020 8442 0442.

## Screen test

The Phoenix Cinema is starting a regular quiz night at The Bald Faced Stag pub, High Road, and is looking for keen film fans to build up teams and to have a 'screen off' with each other.

The quiz is hosted by renowned film writer and all round amazing film buff Ian Haydn-Smith and takes place on the third Monday of each month.

Just show up on the night with your fellow film enthusiasts to make a team. It's £5 per team with a maximum of six people per team and there will be prizes. Strictly no texting allowed!

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