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# THE ARCHER




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CARS & COURIERS

May 2010 No. 199 **20p**  
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*A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.*

## Lifeline voluntary services face uncertain future

By Linda Sansom

**East Finchley Advice Service is busier than ever, helping up to a dozen people a day with housing, welfare benefits, consumer rights and general advice at its base in Church Lane, but there are concerns it is facing possible cuts to its budget next year.**

Ralph Palache, Chair of EFAS, explained that the service receives some money from the City Parochial Charity, and is funded until next March by Barnet Council. "After that Barnet has an overall plan for centralising everything and cutting expenditure, and they no longer want to deal with the little advice centres that exist in Barnet," he said.

"Their plan is to put everything out to tender for the whole area, and the Citizens Advice Bureau will probably be the only people who have the facility for this work, so organisations like ours will disappear."

The funding changes could also affect the work of two other voluntary groups who receive council funding and share the same building: East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact and the African Catholic Refugee Community.

EFAS was set up in 1982 by Barnet Social Services in response to increasing demand in the area for benefit and

housing advice. Under threat of closure when funding was withdrawn in 1994, it successfully applied to Barnet Council for a grant. It now has a dedicated core team of around 20 volunteers, including lawyers, outreach workers and a dentist. An employment training programme offers young people the chance to learn the basics of interview techniques, CV writing and IT skills.

Manager Ruby Joseph said: "EFAS enhances lives, and it empowers people, which ultimately helps them and their families."

A spokesman for Barnet Council said there would be no change to the East Finchley Neighbourhood Centre itself as this is a building leased by the council for community use but acknowledged that a funding review was under way.

He said: "The council is currently going through a tendering process to commission a variety of services from the voluntary sector in the borough. This includes

advice services. The council is obviously speaking to these three groups. We will continue with our current funding arrangements pending completion of that process but we obviously cannot prejudge this process."

**Rudi Vis says farewell**  
Rudi Vis, who stood down as MP for Finchley and Golders Green this month, has written to *THE ARCHER* to say farewell to the constituency he has served since 1997.

In his letter, he reveals that he is suffering from inoperable cancer. He pays tribute to his political colleagues and opponents, and movingly expresses his love for his wife and family. You can read Rudi's letter on page 11.



Mums and children campaign for a safer crossing at Creighton Avenue. Photo by Michelle Imber.

## Mothers and children walk on the safe side

By Emily Burnham

**With Walk to School Week coming up from 17-21 May, mums and children are highlighting the low priority they say is given to the safety of vulnerable pedestrians. They are particularly worried about getting to school safely along Creighton Avenue and Church Lane.**

A mum of three, the eldest attending Martin Primary School, spoke of her daily concern at the lack of a pedestrian crossing on Creighton Avenue. "Cars turning left off the High Road can't see children waiting to cross just around the corner. My son was in the road when a

car turned without indicating. I had to pull him back. How many near misses do there have to be?"

A mum of two who lives nearby has witnessed several accidents in two years. Her child attends Coldfall Primary School and she is relieved that Haringey Council has made Creighton Avenue safer further down the road.

Another mum of three, with two children at Martin Primary School, wrote to Barnet Council some years ago. She received a reply saying that "traffic flow" was the council's priority.

Church Lane is another problem with cars travelling so fast that the narrow pavements are a hazard and there is only one pedestrian crossing. It's dangerous for children to use scooters and bikes and some three-year-olds travel in pushchairs because we fear they may venture near traffic.

The mums say they and other carers work hard to make children safe, healthy and develop good habits such as being used to walking. To make Walk to School Week work all year, they are calling on Barnet to put children's lives first.

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spare time, in all weather,  
to deliver the paper for us.*

### Your contributions

If you have a story for us, please contact us at the above address.

Comments to THE ARCHER may be published unless clearly marked 'Not for publication' within the text.

### Copy deadlines

June issue: 14 May

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## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

### Councils

**Barnet Council:**  
Admin/Town Hall 020 8359 2000  
Council Tax 020 8359 2608  
Recycling & refuse 020 8359 4600  
Primary Care Trust 020 8201 4700  
Benefits Agency 020 8258 6500  
Employment Service 020 8258 3900  
**Haringey Council** 020 8489 0000

### Leisure

**Alexandra Palace** 020 8365 2121  
**East Finchley Library** 020 8359 3815  
**Muswell Hill Odeon** 0870 505 0007  
**Phoenix Cinema** 020 8444 6789  
**Warner Cinema** 020 8446 9933

### Transport

**Nat. Rail Enquiries** 0845 7484950  
**City Airport** 020 7646 0088  
**London Transport** 020 7222 1234  
**National Express** 08705 808080  
**Heathrow Airport** 0870 000 0123

### Hospitals

**Barnet General** 0845 111 4000  
**Coppetts Wood** 020 8883 9792  
**Finchley Memorial** 020 8349 7500  
**Oak Lane Clinic** 020 8349 7000  
**Royal Free** 020 7794 0500  
**St Luke's** 020 8219 1800  
**Whittington** 020 7272 3070

### Health Advice

**AIDSline** 020 8363 2141  
**Alcoholics Anonymous** 0845 7697555  
**Barnet MENCAP** 020 8203 6688  
**Cancer Support** 020 8202 2211  
**Carers' Line** 0808 808 7777  
**Drinkline** 0800 917 8282  
**Drugs Helpline** 0800 776600  
**MIND** 020 8343 5700  
**NHS Direct** 0845 4647

### OAP's Advice

**Barnet Age Concern** 020 8346 3511  
**Contact (N2)** 020 8444 1162

Help the Aged 0808 800 6565

### Crime

**Emergency** 999  
**Barnet Police** 020 8200 1212  
**Mus. Hill Police Stn.** 020 8808 1212  
**CrimeStoppers** 0800 555111  
**Victim Support** 0845 303 0900  
**East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team** 020 7161 9014

### Help & Advice

**Childline** 0800 1111  
**Disability Info Service** 020 8446 6935  
**E.F. Advice Service** 020 8444 6265  
**Gingerbread** 020 8445 4227  
**National Debt Line** 0808 808 4000  
**NSPCC** 0800 800500  
**Rape & Sexual Abuse** 020 8683 3300  
**Relate** 020 8447 8101  
**RSPCA Inspector** 0300 1234 999  
**Samaritans** 08457 909090  
**Refuge Crisis Line** 0870 599 5443



42 Church Lane, London N2 8DT.  
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### General Advice.

Monday to Friday: 10am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm - 4pm.

### Legal Advice.

Tuesdays: 7pm - 8pm.

### Councillors' Surgery.

Saturdays: 10am - 11.30am

### Community Services

❖ **Credit Union**, Green Man Community Centre 020 8883 4916  
❖ **Careers advice**, Green Man, Community Centre 020 8883 4916  
❖ **Toy library**, Muswell Hill 020 8444 0244/ 8489 8774

## Girls just want to have run

The Bobath Centre in East End Road is calling for women of all ages to take part in the Adidas Women's 5K Challenge this September. With no age restriction, mothers, grandmothers, daughters even toddlers can complete the course by either running or walking.

The charity for children with cerebral palsy is particularly keen for local schools to get involved. "It would be great if we had girls in every year group running alongside their teachers for a good cause," says Sarah Terrazas, Bobath event co-ordinator.

"East Finchley has a strong sense of community and we think that getting schools involved reinforces this. For us, it gives us an opportunity to get to know our neighbours and raise money to keep the centre open; not to mention encouraging a healthy lifestyle."

The run takes place on Sunday 5 September in Hyde Park, and the charity will offer runners free entry, a Bobath Centre t-shirt and a goody bag in exchange for a commitment to raise £65 in sponsorship.

Schools or individuals wishing to take part should contact Sarah on 020 8442 2275 or sarah@bobath.org.uk

## ARCHER: seeking volunteers

Could you help us distributing THE ARCHER? We urgently need a volunteer who can take delivery of the paper each month at home and sort it into rounds for our deliverers. You would need to have a decent-sized ground floor room for the papers to be stacked and sorted, plus a suitable space outside for the papers to be left if you are out.

The papers come in bundles of 50 and we provide round sheets with all the necessary details. Sorting into rounds takes two to three hours but does not have to be done the same evening. The next step is to phone those volunteers who collect the bagged papers from you.

## Questions over Avenue House

By Betti Blatman

There has been some concern in the community about the well-being of the Avenue House Estate. Local residents, who are passionate about keeping their beautiful park running and have a willingness to become involved to secure its future, have compiled a questionnaire.

They are asking for as many people as possible to give their thoughts on the estate. They will

then present the results of the survey to the Avenue House Estate Trust and are very willing to meet with them to discuss their suggestions.

The survey seeks to find out how often you use the grounds and what improvements you would like to see. A farmers' market, open-air films and children's activities are all put forward as possible options.

If there is sufficient interest, the organisers may start a regular newsletter to keep people up to date with developments at Avenue House.

For a copy of the questionnaire, which needs to be returned by 20 May, please email Lindy at lindykursten@hotmail.com, or leave a message with THE ARCHER on 08717 334465 and we will pass on your request.

## Planning Applications

### Barnet Council

**5 Beaumont Close, N2**  
Alteration and extension of existing garages, including first floor rear extension.

**43 Brim Hill, N2**  
Alterations to roof, including a rear dormer and a dormer to the side of the rear roof projection, and two conservation style roof lights to the front, all to facilitate a loft conversion.

