



More than ever nowadays, people are changing careers midstream. Sometimes it's a complete change, sometimes it's a case of using acquired techniques and skills in another setting.

Gill Davis starts what could be a new ARCHER series in her article below. We'd love to hear why and how you too changed your life. Send your story to the-archer@lineone.net or The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA.

Why I'm living my dream

By Gill Davis

In 1980 I was living in the High Road and working at the Old White Lion pub. By 2006, I had a career as a project manager and business development manager, responsible for raising millions of pounds through global initiatives. I had also reached an abyss of despair, disillusioned with my work/life balance. To achieve my dreams I had to leap from corporate life to set up on my own.

Using many techniques from my previous career, I am now a professional business coach, running experiential workshops.



Revealing blocks

I specialise in helping people lead themselves, their teams and their businesses. Clients come to me for many reasons, but getting one pregnant by 'immaculate conception' was nothing short of a miracle!

We were working on how she could achieve better results with her team. After a few sessions, it became obvious there was a big block in her way. Her focus wasn't so much what she could do for her company, but more what she could do for herself.

How coaching works

Uncovering blocks is fundamental. Coaching is about carefully crafted questions and active listening. The greatest gift I can give to someone is to listen, non-judgmentally and in confidence, so people start believing in themselves and rebuilding self-esteem. Sessions vary between help-

ing someone realise what they want and what is possible, identifying ways of increasing performance, getting clear about career moves, or managing a new role.

It is so satisfying that results are ongoing and there is a real sense of achievement.

Initially, realising my dreams meant taking a massive pay cut, but releasing the equity on my property in Long Lane, where I had lived for over 12 years, enabled me to buy a bigger house, creating a revenue stream. I was determined to live the dream and challenge the reality.

My dreams include helping as many people as possible make the most of their lives. So my website www.leadingyourselftosuccess.com has a dual purpose: to remind me that I am leading myself to success, and to share tools and techniques with others, so they can do the same..

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Climb every mountain

Steve Harper, of Leicester Road, recently conquered a 110-mile route through the Pyrenees from this year's Tour de France. Here he recalls the pain and the glory.

Heavy people shouldn't cycle over mountains. It's a simple matter of power to weight ratio and, if the maths don't work out in your favour, it's going to hurt. I knew that when I set out to raise funds for the MS Society by riding the 2010 Etape du Tour. I didn't expect a good finish time but, in the event, I had to choke back a tear or two from sheer relief at just crossing the finish line. After all, of the 10,000 riders who started the course, 3,500 didn't make it.

Supportive sponsors

I have to thank the many people from East Finchley and beyond who sponsored Nick Hassel (also from N2) and me. We raised around £4,000 and everyone's support and encouragement kept me going when things got tough. In case anyone missed the chance to donate, you're still welcome to at: <http://beatms.mssociety.org.uk/netcommunity/steves-etape>

Everyone who watched stage 17 of this year's Tour will have seen Contador and Schleck duelling for the yellow jersey over the same course; it looked hard but they rode it like the supermen they are. I didn't look or feel like a superman. My ride was a mixture of painful grinds up relentless ascents interspersed with exhilarating descents, all through achingly beautiful scenery.

High points

The 1,474m Col du Soulor was a 13km climb at an average gradient of 7.1%, slightly steeper than the rise from East Finchley Underground to the Bald Faced Stag but stretching all the way to Potters Bar (one of the thoughts that occurred to me as I rode up it). This part of the course was the first time I felt really challenged mentally. I didn't stop or climb off but lots of riders did. Even so, when I got to the summit my legs were shredded - and the main event of the day, the formidable Col du Tourmalet, was still to come.

There were high points too. Cheering locals and fans, already camped all the way up the mountain waiting for the Tour to pass, came out repeatedly with ice-cold water to pour over us as we passed. I think that without their kindness I couldn't have carried on. When I crossed the timing mat at the finish I knew, for me at least, I'd done something really special - and I hadn't cracked.

Blitz hits East Finchley

By Peter Wynne Davies

Seventy years ago, on 2 October, the East Finchley early morning might have seen milk being delivered by horse and cart and some commuters making their way to the still new East Finchley Underground Station.

Days after the end of the Battle of Britain the German bombing of London, now known as the Blitz, had started in earnest, and at 05.14 a.m. on that October day a 100 kilogramme bomb containing high explosive landed in the back garden of 85 Bedford Road.

ARP rescue residents

The blast resulted in damage to surrounding houses. Responsibility for dealing with the aftermath of bombs fell to a mainly volunteer force, Air Raid Precautions (ARP). Their primary task was the protection of civilians from damage caused by air raids, but often they would have to search for survivors and help recover bodies.

The ARP centre for Finchley was based in Avenue House on East End Road. Word quickly reached them about the Bedford Road bomb and within an hour the two residents at 85, a Mr and Mrs Smith, had been taken by ambulance to Finchley Memorial Hospital. They were just two of the 336 Finchley residents injured during the Blitz. A fur-

ther 78 were not so lucky.

Further attacks

East Finchley suffered much less aerial attack than other parts of London, but almost every county road had their own bomb attack during the war. Many of the houses south of Fortis Green suffered attacks by phosphorus bombs which did not explode but caused fires on roofs and in attics.

In November 1940 one of the particularly feared parachute mines destroyed many of the buildings on Chapel Street and the High Road around where Mulberry Court now stands. Twelve died in that raid alone.

Later in the war Abbots Gardens was struck by Germany's most feared weapon, a V2 rocket, the world's first long-range ballistic missile. Five died, including five-year-old John Fulford. See *THE ARCHER*, January 2009, for a full account.

Records of all the 570 local wartime incidents dealt with by the ARP are held by Barnet's Archive Service.



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