



## Would you hire an electric bike?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Commuters, would you be interested in hiring an electric bicycle to take you into work each day? An electric bike “looks pretty cool, is perfect for the hills and vales of North London, accelerates easily from junctions and roundabouts, and leaves no carbon pedal-print”. So says Peter Thompson, Secretary of the Muswell Hill Sustainability Group. Peter has tried one, and is hooked. So is *ARCHER* columnist Adam Justice-Mills, who praised electric vehicles in our last edition.



Royal ride

The Prince of Wales has tried one, and has survived the experience. Prince Charles had

personal instruction at Clarence House from Colney Hatch Lane resident Va Hua, who invented the Spencer-Ivy model in 2010. The cycle works through a torque sensor, which detects the power the rider is applying to the pedals. This decides how much assistance is delivered by the chain. The rider stops the Panasonic electric motor by stopping pedalling. Gears are used in the normal way.

No special test is required to ride one of these bikes, but under EU law the cyclist must be at least 14 years old. The maximum speed with engine support is 15.5 mph. Then the engine cuts out and muscles take over. It needs recharging

after 86 miles.

At around £1,800 to buy, the Spencer-Ivy model is more expensive than the electric bicycles tested by Adam last month. But inventor Va Hua wants to know how much interest there would be in a daily hire scheme, with the cycles stationed in a special dock near Planet Organic (round the corner from Muswell Hill Odeon).

For more information, visit [www.spencerivy.com](http://www.spencerivy.com), or contact Peter Thompson on 020 8883 0371 or at [aoby37@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:aoby37@dsl.pipex.com).

## Thieves thwarted by quick-thinking duo

By Janet Maitland

Thieves got a lot more than they bargained for when they stole a local builder's van from outside a house on Deansway on 1 December.

Gordon Elliot was in the front garden, discussing the repair of a garden wall with the homeowner, when a white van pulled up on the other side of the road. The driver asked for directions to The Bishops Avenue.

Mr Elliot and his client had to take a couple of steps towards the van to hear what he was saying. While they were giving him instructions, a man wearing overalls and a baseball cap got out from the passenger seat and walked

nonchalantly towards the house.

As soon as the white van drove away and Mr Elliot turned round, he realised that his own red transit van, which had been parked in the driveway of the house, had been stolen by the man in overalls.

### Dramatic chase

Determined not to let the thieves get away with it, the homeowner handed her car keys to Mr Elliot who jumped into her car and drove off, trying to second guess which way they might have gone. Turning right into East End Road, he drove down Fortis Green, finally turning left into Twyford Avenue. And there was his van heading straight for him.

“I noticed my ladders on the roof, first,” said Mr Elliot. “Then I thought, that’s my van! So I did a broadside, thinking I’m in *The Professionals* now. But he drove up onto the pavement. So I spun the car around.

“He jumped out of my van, ran across the road like a flash of lightning, and threw himself into the white van. His mate was waiting for him: it was their meeting point. They sped off, leaving my van in the middle of the road with the door open.

“The police said I was very, very lucky. I was too: apart from all my tools, they’d have had my case, cheque books, house keys, yard keys, everything. The only damage was to my side mirror.”

The van was also full of food for Mr Elliot’s reindeer and camels, which he keeps to raise money for charity. Gordon Elliot and Sons has been in business for 55 years.

## Ardent Arsenal fan meets heroes

By Daphne Chamberlain

June James has been going to Arsenal matches since she was 10 years old. A room in her Leicester Road house, dedicated to the club, was filmed by Channel Five a few years ago. So she was horrified when somebody asked her recently who Herbert Chapman was. “How could they call themselves an Arsenal supporter?” she asked.

The great manager of the 1930s, who, as June said, even had Highbury’s nearest Underground station (Gillespie Road) renamed Arsenal, is one of three past Gunners commemorated in

statue form at The Emirates. “It must have been very difficult choosing the other two,” she said. “I can think of at least 30 others who could have qualified, but I’ve no argument. Tony Adams was very good, and Thierry Henry was marvellous.”

June was impressed by her first sight of the statues in the bronze, as it were. “They’re probably more than life-size and must be a colossal weight.”

She is impressed too by what she calls the good noisy atmosphere at matches recently, though not by all that is said. She loves the way the crowd is getting behind the team, but wishes more people could see the reserves and the youth team, saying, “They used to play at Barnet, but now they are mostly behind closed doors at the London Colney training ground.”

June also watches Arsenal Ladies, who play at Borehamwood, and Barnet on her free Saturdays.



June James pictured with the FA Cup at Arsenal's stadium in 2003.

## Count your chickens

By Nick Young

Are you planning to take part in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch on 28-29 January? If you do, then we at *THE ARCHER* would love to hear about which birds you manage to see in East Finchley.

To take part, all you need is a pen, some scrap paper (or a printout of the RSPB's bird ID sheet, which can be downloaded from their website) and an hour to spend watching the birds in your garden or in a local park on either the Saturday or Sunday.

For over 30 years, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has organised a nationwide birdwatch and, last year, over 600,000 people across the country took part.

“With results from so many gardens, we are able to create a snapshot of bird numbers in

each region,” says the RSPB’s website. “This is important because we’ve been able to see that some of our birds are disappearing in scary numbers. We’ve lost more than half our house sparrows and some three-quarters of our starlings.

“However, it isn’t all doom and gloom. These surveys help us spot problems, but more importantly, they are also the first step in putting things right.”

For more information about the Big Garden Birdwatch, please visit [www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch/](http://www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch/)

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

Sunday masses at 8.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m.

Weekday masses at 10.00 a.m.

(Refreshments are served after mass on Sunday and Thursday)

Prayer requests are gladly accepted.

The Parish has a flourishing social life.  
Contact the Vicar, Fr Christopher Hardy,  
on 020 8883 9315.

All Saints' also has a strong musical tradition and an enthusiastic choir of both adults and children.  
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Contact Geoffrey Hanson on 020 8444 9214.

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

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