**45 Brim Hill, N2**  
Single storey rear extension, including associated landscaping. Widening of existing front driveway.

**20 Church Lane, N2**  
Erection of single storey side extension, following demolition of existing garage.

**1 Deansway, N2**  
Roof extension, involving rear dormer window to facilitate loft conversion.

**54 Deansway, N2**  
Replacement of existing timber windows with new timber windows.

**8 Richmond Road, N2**  
Erection of a single storey side and rear extension and of a single storey outbuilding to the rear of the garden.



## T'ai Chi & Qigong

Wednesdays: 1.05-2.00pm  
(Trial session: £5)

at East Finchley Methodist Church, 197 High Road, N2 8AJ.  
James Drewe is a qualified teacher and has been practising t'ai chi for 34 years.  
He is Vice-Chairman of the Longfei Taijiquan Association

Other classes (Tottenham Ct. Rd., Westminster, The City): [www.taiji.co.uk](http://www.taiji.co.uk)  
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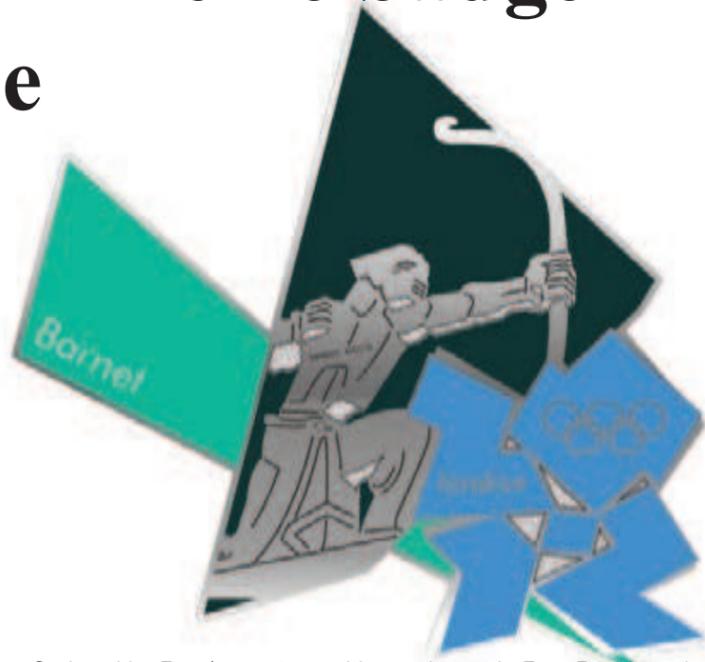


# Wear your Archie badge with pride

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) has revealed the design of the Archie metal pin badge, and it's on sale now.

Eric Aumonier's Archer statue on East Finchley station is 70 years old this year. It was chosen by public vote as Barnet's most popular landmark to be part of the Landmark London pin badge series representing every borough in London.

Sebastian Coe, Chairman of LOCOG, said: "London is a fantastically diverse city and the variety of landmarks chosen by Londoners to represent their local areas highlights this perfectly. These pin badges are a fantastic way to showcase to the UK and the rest of the world what a wonderful city London is and I am delighted to see how proud people are of their city and specific borough. I hope they will wear their pin badges with pride."



Sculpted by Eric Aumonier and located outside East Finchley tube station, the archer points his arrow to the opening of a 17.3 mile tunnel running all the way to Morden.

Other north London landmarks made into badges include Alexandra Palace for Haringey, Neasden Temple for Brent, Forty Hall for Enfield and St Pancras Station for Camden.

The Archie badge is on

sale from branches of Runner's Need (nearest shops in Camden and King's Cross), Crest of London, World Duty Free and the Museum of London. We'll keep you posted if we hear of any local stockists.

What do you think of the Archie pin badge? Tell us at [the-archer@lineone.net](mailto:the-archer@lineone.net) or The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA.

## What next for road junction?

In February's issue, we reported on Barnet Council's plans to make changes to the High Road and Fortis Green road junction in response to congestion and safety plans. Your letters to THE ARCHER raised concerns about removing the pedestrian island in Fortis Green and the bollards and railings that line the junction.

Barnet Council says it has taken these concerns into account. The pedestrian island has been retained, along with the bollards and railings. The pavement outside Domino's has been moved back to give large vehicles more space to turn left into Fortis Green and other minor changes have gone ahead as planned.

We asked the council whether it would be acting on residents' requests to consider a dedicated right turn for traffic on the High Road turning into

Fortis Green. A spokesman said this option would be investigated but gave no timeline.

Your letters also stated that the pedestrian crossing time at the junction was too short to be safe. In response, the council spokesman said: "The crossing times are calculated using the longest crossing distance at the junction, which is at the southern arm of the A1000. The time is considered adequate for this distance and the current scheme does not affect the crossing time currently allowed."

## Join us on a celebratory walk

THE ARCHER's 200th edition will be published next month. To mark this occasion we are holding a free guided walk. Instead of learning what's happening in East Finchley today from THE ARCHER, come and find out about what happened in the past. Tony Roberts, an experienced leader with a wealth of local knowledge, will be our guide.

Because of the terrain, East End developed as a series of scattered settlements. Most of these were strung out along either present-day East End Road or along the track beside the common, today known as Market Place and The Walks. Between the two were fields, and the High Road was hardly built on. The south-facing slopes along East Road became a favourite location for some fine middle class houses, while

Market Place was home to the workers that serviced the trade in and out of London.

Our walk will take us out along East End Road and return along Market Place. Old photos and maps will be used to illustrate some of the history associated with locations along the way.

The walk will start at 2pm on Sunday 13 June. Meet at the Causeway exit of East Finchley tube station.



Ken Carter's Smart car was left on bricks when thieves stole all four wheels. Photo by John Lawrence

## Lock up your wheels

Leaving your house in the morning and finding your car has a puncture is bad enough. Finding all four of its wheels have been stolen is plain aggravating.

Our music reviewer Ken Carter came out of his house in Leicester Road to find his snazzy little red Smart car had been left high and dry on two piles of bricks.

Ken said: "It was an efficient, professional job, pre-planned. They must have brought a vehicle with them containing the bricks

and to carry away the tyres and wheel-holders. No one heard anything. Even next door's dog slept through the operation."

Ken was insured and the wheels have been replaced but he is warning everyone with potentially valuable wheels, alloys particularly, to fit locking wheel nuts to deter thieves.

## Asbestos scare disrupts Fortismere

Students at Fortismere School have been facing severe disruption to their school week after building work uncovered asbestos on the premises.

Many pupils have been kept at home or asked to attend school on alternate days so that the school can accommodate attendees in the available safe areas. Priority is being given to students who are about to sit their GCSEs or A levels. AS THE ARCHER went to press, parents were being told that the disruption could continue for some weeks.

## Tea party contact

Following on from our story last month on Contact the Elderly inviting guests to take part in tea parties, please note that the correct telephone number to contact is 020 8361 6314.



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## Poetry goes before the judges

By Daphne Chamberlain  
Twyford Avenue resident Hazel McBride loves poetry. An actress with a CV covering the theatre and well-known television series, she has often given readings at charity events. However, as a trained teacher she knows that many GCSE students find it the least attractive part of their course.

School English Scene, of which she is joint organiser, aims to overcome that obstacle by inviting schools to theatre-based performances of some of the poems on their syllabus. Hazel finds young actors who work with her to bring printed words to life.

With a few props and plenty of help from each other, these three actors compete for the votes of school audiences and judges for best interpretations of individual poems.

Some poems are always going to be more popular than others, but Hazel points out instances where performance matters enormously, turning something potentially "long, boring and incomprehensible" into something electrifying. Staging matters too. "The Yeats poem *The Song of the Old Mother* was never at all popular, but this year setting it to music improved its ratings hugely."

Each school gets a follow-up booklet and a CD. Since it began in 2007, the annual Poetry Show, which is backed by GCSE examiners, has extended its tour, with the 2010 production travelling all over the country.

Hazel commented: "What we know is that students often start to like the poetry part of their course more after coming to our show, and feel more confident that they can tackle poetry." To find out more, go to [www.schoolenglishscene.co.uk](http://www.schoolenglishscene.co.uk).

## Can you help?

The Animal Aid and Advice charity shop desperately needs volunteer helpers. If you are willing and able to do unpaid work involving various duties such as sorting, pricing and selling donated goods please contact them on 020 8444 6290 or pop into the shop at 48 High Road.



## How to immobilise your mobile

By Janet Maitland

Officers from the Garden Suburb Safer Neighbourhood Team have helped over 120 young people to register their mobile phones and make them useless to thieves. PCs Carl Mercer and Matt Clew visited Christ's College Finchley, East End Road, and King Alfred's School, North End Road, NW11, at the end of March with a laptop set up to take details of the students' phones on [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com).

This ensures that, if a phone is stolen, the real owner can be retraced if it is recovered. The phone will also be immobilised immediately once it is reported as lost or stolen. Carl and Matt also gave the pupils a range of useful crime prevention tips to protect their security, and at King Alfred School, some of the younger pupils were given the chance to sit in the officers' police car.

