



Attempted robbery at NatWest

By Janet Maitland

Police are appealing for witnesses and information following an attempted robbery at National Westminster Bank in the High Road on Thursday 25 June.

At approximately 3.40pm two male suspects were inside the bank while a Cash-in-Transit guard was dropping off money bags. As he placed a bag into the cash box drum the suspects ran at him, assaulted him, and attempted to grab the money bag. The guard was able to turn the drum so that the bag was safe. The men fled from the premises empty handed and ran left into Beresford Road.

Suspect one is described as a black man, aged between 20-30 years, wearing a white polo shirt, brown/khaki trousers and white trainers. He was also wearing a dark coloured hat with a flap that covered his neck.

Suspect two is described as a black man, aged between 20-30 years, wearing a grey polo shirt with a red and white

horizontal stripe across it, a dark coloured baseball hat and white sunglasses.

No words were spoken during the incident and no weapons were used. There have been no arrests.

"The High Street would have been very busy at the time," said DC Dawn Bolitho of Finchley Flying Squad. "I am keen to speak to anyone who may have seen the suspects in the area before or after the incident, particularly anyone who may have seen two men of this description in Beresford Road or the surrounding area afterwards."

Anyone with information is asked to call the Incident Room on 020 8358 1751 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Creative writing for wimps

By Angela Anderson

The Institute's open day on the last Saturday of June showcased the skills of all the students with stained glass, photography, embroidery, music, singing and dance all on display.

Pieces we had written in our creative writing class were read out by actors Tom Smith and Kay Stonham, who is also our class tutor.

Last September, the title of the class, Creative Writing for Wimps, had caught my imagination. I'd always been interested in creative writing but considered myself too much of a wimp to actually do it; other classes I'd taken seemed to be full of people who had no such difficulty.

Facing that blank page

Kay, who writes for TV, radio and film, started the first class by asking about our hopes and fears, what attracted us to writing and what we found tricky about the idea, setting up an atmosphere of trust and support which enabled us to explore ideas.

This innovative class includes fun, warm-up exercises and we spend time in each class writing short pieces. We give each other positive, constructive feedback and are given imaginative ways to approach exercises on character, location, dialogue and plot. The sight of

a blank page can feel portentous but because we started writing from the first day we found we'd written something before we realised it.

The Institute has a strong community aspect. In our class we have written pieces inspired by the Archer statue at the station and the Phoenix Cinema and intend to write more about local history and local landmarks.

Check The Institute's website at www.hgsi.ac.uk. As well as the creative courses there are many others, including modern languages, business and computer skills, ESOL, Skills for Life, health and fitness, cookery and teacher training.

Dads get their own club

By John Lawrence

Calling all dads. If you find yourself at home looking after young children, perhaps while your partner is working, you may be craving some adult company during the day. Or perhaps your children are pre-schoolers and you'd like to give them a chance to mix with other kids. Either way, a new Dads' Club is getting off the ground.

It has been set up by Lydik Grynfeltt, of Leicester Road. An HR manager by profession, when he found himself out of work recently he took on the care of his two young daughters Elke and Blanche and quickly realised there weren't many social activities for men like him.

"Mums tend to meet up for chats and play sessions much more naturally than dads do," said Lydik. "My wife Harriet suggested I do something about it so I'd like to set something up with an open and friendly atmosphere for dads and kids



Join our club: Lydik Grynfeltt with Blanche (left) and Elke.

Photo by Lois Lawrence

to enjoy."

Lydik's idea is well timed in the current economic climate. In Leicester Road alone, he knows of three other dads who have lost their jobs and are now looking after their children full time.

The Dads' Club is spreading

its net wide to Muswell Hill and Highgate, and Lydik is hoping to set up a regular calendar of get-togethers, ranging from coffee and a chat, to proper outings. Find out more on his website at <http://thedadsclublondon.blogspot.com>

Community comes together for family fun day

By Girish Tailor

On Saturday 4 July, the Royal British Legion Club held a family fun day. The two organisers, Manisha Tailor and Harveen Sehra work in schools and know the benefits such an event can bring. Their aim was to strengthen community links for the benefit of locals and to promote membership of the club.

Situated in Brackenbury Road, the club has been in existence for over 50 years. It is part of The Royal British Legion, a UK charity that provides financial, social and emotional support to millions who have served and are currently serving in the Armed Forces, and their dependants.

The fun day included face-painting, games, raffle, bric-a-brac, chocolate fountain, a henna tattooist, snacks and more.

Janisha Tailor, 15, and Poonam Shah, 16, sold delicious hand-



Simaran Punni (aged 6) enjoying a samosa. Photo by Haweena Sehra.

made cakes, fruit juice, books and toys at their stall. The best friends worked from 11am to 6pm baking the 150 cakes.

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