



The Stones shine a light on The Phoenix

By James Luxford
The Phoenix Cinema was one of 100 cinemas chosen to take part in the biggest premiere in recent UK history with a simultaneous screening of the new Rolling Stones movie *Shine A Light*.

The film is directed by Martin Scorsese, his first film since winning a Best Direction Oscar for *The Departed*. It follows the legendary rockers as they prepare and perform a concert in New York last year.

Jack White and pop star Christina Aguilera join the band for duets and there are also archive interviews charting the band's rise to fame and status as music icons.

Shine a Light has received rave reviews, and has been met with great anticipation from lovers of both music and movies. Over 250 fans of the band packed out The Phoenix, watching live footage of the West End premiere, which was attended by a plethora of stars including the band themselves.

The audience was then shown an advanced screening of the film (over a week before its general release) at the same time as the celebrities in the West End. A real red-carpet atmosphere was brought to the independent cinema, as guests were given souvenir 'tour t-shirts' to commemorate the event.

The screening was greatly appreciated by the crowd, a mix of old and young music fans, testifying to the band's enduring popularity.

It was yet another starry night for the venue, which has seen some of the film industry's leading names join audiences, either in person or by satellite link. It also has its roots in the community, with a recent "best of 2007" double-bill being voted for by the public.

Any reader who feels strongly about any matter is invited to use this "Soapbox" column.



Please note that opinions expressed are those of the writer alone.

Don't it always seem to go?

By Jake Eiseman-Renyard
Regarding the coverage and letters about the future of Stanley Road Field within the last three years, I last played on the field in 1998, by which time it was already in a very poor state.

The gates were then padlocked for a long time. Since they took the locks off the gates, I often see people walking their dogs on the field but, until the football tournament last month, I have never seen anyone playing sport there.

Frankly, I don't blame them. I wouldn't want to play on a field so full of burnt out car and motorbike parts that it looks like the aftermath of a chase from the *Mad Max* movies, and so strewn with potholes and prickly shrubs that it is closer to resembling the open range in a cowboy thriller.

Even more ironic, however, is the site of the Wilmot Centre. For 40 years, children played inside at the various clubs and summer schemes provided. Now the temporary fencing around the site, which itself has been there so long that it has creepers growing on it, has signs stating children must not play there.

There was talk of building a new sports centre in part of the field to make up for the loss of the Wilmot Centre, in connection with the rest of the field being restored, with an access road through where the old building was.

The developers who demolished the Wilmot also spoke of an access road, but this was clearly so they could pave a potential paradise and put up a parking lot to serve a housing scheme built over the field. Some justification, they said, was that Ken Livingstone had set a housing target for each borough. Ken Livingstone also won London the 2012 Olympic bid, and there must be young hopefuls in this area who dream of being athletes. Where could they train if Stanley Field was built over?

The lost chord

By Daphne Chamberlain

If you like eating, drinking or singing, then Stokes Court is the place for you. That's according to one of the residents of this large block of sheltered accommodation beside the stationcarpark. Apparently one important ingredient is missing though, and that is a five-octave keyboard.

The residents arrange a varied programme of social events. Stokes Court has one with four octaves, but really needs one with five.

So, if anyone has a five-

octave keyboard they could either donate or sell at a reasonable price, the revellers of Stokes Court would appreciate hearing from you. Their contact number is 020 8444 1793.

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Letters

Unhomely homes

Dear Editor,

A number of new flats has appeared in Church Lane and in Elmfield Road over the last year or so. Nothing wrong with that, except that these particular flats resemble office blocks.

They have gun-metal grey paintwork, steel window frames and forbidding glass entrances. Set amongst the brick terraces and cottages of this, one of the oldest parts of East Finchley, they look totally out of place.

Did the planners bother to visit the area before giving permission for these flats to be built? I was under the impression that new buildings should at least try to fit into their surroundings. These do not.

Yours faithfully,
Julia Cooper,
Richmond Road, N2.

Park House could be police station

Dear Editor,

At the time of writing this letter, there is no news about the exact future of Park House (opposite East Finchley tube station). With concerns about the eventual closure of the police station serving Finchley and Golders Green, isn't the Park House site ideal for its relocation?

The building should be able to accommodate all the technology that, we are told, cannot be provided in the current 92-year-old police station. In addition, the site has speedy access to several of the main roads through the borough, and to the Northern Line.

I wonder what residents of East Finchley, and police now working out of the station in Finchley Road, would feel about this proposal?

Yours faithfully,
Sarah Dudley,
Durham Road, N2

Fooled again

Dear Editor,

You've done it again, you cads at *THE ARCHER* with your April Fool article (New life for Cherry Tree Wood, April 2008). My husband and I were fuming at the thought of it all, and were ready to write some very strongly worded letters of disapproval to Barnet Council. But we had a good laugh when we got to the end of the paper.

Yours faithfully,
June Randall
Edmunds Walk, N2.

What a let down

Dear Editor,

Until two months ago, there were mysterious blue hoardings surrounding a shop front next to Kokos on the High Road, plastered with question marks inviting passers-by to guess who might be moving in.

As the workforce redecorated the premises, there were no clues as to which exciting new business we might be getting in this prime location. Might it be another restaurant, an interesting new shop of some kind, or something totally new?

When the hoardings finally came down, what a disappointment: simply one of our many estate agents moving premises from a little way up the High Road. Let's hope the premises they vacated make a home for a genuinely new shop or business.

Yours faithfully,
Bernard Ashworth,
Fortis Green, N2.

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