The Garden Suburb Safer Neighbourhood Team is based

in the same building as the East Finchley team at 113 High Road, East Finchley, London, N2 8AG. If you live in Hampstead Garden Suburb and wish to contact the Garden Suburb team about any crime issues, ring 020 7161 9016 or email [GardenSuburb.snt@met.police.uk](mailto:GardenSuburb.snt@met.police.uk). If you live in East Finchley, ring 020 7161 9014 or 07887 632767, email [EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk](mailto:EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk) or talk to the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) you see on patrol.

## Traders need a fair chance

By Diana Cormack

Parking controls usually hit the headlines when people are fighting against them, but one area in the locality wants some imposed, and soon. Aylmer Parade is adjacent to the busy A1 / A1000 junction and consists mostly of ground floor businesses with residential accommodation above. The road accessing the Parade runs parallel to the A1 and parking is free for all. However, you'd be lucky to find a space and this has led to potential customer numbers dropping considerably.

Paul Caulfield, of Green Electrical Wholesalers at 31 Aylmer Parade, told *THE ARCHER* that people using the tube station leave their cars there, as do nearby residents wishing to avoid charges for parking outside their homes and some taxis waiting for the next job. To add insult to injury, it took months for a dumped, untaxed car to be removed.

### Appeals not working

Appeals to Haringey Council for a solution to the long-term parking problem have achieved little, as this year's approved programme does not contain provision for the consultation or introduction of parking measures along Aylmer Parade. However, it could be included on a list of areas for consideration in a

"stop and shop" scheme but traders are concerned that, in the present climate, businesses will close before any such scheme is launched.

Saeid Roodbari, of Surf Launderers and Dry Cleaners, told *THE ARCHER* that a service road behind the buildings was sold into private ownership several years ago and is now privately operated, with a long waiting list for expensive parking places. He would like the shop front road to have timed bays for shoppers, pick-up and delivery. Mr Roodbari is extremely concerned about the suffering businesses and is very disappointed at the lack of response he has had from the local authority and from MPs over the years. "Because we have no voice, we shouldn't die," he said.

## Special week for children's hospice

Noah's Ark Children's Hospice will be launching Children's Hospice Week in style on Saturday 15 May with a prestigious Casino Night on board HMS President, London. As part of Children's Hospice Week, the Enfield-based hospice is also hosting a Hero in Disguise competition which is open to all schools in the boroughs of Barnet, Enfield, Islington and Camden.

To bring the week to a close, Noah's Ark will be holding a skydive in Bicester on Saturday 22 May and will be attending the Hospices in Harmony music event on Sunday 23 May. For further information, please contact Amy Walker in the fundraising department on 020 8449 8877 or [awalker@noahsarkhospice.org.uk](mailto:awalker@noahsarkhospice.org.uk)

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# Developers win long battle for medical centre

By Janet Maitland

Developers have finally won a long battle to build a medical centre on the site of Finchley Manor Garden Centre on East End Road. The centre will have facilities for consultation, diagnosis and treatment, including minor surgery.

The medical centre has been controversial from the beginning. Thirty local people petitioned against it when Cloverdale Estates, the developers, first submitted an application in 2007. Planning permission was refused as the plan did not protect the status of the site, which is designated as Metropolitan Open Land, equivalent to the Green Belt.

The developers tried again with a revised application in 2008. Because the council treated this as a new application, the people who had signed the petition were not told and so did not protest again. None of the local GPs and pharmacists were consulted, despite the fact that Barnet's procedures specify that every effort should be made to consult relevant amenity groups.

## Objections received

Even though the consultation was limited, three objections were nevertheless received. This should have been the trigger for the application to be considered by a more local sub committee but this did not happen as some objections were received after the closing date. Planning permission for a centre of 1,000 square metres was finally given in September 2008.

A few months later, Cloverdale Estates went back to the council for permission to double the size of the building to over 2,000 square metres. The Mayor of London objected. His concerns were about access, transport, parking and sustainability, not size. Barnet Council refused the application, not because of the increase in size per se, but because the number of enclosed cycle spaces that would now be required would spoil the open character of the land. They also had issues about sustainability.

## Changes made

Cloverdale Estates tried again with a further application to Barnet early this year. The Mayor again raised objections, saying that improvements were

needed in relation to energy efficiency, access for disabled people, and transport and parking. But he lifted these objections once he had been informed by Barnet that the developers had made a few changes to their plans, in response to his concerns.

Planning permission was finally granted on 17 March subject to a number of minor conditions. None of the changes or conditions is related to the size of the centre.

Councillor Colin Rogers claimed permission might not have been given if he had been able to have the application scrutinised at the more-local planning sub-committee. The application was aired at the central planning committee.

# Glad to sit down after the Big Fun Walk

Hundreds of walkers set off from East Finchley tube station on a sunny Sunday in March and raised thousands of pounds for the North London Hospice. Ten-year-old Joe Lawrence was among them and here recalls the highs and lows of the day.

On 21 March a charity event happened. My family and I walked eight and a half miles into the centre of London for the North London Hospice. It was called the Big Fun Walk. My dad, mum and sister went with me from East Finchley station to Westminster. We all enjoyed it and the children were given medals at the end.

We had stops to eat and drink. One was for biscuits; another one was for a choice of sandwiches and a carton of orange juice or water. It was a bumpy journey going through the parks, with downhill, uphill and long flat stretches. We saw



Oliver Graham Smith in action.

# Oliver magics up a tricky career

By Jessica Tully

What started off as just a hobby has turned into a potentially successful career for one teenager. Fifteen-year-old Oliver Graham Smith, of Midhurst Avenue, is giving David Blaine a run for his money with his own unique magic tricks.

The young magician has been performing since he was 13 and had his first ever gig at an 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party. Oliver told *THE ARCHER*: "I first realised I wanted to be a magician when I was in Year 5 at school. It was the cups and balls trick that sparked my interest. I went home and started

learning basic tricks off the internet and practising them for hours and hours. I practised every day for the first two years."

Oliver's parents were his only audience then. "I used to make them sit down every night and ask them if I could show them a new trick. It must have been so repetitive for them."

The teenager is now studying for his GCSEs and has hopes of working in marketing and advertising, but still loves performing magic when he can. He performs his own gigs and assists magician Christian Lee on the first Friday night of every month in Madame Jojo's in central London.

# All-weather pitch in action

By Sheila Armstrong

Headteacher of Oak Lodge Special School, Lynda Walker, welcomed visitors to the opening of its new Multi Use Games Area (something like Astroturf to you and me) on a sunny day in March. The tape was ceremonially cut by Councillor Andrew Harper and the pitch declared open, then the school lost no time using it immediately for a hockey tournament.

CLr Harper praised the work being done at the school off East End Road, calling it a jewel in Barnet's crown and welcomed the building of the new facility. The pitch replaces the old muddy football field. In addition the school will get its long awaited trampoline later

this year as reported previously in *THE ARCHER*.

Other improvements to the school are an attractive new entrance and reception area, offices and staff room. Funding for the works comes from the government's Building Schools for the Future Scheme.

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Anna Finn has run 100 marathons.

## Ten marathons in ten days

Anna Finn has become the world's youngest woman to have completed 100 marathons, making her a full member of the 100 Marathon Club. Anna, of Manor Park Road, has been in training solidly throughout the winter. Her next challenge this month is to run ten marathons in ten days in the 10 in10 around Lake Windermere in Cumbria.

Her training is punishing. This year, she has run a marathon, sometimes two, almost every weekend. She also tackles ultras, runs ranging from 27 to 100 miles. All Anna's running helps to raise funds for Brathay, a charity helping disadvantaged or vulnerable young people to make positive choices in their lives. You can make a donation at [www.justgiving.com/annafinn10](http://www.justgiving.com/annafinn10) in 10.

## Enthusiasm in the third age

Eight people ranging in age from 60 to 84 are meeting together for the morning in Highgate Village. One of them lives in sheltered accommodation, several live on their own. But they haven't come for a cosy coffee morning or an occupational therapy group. This group meets every week to talk about life, art and politics.

This week's topic, Modern Art and how to look at it (or try to!), is introduced with great enthusiasm by Agnes and is followed by an equally enthusiastic discussion. This is only one of the interest groups which meet under the auspices of the North London University of the Third Age (NLU3A) every day of the week. There are more than 60 groups on everything from Bridge and Bonsai to Theatre Visits and Yoga, via Greek and Roman Plays and

Walking the Thames. But, in spite of the name, these are not university courses. They are a form of learning which enables people to share lifelong interests and skills and to find new activities. Above all, they enable people to get out and mix with others in a stimulating environment.

Further information about all the NLU3A groups and other activities is available at [www.nlu3a.org.uk](http://www.nlu3a.org.uk) or from Ora Warren on 020 8349 3324.

## Explosive device found

By Janet Maitland  
A potentially explosive device was discovered in the park on Oak Lane on 8 April. The emergency services were called by a local resident at about 6pm when they saw what looked like a grenade lying on the grass.

The fire crew cordoned off the area round the object and called a specialist police team. While police officers assessed the device, fire officers widened the cordon to circle the whole park, which borders onto Thornton Drive. Anxious residents returning home from work were directed away from the area as a precaution.

The device was found to be a 'flashbang', which is designed to make a loud noise and a bright flash without causing any physical damage. Officers believed the device had already been set off and spent. It was removed and the cordon was lifted. No one was injured.

