



Letters

Farewell to pavilion plans

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank everybody who has supported my plans for the Cherry Tree Wood pavilion project over the years, especially all those people who joined the steering committee to help make this exciting project happen, in particular Chris Hampson for the significant amount of work he put into the architectural plans.

Sadly, the proposal we submitted to Barnet Council was outbid by another interested party. Therefore, my husband Rob and I have decided it's time we moved on from the project.

I would also like to say a big thank you to all those people who have emailed through pledges of support recently in response to plans for developing a Trust and to help fund the restoration of the Pavilion.

The Lazy Sally kiosk will continue to operate until the lease runs out in mid-summer next year. A final big thank you to all our customers for supporting us over the years.

Yours faithfully,
Sally-Anne Wigfield, Rob and Charlie the dog,
Address supplied.

Ringing endorsement

Dear Editor,

Some very kind people live in East Finchley! On Bank Holiday Monday 29th August, my son received a phone call from someone who only gave her name as Julia, saying that she had found a mobile phone in the street.

She had checked the number of the last-dialled call (which happened to be my son's) and rang it. She told him she had found the mobile in Fordington Road, so my son was able to tell her my house number and she put the phone through my letter-box. I am very grateful to have had the phone returned to me as it has large numbers for visually-impaired people.

I know only that Julia lives on East Finchley High Road and, if she reads this, I would ask her to accept my sincere appreciation: she went to considerable effort to find the phone's owner and not everyone would have taken so much trouble. Thank you, Julia.

Yours faithfully,
Herbert Levy,
Fordington Road, N6

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page",
The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA
or e-mail
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.

All tyred out

With the very generous help of *THE ARCHER* and its readers, our photo editor Mike Rubens and his sons managed to raise over £2,000 for the muscular dystrophy charity Action Duchenne, by cycling from London to Cambridge. Well done to all involved.

Still standing (just) after 60 miles. Left to right: Zack, Mike, Dylan and Matty.



Ill met by moonlight on Finchley Common

By Robert Sutherland Smith

How many of us realise that through East Finchley runs one of the great threads of English history? I refer to the Great North Road, now unromantically disguised as East Finchley High Road.

You can walk past its thankfully still small, human-scale shops and suppose that nothing much happened here to make the pulse beat faster. In the 18th century, however, the Great North Road and the section of Finchley Common in this area had the bustle of a modern airport or railway line. It reverberated to the noise of horse-drawn mail and other coaches travelling to and from the north, the sound of coaching horns and the shouts of drivers and guards in long warm coats and broad-brimmed or tri-corn hats.

Halt! Your money or...

Lying in wait were the highwaymen who made the lonely road across Finchley Common, along with Shooters Hill on the road to Dover, one of the two most dangerous public thoroughfares out of London. In 1774, Sir Gilbert Elliott,

Earl of Minto, was reported by his wife to have said "he would not trust his throat on Finchley Common after dark." Highwaymen, or gentlemen of the road as they styled themselves, came from far and wide to make a living on Finchley Common. From the 1670s to the 1790s, the corpses of those who had been caught and executed at Tyburn were draped on a gibbet, reputedly at the point where East Finchley High Road now intersects with Bedford Road. This deterrent to others must have been a fearful thing to pass in moonlight, on the lonely Common.

The fact that the gibbet stood there for about 120 years suggests its success, if any, was limited. By 1805, the sway of the highwayman over Finchley Common weakened when armed mounted patrols were employed between Highgate village and the Common's north end.

Macheath's fate

To quote John Gay's famous highwayman, the gallant and generous Captain Macheath from *The Beggar's Opera*: "The road indeed hath done me justice, but the gaming table hath been my ruin."

Gay has Macheath hanged but makes no mention of the fate of his corpse. In real life he would have been too prominent a practitioner of the highwayman's profession not to have ended up as an example on the gruesome gibbet at Finchley Common's east end.



October already (note to self: need thermal underwear for cycling) and the evenings are drawing in. A natural reaction is to turn on more lights and crank up the faithful old boiler, trying to pretend autumn's not happening.

On a trip to Rye recently, I was delighted to see the wind farm waving its arms at us as we struggled against the (admittedly warm) ocean breeze. I was also delighted to see quite a collection of both domestic solar thermal and solar electrical (PV) installations making the most of the intermittent sunlight; maybe the councillors (and neighbours) there are a bit more tolerant or, dare I say it, switched on to the idea of renewable energy? I was also delighted to read *THE ARCHER's* article about local PV and to hear a work friend say how cheap it was to get her loft insulated. There's more of it going on than we know, perhaps, but there's always room for more.

It's well worth considering early insulation of loft and windows as I've mentioned before. It's also worth considering some things which might seem trivial but overall make a real difference: the lights you switch off in your workplace overnight, the charger you unplug when it's not in use, the clever extension cable that switches off all the computer bits when you shut down, the TV switched off not on standby and the shower you take instead of a bath. It all adds up. I'm going to have a "Dad Day" every week, where I'll promise not to nag everyone about turning off lights etc, provided they do it themselves! Next time, I'll (finally) be writing about electric cars and bikes. Watch this space.

CLEARLY

see

David Hillel

optometrist

FCOptom DCLP BSc(hons) MPhil(optom)

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