



Major David Patch has returned from Afghanistan.

Mission accomplished

Territorial soldier Major David Patch has recently returned from his first tour of duty, a three-month deployment in Afghanistan with 256 (City of London) Field Hospital, part of the Army Medical Services.

Major Patch, 44, who lives in East Finchley, is a consultant liver specialist working at the Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead. He has been a member of the Territorial Army for just 12 months.

He spent two months at the Joint Forces UK Medical Group Hospital based in Camp Bastion in Helmand Province, working with Marines and Gurkhas. The Army Medical Services (AMS) are responsible for the care of the sick and wounded on operational duties. They treat casualties both civilian and military, and from all sides of the conflict.

Major Patch said: "The camaraderie is like nothing I have ever experienced. We had many laughs, and a few tears as

well. I came away incredibly impressed by what I saw and not a little humbled. I would very much like to deploy again."

Major Patch was kept busy and by the end of the tour was running a trauma team, whereas at the outset he had relatively little trauma experience. Other experiences included working shifts on ITU and taking part in some local medical intelligence.

Colonel Peter Gilbert, Commanding Officer of 256 (City of London) Field Hospital said: "David Patch is a medical consultant of international pre-eminence. He has made a critical contribution to the care of our soldiers in Afghanistan. He has also had a life-shaping personal experience."

For more details on the TA (Medics) visit www.army.mod.uk/256fdhosp

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Kaleidoscope of colour

Bold saturated colours and strong shapes and patterns leap out of the works of photographer David Lewis in his exhibition running at Chorak in East Finchley High Road.

Eye Balance is his name for the collection of abstract images taken from real-life subjects like deckchairs, rust, wheels and columns.

This is David's fifth solo exhibition in north London following a successful show last year on the street life of East London's Brick Lane area. He lives in Enfield.

Eye Balance is scheduled to run in East Finchley until the end of April but may also be transferred to the other Chorak in Muswell Hill.



David's photos find the patterns and lines in everyday objects.

Healing powers within

By Daphne Chamberlain
Tucked away in Fortismere Avenue, on the East Finchley / Muswell Hill borders, but running workshops and training courses for people all over London, is the Soul Therapy Centre.

Workshop organiser Christine Bachmann says their 2009 programme is open for everyone to drop in for a taster. Sessions include Dowsing (incorporating working with pendulums, auras and crystals), Feng Shui, Herbs and Healing, Communicating with Animals, GPs and Healing, and Making your Business Grow.

Healing is the key word here. Soul Therapy, co-founded by Ingrid Collins in 1996, also trains healers to an accredited standard on a part-time two-year diploma course.

The ethos at the centre is that healing should be at every level of existence. Local spiritual healer Kathryn Scorza, who works closely with Ingrid, stresses that she and fellow healers are not special people set apart. "I wish we could call ourselves channels for healing energy, but that's a bit long-winded. Everyone has this ability."

The workshops, which run monthly from April to November, are not connected with the course. Soul Therapy also runs a drop-in session at the annual Muswell Hill Festival in Cherry Tree Wood, and maintains a list of accredited therapists.

For information about the Soul Therapy centre visit www.Soul-therapy.co.uk. If you are interested in the general workshops and / or would like to be included on Christine's mailing list, contact cbachmann@googlemail.com

Raising the flag for Cherry Tree Wood

By Diana Cormack

Barnet Council has announced that Cherry Tree Wood is included in a bid to the Civic Trust for Green Flag status.

The Green Flag Award scheme began in 1996 as a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country. Seven parks in the borough already hold this award, which depends on them being well maintained, with a range of facilities. There also needs to be a comprehensive five-year management plan in place, setting out further improvements that will be made.

Money matters

In 2004 The Archer reported that Cherry Tree Wood was one of 16 parks in Barnet with Premier Park status. This meant they were eligible for more money than lower graded parks to provide such things as essential repairs and improvements. However, anything bringing about significant change depended on funding being available; as the then chairman of the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood said, no matter what the intention, it "always came down to money".

At the time of writing, money is being spent on

long-needed improvements, particularly to the paths. There is no longer a park keeper, but his vandalised hut has been refurbished and is being used for storage.

Green Flag criteria

Judges will inspect the park and meet the council's Green Space officers. Among other things, they will be looking for a welcoming place that is healthy, safe and secure. It should be clean and well maintained, with an emphasis on sustainability, paying particular attention to conservation and heritage. Community involvement must be evident, of which the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood are an obvious example.

There are still plans for the pavilion site (see *THE ARCHER* August 2008), though in its present state it has been regarded as a stumbling block to Green Flag status. Visit www.greenflagaward.org.uk to see if you think the Wood meets the necessary criteria. The Civic Trust's decision will be announced in the summer.

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