Police do not believe that the incident was related to terrorism. "No crime has been committed and no arrests were made," said a spokesperson.

## Have you visited our 'best kept secret'?

By John Lawrence

Long Lane Pasture has reopened for the spring, with news of even more wildlife arrivals and a call for benefactors to help it continue its conservation work. The pasture bills itself as "Finchley's best kept secret", tucked away as it is on land opposite the fire station on Long Lane.

This spring, a new entrance way and path have been landscaped and a bench is shortly to be installed in full view of the birdfeeder. A circle has been cleared in the dense bramble by the railway line and been given a secret entrance.

Through the snowy winter, there have been plenty of winged visitors including redwings and fieldfares. A duck island has been built in the hope of encouraging ducks to return to the pond. A moorhen has already been spotted.

A group of three foxes has been seen so there may be a family living on this green space through the summer months.

The Long Lane Pasture Trust says that its grant funding from the Big Lottery Breathing

Places fund is coming to an end so it must now raise funds to cover essential overheads like insurance, tools and mower fuel.

Anyone who has enjoyed the beauty of this open pasture land is invited to send a donation or, better still, make a regular payment by bankers order to help the trust's work. Visit [www.longlanepasture.org](http://www.longlanepasture.org) to get involved.

The pasture is open to the public every weekend between 10am and 5pm. Volunteers to work on conservation projects are welcome between 10am and 12 noon on Saturdays. There are a number of free special events coming up during the spring and summer, details of which are included on the website.



Paul Baker holding the group's interest. Photo by Diana Cormack

## Stepping back in time

By Diana Cormack

It was the title that first attracted me: "Fabulous Finchley: a guided walk through 1,000 years of history". That, plus the fact it finished at East Finchley tube station so I wouldn't have far to walk home. However, by the time we got there, I didn't want it to end.

Most former teachers have the gift of the gab and this certainly applied to our leader Paul Baker. He is also a qualified City of London guide so knows what he is talking about and, as well as conducting walks in the City and the West End, has been doing local walks since 2004. Paul has lived in the area with his family for 23 years and obviously loves it.

We met at Finchley Central station and made our way to St Mary's Church, past Parde House School then down

Gravel Hill and along East End Road, arriving at our destination after about two and a half hours. The walking was easy and the time sped by, filled as it was with so many interesting facts and details pointed out along the way. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Walks cost £7 per adult and £3 for accompanied children under 12. Check our What's On listings on page 10 for the latest walk or for more details phone Paul on 020 8440 6805 or email [pbaker54@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:pbaker54@hotmail.co.uk)

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# Michael Palin makes friends at the Phoenix

By Ann Bronkhorst

Since 1910 over seven million film-goers have attended the cinema we now call The Phoenix. On 9 April yet another audience enjoyed a special event: watching a film, meeting Michael Palin and supporting the cinema's fundraising drive.

*American Friends* is fiction, but inspired by the 1861 diary of Palin's great-grandfather, an Oxford don who met two American ladies in the Swiss Alps, eventually married the younger one, despite a considerable age difference, and fathered seven children.

The film is gently paced, visually appealing and rich with period detail (cumbersome walking gear, Victorian furnishings, High Table dining).

## 'No car chases'

Director Tristram Powell, who joined Palin in discussion and reminiscence after the screening, noted that "the women drive the emotion; the men are stultified." He felt that the story had dictated the 1991 film's slow, even pace and agreed with chair Richard

Brooks, Arts Editor of The Sunday Times, that it couldn't be made today. As Palin said: "Nobody gets killed and there are no car chases."

During the three-way discussion and the audience's questions, Palin's early experiences of cinemagoing, his performances on film and TV and his respect for the writer's role ("the primary creative act") were touched on. He was courteous, engaging and, of course, often very funny. He was serious, however, when suggesting that film can captivate people in a way that TV and DVD can't. *American Friends* seemed to prove his point that evening but, for those who missed the event, there are plans for a DVD release in the UK.

# School needs funds for watertight solution

By Briony Cartmell

**Christ's College Finchley on East End Road, is experiencing some structural problems with its building and is launching a campaign to try and persuade Barnet Council to fix the roof. The 30-year-old building has been troubled with rainwater leaks since 1991.**

The flat roofs, combined with a design flaw which resulted in rainwater being channelled internally through the walls, meant that, as the building expanded, leakage was exacerbated. The leaks are posing health and safety risks. Closing various areas of school in times of bad weather leads to congestion in corridors, and rotting floor tiles in classrooms create trip hazards.

The school's maintenance and repair budget is already overstretched. Work has been concentrated on repairing drains and an electrical blow-out. The Parents and Friends Association (PFA) communicated the problem to Barnet Council who acknowledged that the situation needed rectifying, with a complete rebuild of the school.

## No funds in place

While this is the only effective

response, there are no committed funds in place for this, and plans could take years to materialise. Barnet Council said it will carry out a condition survey of all secondary schools in six months, but no guarantee of action will stem from this.

The PFA has launched a petition and is urging local residents to give their signature. Each one will further encourage the Council to contribute to the £150,000 needed to re-surface the roof.

Fiona Davidson, chair of the PFA, said: "Christ's College is a good school with many strengths, which in a way may be one of its problems. If it had lower levels of attainment, it might have received more attention."

Find out more about the petition at the school website [www.ccfplus.com/school/](http://www.ccfplus.com/school/)

**Run for Children with Cerebral Palsy**

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Contact Sarah  
sarah@bobath.org.uk

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BOBATH CENTRE



Transformed: from left to right, photographers Karen Fraser, Myra Lawson, Peter Kyte and Francesca Albin had their works on show. Photo by John Lawrence

# Glimpses into a changing world

**A very special event by East Finchley Open Group gave visitors the chance to walk through four front doors and see glimpses of the world in different states of change. Sixteen photographers exhibited their work in the 'Trans/Form' show over the course of the last weekend in March.**

Intriguing images hung on the walls of four houses in Church Lane, Beech Drive and Creighton Avenue. The unifying

theme was transformation.

Peter Kyte chose to interpret it through searing images of green, red and orange autumn

leaves, all taken along one road in Golders Green. Myra Lawson's photographs captured the reflections of buildings and sky morphed out of shape by the ripples on the Regents Canal.

Elsewhere, Adam Justice-Mills documented the last days of the shops on Lincoln Parade with some poignant images of the empty barber's shop, cut throat razors abandoned next to one of the sinks.

Scores of visitors toured the four venues over the course of three days. All the works were for sale. This is the first time the East Finchley Open group has run a show focusing solely on photographs, and with a unifying theme.

Textiles, sculptures, ceramics and other media will be on display when the EFO opens its doors again for its annual summer show on 3-4 and 10-11 July. More details at [www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk](http://www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk)

# Free exercise clubs

**Triathlon and cycling chain Bike & Run is living up to its name by setting up a run club and a bike club to help people get fit and enjoy outdoor exercise. The free clubs have expert tuition for all beginners and are designed to gently inspire confidence in taking part in sport.**

The Run Club is on Wednesdays from 6.30pm to give people time to get back from work and the Bike Club leaves each Saturday at 8.30am

Steve McKenzie, co-founder of Bike & Run, said: "While we sponsor an elite Bike & Run team, we realised that many beginners possibly lacked confidence or time to join a competitive club and so it made sense for us to extend

our advice into providing physical training that lived up to our shop name."

His co-founder Nick Pearce added: "We genuinely feel part of the community and wanted to actively provide a wellbeing resource that people could access 100% free of charge."

To register, visit the High Road store and fill out a simple health & safety form. The website is [www.bikeandrun.co.uk](http://www.bikeandrun.co.uk).



Get fit with Bike & Run owners Nick Pearce, Sally-Anne Patch and Steve McKenzie. Photo by Ben Pochee.

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Ali shows Pam Kent and Don Fade of Hamilton Road how it's done.  
Photo by Diana Cormack

## Bishop Douglass School experiments with locals

By Diana Cormack

At the end of March Bishop Douglass RC School in Hamilton Road held a special event to mark National Science and Engineering Week. The school, which was awarded science college status in 2007, invited neighbouring residents into its science block, named after the first headteacher Michael Caulfield.

Guests were greeted by Science College Director Mr Oza along with Head of Science Dr Williams and teachers Ms Boohan and Mr Kennedy plus lower and upper sixth pupils Ali, Charles, Chelsea, Kinga and Shahaz. Groups of adults were allocated to a student who was to be responsible for guiding them through the objective of the evening – to conduct a scientific activity. Before this everyone was able to relax and chat over drinks and nibbles.

Many school day memories were revived as the adults worked with scientific equipment. Under the polite and friendly guidance of the sixth

formers they followed a worksheet from the 'harnessing chemicals' module to produce a scented face cream. These students were all high achievers, some having Oxford or Cambridge universities within their sights, and they were a credit to the school.

As well as being a showcase for the department, the evening provided a good opportunity for interaction between the different age groups and was a confidence booster for the youngsters.

Everyone enjoyed the experience and Mr Oza told *THE ARCHER* that he hoped this sort of event could become a regular feature at the school.

## Archie (and team) did it!

Thanks to everyone who sponsored Martin School pupil Archie Price for this year's Swimathon charity swim. Featured in *THE ARCHER* last month, the seven-year-old managed to swim 28 lengths of the Oasis pool in Covent Garden, over twice the distance he was expecting to swim.

