



KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Name game

In the weird and wonderful world of austerity Britain as the country lurches towards wide-eyed madness there is one beacon of blinding light in the darkness. Yes, the Beckhams are breeding again. Just when we feared that they would decide that three was enough they've announced that they are making another contribution to society. And, to the amazement of the watching world, Victoria smiled for the first time since Botox was invented.

Now that we know there's a new baby Beckham on the way we can all indulge in that great party game and try to work out what they are going to call it.

Let's start with Brooklyn. He's called after the place where he was conceived and set a trend. Out there in the weird world people have taken this idea and run in ever decreasing circles with it. What about the girls called Paris or the boy called Finchley? Better still, there's some poor kid out there called Leyton. Yes, a kid named after a crossroads in East London notable for two pubs, one bookies, a Polish shop and a god-bothering centre. Nice?

For child two, Romeo, the Beckhams went for the back end of an Italian car. Not the first: there are a couple of Cortinas out there and Sienna Miller's got a sister called Sierra (1.6L). What next? A girl called Mazda or a boy called Nissan?

Child three didn't do much better. They called him Cruze, probably after Tom and probably because they can't spell. Maybe it's time to name-check their other friends: how about Giggs for a boy or Fergie for a girl?

The only thing to say in favour of not very posh and stupid is that they've avoided fruit, so far. Gwyneth has her little Apple, so maybe now is the time for an Orange or Banana or Raspberry? They could go for drinks and call it Brandi or Bacardi and Coke. The big problem is that had they realised they would have four kids they could have gone all Vivaldi and called them Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. Now that would have been different.

It's Showtime Again for writers

By Daphne Chamberlain

Fans of East Finchley Writers will know immediately that anything with that title could only be the group's third published anthology. Showtime, Showtime Too, and now Showtime Again are inspired names. These annual collections show off the writers' very varied talents, but there is also a theatrical feel about a lot of their work. As I was reading through, I could see many of them as tightly-written television dramas.

Without turning this review into a spoiler, you can take your pick from a South African inquisition, an English day trip, war-torn Eritrea, a ghost, an original twist on time-travelling, friends meeting again after many years, and many more.

There are 36 stories, essays and poems in this book, the work of eight of the East Finchley Writers.

Who, where and why

East Finchley Writers are a diverse group of individuals with distinctive styles and personalities. For the last three years they have read some of their work at the East Finchley Arts Festival, and they meet on Wednesdays

at the Old White Lion to offer support and constructive criticism to each other.

What they have in common is a love of writing, and anyone who shares that will be very welcome at their meetings. If you are interested, please contact Carola on 020 8883 5808 or Lilian on 020 8444 1793.

Care home help

The national charity, **Counsel and Care**, supported by the **Department of Health**, has published the **Care Home Handbook**.

The handbook, which is free to all Barnet residents, guides people through the options for funding care, gives advice on choosing a suitable care home, and clearly sets out the rights and choices involved. To obtain a copy of the Care Home Handbook call 0845 300 7585 or go to www.counselandcare.org.uk/helping-you.

ART EXHIBITION

From Feb. 1st to 28th at **CHORAK**
122 High Road

Paintings by:

L. Platman (mother)
M. Meyer Dp Hyp (daughter)
A. Meyer (granddaughter)

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What is the mystery bird of prey? Photo by Luke Potter

Can you identify this bird?

By Lois Lawrence

ARCHER reader Luke Potter spotted a mysterious bird of prey near his home in Cedar Drive one evening in December. He'd seen a wide range of birds over the years but he wasn't able to identify the bird he saw. It was sitting on top of a pigeon that it had just killed and stayed there feeding happily for about 10 minutes before leaving.

There weren't any rings on the bird's legs so Luke assumed it was a wild bird of prey that may have come from somewhere outside London.

The photo is not very clear but Luke is intrigued to know what type of bird it was and what habits might bring it this far into the city. If anyone can help, contact *THE ARCHER* on the-archer@lineone.net or 0844 579 6949 (mailbox 63450).

Waxwings

Meanwhile, in other birdspotting news, Peter Cox witnessed the arrival of flocks of waxwings around his house in Hertford Road. These subtly beautiful birds are fairly regular winter visitors to the east coast

from their breeding grounds in Scandinavia but Peter has not seen them before in our neck of the woods.

At first glance, they are starling-like, but with crests and yellow tail-tips. Peter saw around 50 of them clustering on TV aerials on roofs around his home.

He said: "They tend to turn up in places like the Tesco car park where there are berries to feed on. We have a rowan tree outside our house so that may have attracted them."

Waxwings are likely to be around in our area throughout February. Keep your bird feeders full and look out for them.

London honours local naturalist

By Ann Bronkhorst

Woodland enthusiasts from the Greater London area saw a distinguished local naturalist honoured for his lifetime achievement on Thursday 2 December. City Hall on the South Bank hosted the London Tree and Woodland Awards, which recognise organisations, individuals and schools that have helped to improve London through their dedication to trees and woodlands.

David Bevan, botanist and former Conservation Officer for Haringey, received the Individual Commitment and Achievement Award for his work for the woodlands of north London. Many local people have enjoyed his guided walks through Coldfall Wood and Queen's Wood, and the wealth of knowledge he continues to share through his teaching, advice and active involvement with the London Natural History Society.

Receiving the award, David outlined the benefits and discoveries that have

resulted from coppicing and other woodland management methods in both woods, and paid tribute to the energy and commitment of the two Friends groups.

Keith Good, one of the Friends of Coldfall Wood, was shortlisted for the Photographic Award with some of his work enlarged for display that evening. Keith's wildlife photographs can be seen at www.coldfallwoods.co.uk and for more information about David Bevan's work go to freespace.virgin.net/conserving.bevan

Get your bus routes straight

By Daphne Chamberlain
In December 2010 we published a letter from reader Lorna Roberts, (written in November) complaining about the re-routing of the 143. It used to run along the whole of East End Road and Gravel Hill into Hendon Lane but now turns off East End Road to take in Manor View, Squires Lane, Long Lane and Ballards Lane. Obviously this adds to the time it takes to reach Brent Cross.

Our correspondent said that Transport for London told her they would consider restoring the original route, but she had heard nothing since.

Misinformation

THE ARCHER contacted TfL on 12 November, asking whether any considering had been done. Our enquiry was acknowledged, but we heard nothing further. On 7 December, after a reminder from us, TfL apologised for the delay in replying and said that the 143 had always run along the present route, while a 143A (withdrawn in 1995) had taken the direct route along East End Road.

To anyone using local buses up to the early 1990s this was a statement from a parallel universe! When we protested, TfL re-investigated. A further letter from them confirmed that the original route was as described by our reader. TfL apologised for misinforming us and Ms Roberts, but confirmed that they were not considering changing the existing route.

They said that there was low usage along the end of East End Road and high demand for buses along Long Lane. Bus stops along the Manor Way, Squires Lane, Long Lane and Ballards Lane part of the route are used by 24% of all the passengers.

And another thing...

Lorna Roberts had also asked TfL whether the H3 would ever run more than once an hour, and whether it could be extended beyond 2.30pm.

TfL told *THE ARCHER* that current usage was well matched to one bus per hour, and there was insufficient demand to extend the hours of operation

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