



The chapel porch in 2003. Photo by Ann Bronkhorst

Chapel demolished

By Ann Bronkhorst

A small, derelict chapel in Islington Cemetery has been demolished and with it a little bit of local history has gone too.

The huge cemetery on the High Road, originally called St Pancras Cemetery, was opened in 1854. It greatly influenced the development of East Finchley, not least through the thriving businesses of stonemasons, funeral directors and flower sellers in the 19th century.

In 1896 a Roman Catholic section was opened, with a small chapel on Roman Road (previously Collins Road) for Roman Catholic funerals.

In recent years the building became a target for pigeons, vandals and arsonists. It was boarded up, so mourners took to leaving flowers, icons and religious pictures in the porch; finally that, too, became unsafe. Last month the disused chapel was demolished.

Not special enough

Just before demolition began, a workman stated that English Heritage was involved; this was incorrect. According to a cemetery employee, English Heritage did not consider the chapel's bricks and stonework or the stained glass window in its east wall to be worth saving. The window was offered to several other organisations, apparently, but was not special enough to interest them.

On 1 April I went to photograph the window, so there would be a record of it. It had been intact the day before but now nothing remained except shards of glass and twisted lead.

Dangerous buildings must be made safe or demolished, of course, and cemeteries need more burial space. To remove, intact, a large stained glass window would have been slow and costly. But it is sad that soon there will be no trace left of that little chapel and its window, where the bereaved sought comfort for over a century.

Local hero returns with hit film

By James Luxford

One of the most acclaimed British films of 2009 had an early showing at the Phoenix Cinema. Tom Hooper brought his new movie *The Damned United*, to the Phoenix, taking part in an exclusive Q&A after the screening.

Hooper was brought up in Finchley, and directed many of the UK's most memorable TV series, including *Cold Feet*, *Prime Suspect* and episodes of *EastEnders*, before going to Hollywood and winning award after award for his work on the Tom Hanks-produced US mini-series *John Adams*. He has also worked with Helen Mirren on *Elizabeth I*, and the Golden Globe-winning *Longford*.

Sheen plays Clough

He came back to his native turf with his new piece, the film version of the controversial book *The Damned United*, a fictional account of Brian Clough's doomed 44-day reign as manager of Leeds United.

Starring Michael Sheen (from *Frost/Nixon*) as 'old big 'ead' himself as well as *Longford* star Jim Broadbent, it's the first British film ever to be directly financed by Hollywood studio Sony Pictures International, and has already won rave reviews both for Sheen's performance and for

Hooper's skilful direction.

All profits from the event went to the Phoenix's centenary restoration project, designed to expand the potential of the cinema and take advantage of its enormous popularity with Londoners.

The plans to create a new

café and education space, whilst still maintaining the classic look of the cinema, have attracted donations from all over the industry as well as the venue's adoring public. This latest in a long line of special events looks likely to bring that dream even closer to reality.



Director Tom Hooper. Photo by Kristin Myers

Become an expert patient

By Janet Maitland

Have you got a long-term health problem such as back pain, heart disease, diabetes or asthma? If so, you might be interested in the Expert Patient Programme, run by Barnet Primary Care Trust (PCT). The aim of the course is to give people living with such conditions the chance to get greater control of their health.

The course is free, and led by people with experience of long-term health conditions. "I was so impressed by the course that it boosted my confidence," said Beverley Bond, a former participant. "I made many friends and subsequently trained to be an accredited volunteer tutor."

The course runs for two and a half hours a week for six weeks. Participants learn to manage their symptoms and to take decisions about treatment. The PCT reports that participants frequently say their symptoms are less severe by the end of the

course and that they feel more in control. This in turn gives them greater self-confidence.

Five stars

"Every time I tutor a group I'm delighted to watch the participants take control of their lives and begin to smile again. In my opinion the course is a five star experience," added Ms Bond.

Places are available on the following courses:

- Mill Hill: 7 May to 11 June, 10.30am - 1pm every Thursday
- East Barnet: 1 June to 6 July, 10.30am - 1pm every Monday
- High Barnet: 23 September to 28 October, 10.30am - 1pm every Wednesday

To find out more or to register on a course, call 020 8937 7641 or email expert.patients@barnet-pct.nhs.uk.

Former Mayor dies

Former Mayor of Barnet John Tiplady OBE, who served in the role from 1983-1984, has died.

Mr Tiplady was first elected in a by-election in 1970 and served continuously as a Conservative councillor for the former Friern Barnet Ward until he retired in 2002. He represented Barnet on the London Fire and Civil Defence Authority from 1986 to 1994 and also served as chairman of governors at Christ's College, Finchley and Oakleigh School, Whetstone.

Mr Tiplady was awarded an OBE in 1984 for his political and public service. He is survived by his daughter Marion and grandchildren.

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adidas Women's 5K Challenge - Sun 6th Sept
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