His dad Chris Price said: "It was great. We're so proud of him. Archie was really spurred on by all the readers of *THE ARCHER* who pledged money for what is a really, really good cause. He just kept going even though he was swimming in a lane full of adults and it was tough going at times."

Archie and his friend Ella

Coleman were swimming as part of Team Goggleblog to raise money for Marie Curie Cancer Care, a charity that helps the terminally ill to be looked after in their own home. So far, Team Goggleblog has raised nearly £800 in sponsorship. But there's still time to make your donations at [www.archieprice.com](http://www.archieprice.com).

### All Saints' Church, Durham Road, East Finchley Church of England

Sunday masses at 8.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m.  
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Prayer requests are gladly accepted.

The Parish has a flourishing social life.  
Contact the Vicar, Fr Christopher Hardy,  
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All Saints' also has a strong musical tradition and an enthusiastic choir of both adults and children.  
Experienced singers are always welcome.  
Contact Geoffrey Hanson on 020 8444 9214.

<http://www.allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk>

## Return of the Morris Men

By John Dearing

Following the success of their tour of East Finchley last year, the Westminster Morris Men will be returning on 19 May, visiting the Windsor Castle pub at 7.45pm, the Five Bells pub at 8.30pm and the Old White Lion pub at 9.15pm. They will be performing a series of traditional dance routines for your entertainment, while you enjoy the beer (as they will be doing). Watch out for a mythical creature who emerges from the shadows to claim a kiss from unwary young ladies!

### PARENT & BABY/CHILD ACTIVITIES

- ❖ Coffee & Kids, Fri 9.15-11.15, Green Man Ctr. Rachel 8343 6147.
- ❖ Dads' Club: Get-togethers for dads looking after young children in East Finchley. Adam 07957 441435.
- ❖ EF National Childbirth Trust contact Ruby Yang or Patrizia Canwell at [eastfinchleynct@googlemail.com](mailto:eastfinchleynct@googlemail.com)
- ❖ Newstead Parent & Toddler Group, Thurs 9-12-30, Green Man Ctr. Sajni 8359 3460.
- ❖ Old Barn pre-school club, contact 8349 4613/1961
- ❖ Parent & Toddler Group, Green Man Centre, Julia 8444 2276
- ❖ Stepping Stones, interactive play session for under 3's. Karen 07957 278860.

## YOUNG ARCHER

### UFO sighting at Martin School

By Lowri Dillon and Lorna Manning, Year 6

Teachers of Year 6, with a bit of help, came up with the idea to enrich our English lesson in rather a strange way. Both classes mingled together and were told that a serious incident had occurred. We then trekked onto the rather soggy school field to investigate a 'UFO' sighting.

We were shocked when we saw the four crop circles that were covered with police tape. Some groups had to interview and some had to look for evidence. The interviewing groups interviewed the caretaker Tristan Green, deputy head Mr Pickering, and two local police officers.



The others went with the teachers and found some silver cloth which was scorched, some green goo and some mysterious large footprints. We also found some mirrors with weird patterns and symbols on them.

Anya Vallentin, one of our classmates, said: "It was really fun, because instead of just doing the task we got to experience it."

When we had collected all of the information that we needed, we went back inside and discussed what we thought and what would make a good story. We jotted down our ideas then shared them with the class.

Soon, we had, in groups, all written great articles about the situation.

Many of us thought that there was a real alien, and some believed that it was Mr Green that created it as a cover-up story for the heating which had broken earlier on....

All in all, it was great fun and we think that it helped us improve our writing skills. However, we couldn't have done it without the help of Tristan, the local police and our fantastic teachers. So, in the future, if you ever see a UFO, give us a call. Watch out, aliens!

## Chilling tale of Frankenstein's monster

Finchley Youth Theatre recently performed Mary Shelley's gothic horror Frankenstein. Francis Atkinson was in the audience and gives us his review. Cast member Megan Fellows, 18, tells us what it was like to work on the production at the High Road theatre.

Francis writes: The cast had been rehearsing for over a term to produce a piece of theatre equally as ambitious as last year's *West Side Story*. As usual, the acting was top quality and the monster himself was played by an assortment of cast members working in tandem.

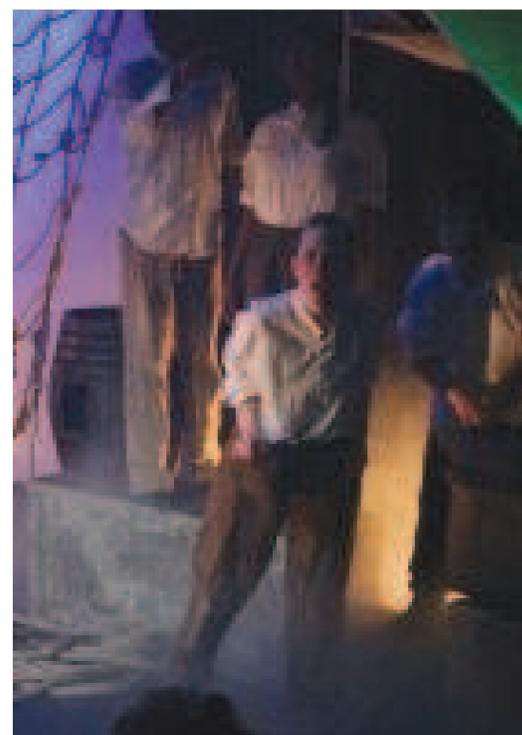
The play focused on the plight of the monster that Frankenstein creates and invited the audience to be sympathetic to its desire to be accepted amongst humans. The set was intricately detailed, rope nets were hung from the ceilings and authentic-looking barrels and boxes were strewn across the floor. A smoke machine provided the sinister atmosphere and a winch was even used for a hanging scene. The cast had worked tirelessly to put the show together. Kudos should also be given to the technical team in creating a stage show comparable to the West End.

Megan writes: Being a part of the Frankenstein cast was a thoroughly enjoyable experience. We came together as a group which supported each other: quite literally in fact, with all the carrying, lifting and balancing that this physically-demanding show required.

At first we were a bit daunted by our director Liz Sacre's aspirations. Liz had visions of flying ropes, fog machines and rigging, consuming the length of the stage. Liz's vision, although highly eccentric at times, proved to be the 'oomph' factor of our performance.

From the incredibly eerie crypt and graveyard scenes, to the heart-warming moments when the monster longs for acceptance, the FYT cast were able to deliver a performance peppered with a variety of different emotions, atmosphere and tone.

We spent several months prior to rehearsals improvising scenes and physical movements in order to create the script. The end result was a production which contained a little bit of each member's own directorial interpretation.



Chilling scenes from Frankenstein. Photo courtesy Finchley Youth Theatre



Alive, alive-o: Kyle, Brooke and Mandy serve fresh seafood. Photo by John Lawrence

## Change young lives in Nepal

John Dixon, who lives in the High Road, makes an annual visit to Nepal, one of the world's poorest countries, and collects funds for disadvantaged Nepali school children. Here he explains why money is desperately needed.

One Nepali village I visit called Katunje does not have a school so the villagers have banded together and built a pre-school classroom in local stone. Given their willingness to help themselves, I arranged for the school to be equipped with coloured and leaded pencils, rubbers, copy books, two writing slabs and a school bell. The bell made the children feel really special.

Now there is a need for materials for a children's toilet which the villagers will build. Materials are expensive, beyond the reach of the villagers. A bag of cement costs £10, more than a good day's wages, and has to be carried on a villager's back up the mountain from the river. The present toilet is primitive and unhygienic. The nearest school for the older children is in the next village. They have a tough climb and descent which takes about one and a half hours. That is bad enough but on the way they must negotiate a narrow dangerous mountain pass. I am looking for help in raising money for the children's toilet and hopefully for a small classroom for the older children to spare them the long, daily trek to the nearest school, also for small children's clothes and toys for my next visit. If you can help in any way please contact me at johndixon1902@hotmail.co.uk

## Whelk-ome to a taste of the seaside

A new business has musseled its way into a small corner off the High Road. The Fresh Shellfish stall is selling cockles and winkles next door to the Alexandra pub in Church Lane. Jellied eels, prawns, crayfish, oysters, whelks, lobster tails and mussels are all chalked up on the blackboard at the stall set up by market trader Mark O'Dwyer.

Shellfish are bought fresh from Billingsgate Market at 4am on a Friday morning and they're on sale in Church Lane on Friday evenings from 4pm and during the day on Saturdays and Sundays.

Mandy Longcluse, of Font Hills, is behind the counter along with her son Kyle and daughter Brooke. Mandy said: "Shellfish stalls are few and far between around here, and people are surprised to see us the first time. We've had a really positive response and a lot of passing trade."

## KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

### No fly zone

The skies had fallen quiet, no one was heading off into the wide blue yonder for a fortnight on the Costa del Living, no Sleazy Jets were landing and bar owners from Riga to Prague were in shock. Yes, the great green dream had come true and the only cloud on the horizon was Icelandic.

Why? Because thanks to the double eruption from Eyjafjallajökull, Iceland had done something that no striking air traffic controller could ever do, it had ended air travel.

In the weird world of weird places there is no place as weird as Iceland.

