



Plea for help from mugging victim

By Janet Maitland

A woman who was mugged and badly injured while walking home has issued a warning to others and a plea for help from witnesses to the attack.

As she walked down Devon Rise, off Brim Hill, at about 6.30pm on 22 January, Patricia Leonard heard a car stop a few yards behind her and then the sound of running feet. "I didn't turn round," said Patricia. "I'd walked all the way back from Muswell Hill with heavy shopping and was concentrating on getting home. The last thing on my mind was that I was about to be mugged."

Violent attack

Her shopping bags were suddenly grabbed from behind and she fell to the pavement, breaking two bones in her left hand and tearing the tendons in her side. Her attacker snatched her handbag, ran back to his car and drove off.

"I was lying on the pavement shouting for help with all my shopping scattered everywhere, but there was no one around," said Patricia. "I couldn't call the police till I got home as my mobile was in my bag. I had my keys in my pocket, which was just as well as my driving

licence with my address on it was also in the bag."

The mugger was a tall, white, 'bulky' man wearing a green hooded top that covered most of his face. He was driving a dark coloured old estate car with roof bars that ran widthways. Patricia was wearing a hooded pale grey raincoat and black trousers.

Pocket safety

"If anyone saw what happened, please get in touch with the police," said Patricia. "The hospital now thinks I may also have broken a bone on my right side and I've been in a lot of pain. I'm going to start carrying my mobile in my pocket as well as my keys, and I'd advise everyone to do the same."

Detective Sergeant Andy Grievesaid: "This is a particularly nasty robbery where the victim sustained quite serious injuries. If you have any information about the attack, please call 0300 123 1212. If you want to remain anonymous, ring Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111."



Party entertainers: - from left: An Hongzhen, Yu Xzaohuz and Chang Yuyuan - with Mandarin teacher Wu Shu Jyun. Photo by Daphne Chamberlain.

Xin niàn kuái lé

By Daphne Chamberlain

Chinese readers, please excuse what you are about to read! If anyone, like me, automatically linked the Chinese for Happy New Year with Kung Hoi Fat Choi, that's only partly right. It's the Cantonese version. In Mandarin, it is Xin niàn kuái lé.

As I discovered at last month's New Year party at The Institute, a group of East Finchley's English speakers can manage not only this, but at least ten sentences in conversational Mandarin. They all agreed that learning this subject was a lot of fun. So was the party, which had a real family atmosphere.

The youngest guest was 15-month-old Chinese-born Leah, while some of the English students were more than 70 years older, but enjoying the mental stimulus of learning Mandarin. They have actually found it easier than expected. Using our Roman alphabet helps, but they all agreed that the humour and enthusiasm of class teacher Wu Shu Jyun has a lot to do with

it too.

Indicating the raffle prizes, Ms Wu laughed: "Everyone knows how to say two bottles of wine." Two students who visit China from time to time vouched for the success of her travel-friendly approach.

Guests enjoyed home-cooked refreshments, kicking the shuttlecock, picking up as many things as possible with

chopsticks, and demonstrations of Tai Chi, fan-dancing, and playing a traditional two-stringed bowed instrument. The tune played was one for happy occasions; the middle part sounded very Chinese, but the beginning and end reminded me of party music on an Irish fiddle, which seemed appropriate as the Year of the Tiger bounded in for this international gathering.

Festival clash with playground plans

The plans to install an adventure playground in Cherry Tree Wood that we reported in our last issue are good news for youngsters and families in the park but could create a major headache for organisers of the East Finchley Community Festival.

Barnet Council will shortly be installing new climbing and play equipment on the grass outside the current fenced-off playground. This area of land is a major entry and exit point for festival-goers and is close to the traditional site of the festival's main music stage.

Festival organisers are worried that the new playground will force a complete rethink of layout arrangements for the

event, to be held this year on Sunday 20 June. They also have concerns over health and safety if access routes are blocked.

As we went to press, festival representatives told *THE ARCHER* that efforts were being made to get an urgent meeting with council officers and councillors on site, to see if alternatives that would assist the festival could be worked out.

Firewalk for Hospice

North London Hospice is holding its first firewalk to raise funds for specialist patient care. Those with a burning ambition to firewalk can hot-foot it across five metres of smouldering coals, measuring more than 800 degrees, all in the name of charity.

The firewalk will be held at the Five Bells Pub, East End Road, N2, on Saturday 8 May. Its large garden is an ideal venue for such an event and the hospice hopes to attract dozens of walkers, along with family and friends to cheer them on.

Azey Siddiqui, community fundraiser, said: "It's fundraising with a difference and also allows those who are unable to run or cycle any distance to take part in a major fundraising event."

The brave participants will

be given an hour's motivational talk beforehand to fire them up for the walk. Spectators will be entertained by live band Metal Detectors while they wait to cheer on their friends.

Registration is £30 with no minimum sponsorship, although participants are of course encouraged to raise as much money as possible.

For further information or a registration form please contact Azey at North London Hospice on 020 8446 2288 or asiddiqui@northlondonhospice.co.uk

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