It's not just that in Iceland Bjork is seen as normal. It's not that it only has two seasons: winter, when it's dark all the time and everyone stays in and gets drunk; and summer, when it's light all the time and everyone goes out and gets drunk. No, what makes Iceland seriously weird is that it's volcano central, and, with 130 of the things, volcanoes are to Iceland what acne is to the average teenager.

Iceland has tried hard to stop people thinking about volcanoes or Bjork. The country even tried to bankrupt itself and everyone else before the American banks started collapsing. They did try to make it up to everyone and had a referendum on giving the money back, but everyone came out of the pub and voted. The polite answer was 'no'. The less polite answer is not printable, but involved volcanoes.

Even Iceland's contribution to world economic meltdown is just a post-modern joke compared to the big one back in 1783 when Laki, another of Iceland's rabid volcanoes, kicked off the French Revolution. It started erupting in June 1783 and kept going until February 1784. A full eight months of belching fire, ash and sulphur into the air. There was a dark cloud across northern Europe, ships were stuck in harbour and the Asian monsoon didn't happen. No rain, no rice, no food, not good.

In England the crops failed, the temperature soared and meat rotted as soon as it was butchered. Naturally, starving people get pretty restless, something that the French king didn't spot, so when, in 1789, he called the first parliament in a long time he got a bit more than he bargained for; he got a revolution and an appointment with death.

Like I said, pretty weird things come out of Iceland and a few cancelled flights might just be the start of something. And if it's not, I'm sure that some coke-crazed Hollywood movie magnate can be relied upon to invent it.

## Thrilling reading

By Diana Cormack

Despite the inclement March weather, there was a good gathering at the Black Gull Bookshop to hear local author Jeff Robson reading extracts from his first novel *Racing to Armageddon*. Drinks and nibbles helped with the ambience as did relaxing in the cosy corner set aside at the back of the shop surrounded by hundreds of books.



Jeff Robson reading extracts from his novel. Photo by Diana Cormack

Jeff describes his novel as "a combination of World War Two yarn and Cold War espionage thriller." It certainly put me in mind of both genres and before long I was wondering who would play the lead in the film of the book. The sub-

sequent question and answer session proved that I wasn't the only one thinking that way and also revealed the depth of the author's historical knowledge and interest. Other similar events are planned for the bookshop at 121 High Road.

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## Regular Events SPORT & FITNESS

- ❖ **Finchley & Hornsey Ramblers Group** Call Vivien 8883 8190
- ❖ **Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club**, Summers Lane N12. New and experienced bowlers welcome.
- ❖ **Keep fit for the Retired** on Wednesdays, Christ Church N12. Call Bridie 8883 5269
- ❖ **Muswell Hill Bowling Club**, Kings Ave, N10. New & experienced bowlers welcome. Tel: 8883 0433.
- ❖ **Pilates** in East Finchley, qualified teacher. Contact Dee on 8883 7029
- ❖ **Pilates class** Weds 3.30 & 7pm at Ann Owens Ctr, N2. Call Penny 8444 2882.
- ❖ **Tae Kwon Do** for children & adults at Finchley Lido Mon & Fri 7-9pm 07949 612 706. www.taekwondo-uktd.co.uk
- ❖ **Tai Chi class** at EF Methodist Ch, Weds at 1pm. Call James Drewe 8883 3308 or james@taiji.co.uk
- ❖ **Tennis club** with four clay courts off Southern Road. Call 8883 7723.
- ❖ **Yoga, breathing & relaxation.** Weekly drop-in classes - N3, N6, N10. Phone Judy on 07956 375607.
- ❖ **Yoga, pregnancy yoga, meditation** classes. Call Sunnah 07941 321 772 or see www.stretchingpeople.co.uk.

## MUSIC, DANCE & CREATIVE ARTS

- ❖ **Art Classes.** For info call Henry on 8888 5133.
- ❖ **Ballroom Dance Classes**, Wednesday eves for beginners & improvers. St Mary's Church Hall, N3. 8444 0280.
- ❖ **Ballroom & Latin American Dance Classes** - beginners and Improvers. Wed & Fri eve, Bishop Douglass Sch. 8207 2323.
- ❖ **Creative writing classes** in informal, friendly atmosphere. Tel Sallie Rose 020 8444 7217.
- ❖ **Drama Classes** for 11-15 year olds. Mondays 6.30-8pm. Contact Dominic Conway 0777 284 3958
- ❖ **East Finchley Writers Group**, Weds at the Old White Lion. Contact Carola 8883 5808 or Lilian 8444 1793.
- ❖ **East Finchley Poetry Writing Workshops.** Monthly on Saturdays. Contact Dennis Evans 8346 9528.
- ❖ **Finchley Jazz Club: Live jazz** on Mon 10 & 24 May at 8.15pm, Wilf Slack Cricket Pavilion, East End Rd, N3.
- ❖ **Memory Lane Singing Club** - friendly singing club meets every Friday in Finchley. Call Valerie 8458 4508.
- ❖ **Over 50s Tea Dance** at Christ Church, North Finchley. Every Weds, 1pm. 020 8444 0280.
- ❖ **Learn to sing** at Finchley Methodist Church, Ballards La. Call 8888 4412.
- ❖ **SwampRock** Louisiana Dance Club. Live music. Contact 07957 344 724 or www.swamprock.org.uk.
- ❖ **Symphonic Wind Orchestra** Contact Caroline Egan 8340 2706
- ❖ **Traditional music** at EF Constitutional Club on 2nd Mon each month from 8.30 pm. Free to join in or just listen.

## CLUBS & SOCIAL

(See p8 for Parent & Toddler Clubs)

- ❖ **Bingo evening, 8pm Sundays**, at the Constitutional Club, The Walks, N2.
- ❖ **Bingo Club** Mondays 7-9pm, Green Man Centre, Contact: Jan 8815 5452
- ❖ **Contact Lunch Club** Tuesdays at the Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book.
- ❖ **Finchley & District Philatelic Society**, Contact Brian 8444 3251
- ❖ **French conversation** in small friendly group with native speaker. 8444 9395.
- ❖ **Friendly Rubber Bridge** on Weds afternoons, call 7722 6209.
- ❖ **Friends of Cherry Tree Wood** www.cherrytreewood.co.uk or 8883 7544.
- ❖ **Haringey Recorded Music Society** informal meetings locally. Call David Moldon on 8361 1696.
- ❖ **LGBT?** 1st Weds every month in a local pub. Welcoming atmosphere. Email efinchleylgbt@hotmail.com
- ❖ **Muslim Lunch Club** 1st & 3rd Weds, Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book.
- ❖ **North London Bridge Club**, Muswell Hill. Contact 8348 3495
- ❖ **Northside Bridge Club**, EF Methodist Church, Thurs 7.30-11pm. 8346 8145.
- ❖ **Jewish Friendship Club** for over 60s, Tues 1-3pm at Muswell Hill Synagogue, Tetherdown. Call Anita 8886 6140.
- ❖ **Muswell Hill Tetherdown Bridge**, contact 8883 4390
- ❖ **Probus Lunch Club** for retired professionals. Call John 8883 8114.

## Community Focus goes national

When there is a recession, the first three sectors that often suffer are charities, the arts and disabilities. So when a disability-focused arts centre which is also a charity looks set to go national, it's good news.



Oak Lodge students take part in an animation project with CF.

Future Builders, a government-funded social investor, has spotted the talents of Community Focus, based at artsdepot in North Finchley, and is backing a new national venture over the next six months.

Schools, prisons or hospitals are invited to take part in this new social enterprise, with tailor-made packages available. Some of the projects CF is already working on include an animation project with Oak Lodge School in East Finchley and a five-week outreach project with the Hyde School in Colindale working with

the Afghan community.

CF uses the arts as a means for personal development, education, therapy and social interaction. Its tutors are practising artists and many are graduates of the leading art schools including the Royal College of Art, Goldsmiths and Chelsea School of Art. Since 2007, the number of classes offered has tripled and outreach work has increased tenfold.

For details, visit [www.communityfocus.co.uk](http://www.communityfocus.co.uk) or speak to CF's Director Tim Balogun on 020 8369 5481.

## Star names for Proms

Opera maestro Sir Willard White and jazz vocalist Clare Teal are two of the stars lined up for the 18<sup>th</sup> season of Proms at St Jude's in Hampstead Garden Suburb.

The programme also promises the BBC Elstree Concert Band playing music from the silver screen, a choral concert with the Choir of Clare College Cambridge and a rousing Last Night of the Proms in the company of the Southbank Sinfonia.

Proms at St Jude's has become a major musical attraction for north London and a creditable small-scale rival to the summer's BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall.

There are free lunchtime concerts sponsored by the Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association. These include an accordion recital, a cello quartet and a family concert featuring works by Holst, Purcell, Tchaikovsky and Copland. The musical menu is accompanied by a series of Proms Heritage Walks around the suburb.

The Proms season runs from 19-27 June. Full details of all the events are available now at [www.promsatstjudes.org.uk](http://www.promsatstjudes.org.uk) or by telephone on 020 8455 8687. The box office opens on 020 8458 8798 from 1 June. St Jude's Church has wheelchair access.

## What's On...

**Wednesday 5 to Saturday 29 May**  
**George Eliot's Daniel Deronda**, Upstairs at the Gatehouse Theatre, Highgate. Tuesdays to Saturdays at 8pm, Sundays at 4pm. Tickets £10-£15. Box office 020 8340 3488.

**Saturday 8 May**  
• **Dads' Day** at Highgate Children's Centre (behind Highgate Primary School), Gaskell Road, Highgate N6 4ED. Telephone 020 3213 0004 or find out more about the Dads' Club at <http://thedadsclubnondon.blogspot.com>.  
• **Walk over hot coals for the North London Hospice**, 7.30pm at The Five Bells, East End Road, N2. Bring friends or family to cheer you along. Participants must check in at 7.30, as there is motivational exercise beforehand. Register early, as places are limited. Information from 020 8446 2288 or [asiddiqui@northlondonhospice.co.uk](mailto:asiddiqui@northlondonhospice.co.uk).

**Sunday 9 May**  
• **Historical High Barnet**: a guided walk with expert guide Paul Baker. Meet outside Barnet College, Wood Street, 2.30pm. Explore 1,000 years of history in two hours. For more

information, contact Paul on 020 8440 6805.

• **Free concert at East Finchley Methodist Church**, High Road, 7.30pm. Jacquin Trio play Beethoven and Brahms. Collection in aid of Balanya, sending volunteer music teachers to Central America. This venue is fully accessible to people with disabilities.

**Thursday 13 May to Saturday 15 May**

• **The Guild Players** present **Deliver Us From Evil**, a thriller by JD Robins. Performances at 7.45pm at Finchley Methodist Church Hall, Ballards Lane, Finchley, N3 1NB. All tickets £8. Box office 020 8346 6337.

**Until 16 May**

• **Tableau: new works by S. Ravi Shankar**, Noble Sage Art Gallery, Fortis Green. All artworks for sale; free entrance. Wednesday to Friday 11am - 7.30pm, Saturdays and Sundays 11am - 5pm.

**Sunday 16 May**

• **Georgian Monken Hadley**: a guided walk with expert guide Paul Baker. Meet outside The Spires,

## May at the Phoenix

By Paul Homer, of the Phoenix Cinema

The Phoenix is now clad in scaffolding. As I write this, we're four weeks into the 24-week building programme and so far, touch wood, it's all going well. Of course, that could all change tomorrow. We're very aware that in raising over £1 million to do this work we have been entrusted to restore the cinema carefully and to manage the project professionally and diligently. Ultimately it's your money that's paid for this work so we're doing all we can to ensure that you have the cinema you deserve at the end of the project.

The iconic Phoenix fin has been removed and, once the new façade is complete with an insulated render and doors onto the new terrace, a new fin will be erected. We're making the cinema look like the wonderful 1930s building it once was and trying to undo some of the damage done to it in the intervening 70 years.

Throughout May we will remain open for film screenings on evenings and weekends. You'll have to excuse a few holes in the wall during this period, but the rest of the Phoenix experience should be of the same quality. On 7 May

we open with one of the more controversial films of the year, *Four Lions*, about a gang of hapless British Islamic terrorists. It's a very funny take on a serious issue and will certainly have people talking.

Also in May we have the extraordinary *Lebanon* about the 1982 war with Israel. We round off the month with Werner Herzog's re-imagining of Abel Ferrara's cult classic *Bad Lieutenant* with Nic Cage as the immoral cop. We hope to see you at the Phoenix this month. Our box office is on 020 8444 6789 and our website is at [www.phoenixcinema.co.uk](http://www.phoenixcinema.co.uk)

## Review:

### A concert treat

By Susan Norman

If you were at Hampstead Parish Church on the evening of Saturday 27 March, then you'll have shared in the treat that was Hampstead Chamber Choir's performance of Pergolesi's beautiful *Stabat Mater* and the *Officium Defunctorum (Requiem 1605)* by Tomás Luis de Victoria. The latter is a mass for the dead which includes some plainchant, with intonations by East Finchley resident, Hugh L'Estrange.

This was the first concert under HCC's new conductor Iestyn Evans, who, among other things, has been Organ Scholar of both Westminster Cathedral and Westminster Abbey. Iestyn said he was 'delighted with the choir's performance' and 'greatly looking forward to working with them over the coming years'.

HCC has been established for more than 30 years and

has about 30 members at any one time. Their repertoire is wide-ranging and eclectic. Vacancies sometimes occur for singers. Contact them via their website: [www.hampsteadchamberchoir.org](http://www.hampsteadchamberchoir.org)

If you'd like to hear HCC's next concert, then put a note in your diary for Saturday 3 July at Rosslyn Hill Chapel, for a concert of Romantic music including Brahms' *Liebesslieder Waltzes*.

E-mail your listings to:  
[the-archer@lineone.net](mailto:the-archer@lineone.net)

Tickets £16 (£14 concessions). Box office 020 8369 5454.

**Until 23 May**

• **Time and Time Again, paintings by Lisa Milroy**, artsdepot, North Finchley. Open daily 12pm - 4pm. Free admission.

**Thursday 27 May**

• **The Finchley Society** hosts a talk by Ann Brown, **Long Lane Pasture**, 8pm in Avenue House, East End Road, N3 (tel. 020 8346 7812). Non-members are very welcome. Admission £2.

**Wednesday 2 June**

• **Tumbleweed Comedy Club**, The Old White Lion, next to the station. 7.30pm.

**What's on at artsdepot**

**Reginald D Hunter**: Saturday 8 May, 8pm. **Sarah Gillespie**: Saturday 15 May, 8pm. **An Audience with Britt Ekland**: Saturday 22 May, 8pm. **The Importance of Being Oscar - Alistair Whatley**: Thursday 27 May, 8pm. **Michael Craig-Martin exhibition**: Friday 28 May to Sunday 27 June. **LaLaLuna - Wolfe Bowart**: Saturday 29 May, 3pm and 7.30pm.



## Slimmers expand

A popular slimming group is starting a new morning meeting. The East Finchley Slimming World group has been named 'best warm and friendly group' three times and two members have won awards for losing weight.

Natalie Hanna, the group's consultant, said: "Morning groups often work really well for mothers with young children or retired men and women who prefer not to go out in the evening."

The current group meets at East Finchley Baptist Church, Creighton Avenue, on Tuesdays at 5pm and 6.45pm. The new group meets at East Finchley Methodist Church, High Road, on Wednesdays at 9.30am.

Natalie is offering 50% off membership to all readers of *THE ARCHER* if they mention the paper when joining. For more information, contact her on 07889 252548 or turn up at one of the groups.

## Review: Bach and Handel

By Ken Carter

There was no doubt about it: the North London Chorus and Orchestra were the stars. St James', Muswell Hill, rang with the variety of sounds and performing styles demanded by the three principal works in a concert on 20 March.

I admire Buxtehude. His music is simple yet grand, bare and heroic, spare yet warm. Tonight, we heard meditations on the parts of Jesus' body assailed during the crucifixion. Choir, orchestra and soloists were gravely moving, open to the music's stark, glowing splendour.

The Bach *Mass in F* was an astonishing contrast: brisk, busy, with vigorous interweaving counterpoint and daring in its demands for instrumentalists to vie with each other in versatility. This is a shorter work than the great *B minor Mass*. Its style is secular. Even so, the genius of its creation shone and sparkled. Small it may be, but choir and orchestra proclaimed that it has size.

Handel's *Organ Concerto (The Cuckoo and the Nightingale)* brought nimble currents and virtuoso cascades from Nicholas Ansdell-Evans. The evening's climax was Handel's *Dixit Dominus*. The choir hit the rafters with their Gloria Patri, full-throated, unashamedly jubilant, brisk and resonant. This was Handel unmistakably, and at his best.

The soloists played their part. Nina Lejderman and Sarah Barnes, sopranos, together with Jake Ardititti, counter-tenor, blended felicitously, often as one voice. Warren Albers, tenor, and John Molloy, bass, were, somewhat mutedly, distinctive. Conductor Murray Hipkin must be proud of the night's achievement.

## Letter to the editor

### Rudi Vis signs off

Dear Editor,

From time to time a person has been pointing roughly in my direction saying: "That is my MP." And still almost every time, I look over my shoulder to see who the MP might be, just out of curiosity I suppose, but quickly realizing that the person pointed at me and that a lot of people show far too much deference and respect to MPs. Some MPs, of course, start believing that they are special and rare and start behaving as if they were, often with dire consequences.



I have enjoyed being called Rudi. I have enjoyed the banter, serious conversation, jokes and debates. I probably fool myself into thinking that I have almost never lied. Also, and naturally, I have had to apologise for being in error about matters. I was sure, yet pleased that Sir Thomas Legg QC, who examined the MP's expenses claims wrote to me, and I quote: "Dr Vis has no issues".

This has been part of my experience not just with my Labour Party friends and voters, but also with people who I consider, not as enemies, but always as opponents and often friends. I have enjoyed such friendships with Tory and Liberal Democrat councillors and other voters, although one cannot always utter that in public.

Political parties, all of them, both in their policies, intent and through vagaries can be wrong. If there are superior ideas around from "others" one should lean on them, discuss them, re-examine your own views with seriousness and not dig your own hole even deeper. The good for us all requires at times to transcend party politics and to ditch dogma.

Why do I not fight in this election? Well, I'll be 70 years old next time and talent, if there ever was any, is not growing as easily. Experience might be enhanced over years, but mere backbenchers face terrific difficulties in making themselves heard. Government is too 'presidential' in policy-making and journalism can be rushed in, only directing their attention and interviews at the same 'old faces'.

It also does not assist one to vote against one's own party. I have tried not to be a rebel for the sake of it, but it has not always been possible. It is not the road to take if one were interested in being promoted. Iraq, student fees and foundation hospitals come to mind among quite a few other 'mishaps' by my Government.

Most unfortunately I have recently been diagnosed with incurable cancer with all its attendant nastiness, chemotherapy, feeling below par and being totally out of breath.

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page", The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA or e-mail [the-archer@lineone.net](mailto:the-archer@lineone.net).

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be reviewed or printed. Contact details can be withheld, however, on request at publication.

Finchley and Golders Green has been special. I never had the desire to stand anywhere else and I did not think that we would win it in 1997. Locally the Labour Party has been brilliant in assisting me, both for themselves and for me. The constituency is also an agreeable and convenient place in which to live. It needs all our protection as it is one of the jewels in the crown of London, particularly with the improved Northern line.

Finchley and Golders Green constituents have, on average, a higher income than elsewhere. We were the fourth wealthiest Labour-held constituency in 1997, but since then we lost Wimbledon and Hammersmith and Fulham. We still have Hampstead and Highgate so we are now 'second' well off. Of course we have constituents in difficult economic and social circumstances and I have done as much as humanly possible to assist.

It is also a constituency where many people are politically sophisticated and are thoughtfully contributing to just about every debate. This has been a fantastic educative experience for me. We would not have won so many campaigns if 'locals' had not put on their campaigning gear, often only asking me to come in for support. Nuclear trains in Cricklewood, College Farm, a multiple of planning issues, insolvency matters and assistance to non-governmental organisations are all local-led issues where I came in by invitation of them.

I could now name hundreds of party members, friends, acquaintances and people who have assisted me beyond the call of duty, but I will hide behind the screen that says: "What if I should forget some?" Allow me to make one exception. I have been in love with Jacqui, my partner, wife, confidante and mother of our 15-year-old twins for 25 years and she is utterly marvellous. I thank her for that. Both she and I have been honoured by 'our' constituents to be elected and re-elected, variously from 1986 onwards and we shall always remember that with the fondness and humility it deserves.

Our very best wishes for all your futures.  
Yours with warmth,  
Rudi Vis

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.



## Drivers need to look in the mirror

By John Perrow

Stanley Road is a cul-de-sac leading to Ashburnham Close, Homefield Gardens and a footpath to Holy Trinity Primary School. Drivers leaving Stanley Road to join East End Road are faced to their right with a blind bend some 70 feet distant and can see nothing beyond this. A vehicle moving at 30mph covers 88 feet in just two seconds with a stopping distance of 75 feet. It is, therefore, extremely dangerous.

I contacted Barnet Council twice to suggest that a mirror installed on East End Road would give anyone emerging from Stanley Road a much-improved sight of oncoming traffic. Both requests were rejected.

Numerous Acts were quoted to show how difficult it would be, legally, to install such a mirror which might also be a target for vandals. But the objections went much further, giving a whole list of reasons why mirrors could, in fact, be positively dangerous. The objections were highly unconvincing. If valid, why are all vehicles fitted with mirrors?

Frustrated, I circulated a petition urging the council to install a mirror and was surprised at the response. It was signed by 187 residents on the roads concerned, plus the parents of children attending the school.

On 24 February at the relevant sub-committee, I had five minutes to speak and hand in the petition. It was immediately rejected by the Director of Environment and Operations on the grounds that no accident had been recorded at the junction in the last three years and that the council did not advocate the use of mirrors. There was no discussion. Officialdom had spoken. Readers can draw their own conclusions.

## Review: The Buddy Holly Story

By Sheila Armstrong

The Theatre Upstairs at the Gatehouse did it again last month with its very successful production of *The Buddy Holly Story*, directed by John Plews with his own inimitable flair and style.

The young and multi talented cast ably supported Roger Rowley (still at drama school) as Buddy and Jason Blackwater as the Big Bopper, both sounding very like the originals. It was a great night out with the audience singing, clapping and strolling down memory lane; well, those who could remember the 1950s anyway.

Find out about future productions at The Gatehouse in Highgate at [www.upstairsatthegatehouse.com](http://www.upstairsatthegatehouse.com).

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## The Scorpions ride again

Jim French, an *ARCHER* reader in Canada, sent us this fantastic photo of the Scorpions Motorcycle Club, taken about 1962 at their clubhouse, one of the air raid shelters outside Martin School in Plane Tree Walk.

Jim is on the bike in the middle, with Sue Langham sitting behind him. Jim and Sue got married and went to live in Canada in 1968. They later divorced and both remar-

ried. Jim has two sons and he says his passion is still motorcycles.

Jim remembers a lot of his friends from the Scorpions. He says: "Other names that I can

remember are Peter Rawlings, Barry Crowson, Danny Miall, Bob Scorfield, Peter Ranyor, Don Ranson, Roger Trudelle, Griff Jones, Chris Salarno, Bob Crane, Frank Malone, plus Spider and Slug. "Danny was killed not long after this photo was taken. Roger passed away three years ago. Peter Rawlings married my sister Betty and moved to Canada in 1966. They have two girls. Bob Crane, Frank Malone and Slug all went to Australia."

*Were you one of the Scorpions or do you know someone who was? Jim would love to hear from you and so would we. Email Jim on jimfrenchzx@yahoo.ca and write to us at the-archer@lineone.net or The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA.*

## Relaxing and inspiring gardens

By Susan Bennett

As I approached the front door my spirits sank. Boring begonias in narrow window boxes did not bode well. As an Assistant County Organiser for the National Gardens Scheme, inspecting potential gardens is part of my remit. It is gutting to have to tell proud owners that their creation does not pass muster. My guts were churning as I rang the doorbell.

A cheerful welcome. "DO come in". We pass through an immaculate workshop into a leafy conservatory crammed with happy, healthy, beautifully displayed plants. I am won over by the charm, vibrant atmosphere, and evident expertise. An abundance of hanging baskets, but some are empty? They are for the cats. Caroline and David Broome explain that their conservatory, open to the elements, is unlike any other. It is an adventure playground for their family of characterful cats. I am intrigued.

Leaving the 'Catorium', as I christened it, we enter a lush cottage garden, a haven for wild birds, with feeders, a hidden pond, an owl-topped rustic arch and a 'man-shed'. Caroline is a talented plantswoman. David is an accomplished carpenter. Here is a husband and wife team who complement each other's tastes

and skills. I am pleased to say they will be opening their garden to visitors for the NGS for the first time this year.

Their garden at 79 Church Lane, N2 OTH, will be open on Sunday 13 June and Sunday 18 July from 2-6pm. Admission is £2.50 for adults and free for children. There will be home made teas and a plant sale.

Other NGS open garden dates for your diary:

5 St Regis Close, Alexandra Park Road, N10, Sunday 2 May, 2-7pm, Sunday 9 May, 2-6pm, Sunday 27 June, 2-7pm, Sunday 25 July, 2-7pm. Admission £3, children free; 66 Abbots Gardens, N2, Sunday 16 May, 2-6.30pm; East Finchley Cottage Gardens, 399 Long Lane, 20 and 22 Trinity Road, N2, Sunday 6 June, 2-6pm; 2 Stanley Road, N2, Sunday 6 June, 2-6pm. For full details, visit [www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk)

## Walk the cat

On 15 May, Jenni Alexander and her husband Stuart, of Fortis Green, and two of their friends are walking 40km to raise money for The Scratching Post, a cat rescue charity that covers north London.

The charity relies solely on donations and volunteers. Its policy is to ensure that no cat is ever kept in unsuitable accommodation while it is waiting for a home. Jenni and Stuart are taking on this walk to help them raise money for a new

shelter, as the one they currently use is becoming much too small. When the recession hit many people could no longer afford to keep their pets and they have seen a massive increase in the demand for their services.

Jenni and Stuart will be walking across the South Downs, starting and ending at Goodwood. This will be a long and challenging day. If you would like to sponsor them you can do so by visiting [www.charitygiving.co.uk/jennialexander](http://www.charitygiving.co.uk/jennialexander) or you can send cheques (payable to The Scratching Post) to 1 Woodside Cottages, Fortis Green, London, N2 9HE.

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## Join a day trip to Clacton

By Daphne Chamberlain

East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact are off on a day trip to Clacton on Saturday 22 May. Any senior citizen in the area is welcome to join them, whether a registered user of Contact services or not, and you may bring a friend or relative of any age.

There is plenty of storage space under the coach for wheelchairs or zimmers, but unfortunately no wheelchair lift directly into the coach. However, Contact guarantee helpers and there may be possible volunteer wheelchair escorts.

Pick up is between 9.30am and 10am, from Avenue House, Thomas More Way, The Five Bells, and the corner of The High Road and Sylvester Road, and the coach should be back in Finchley by 7pm.

The trip, one of several organised by Contact each year, will cost £12. Organiser Keith John is asking for people to book in advance. If this is physically difficult for anyone, please contact him on

020 8444 1162. Further information on that number or at [www.efncontact.org](http://www.efncontact.org).

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