



## Singing group changes its tune time

By Diana Cormack

“From Gershwin to Gaga and everything in between” is how Barnet’s Community Focus advertised its new singing group in September and I am witness to the truth of that description.

Last term we covered old favourites *The Way You Look Tonight*, *California Dreamin’*, *Bridge over Troubled Waters*, *Somebody over the Rainbow*, *I Say a Little Prayer* and *I’ll Never Fall in Love Again*. But I also found myself singing songs I’d never heard of by Rihanna and Adele and now enjoy having *Take a Bow* and *Rolling in the Deep* in my repertoire. We also practised some Christmas carols which we sang at Mulberry Court

retirement flats and in The Old White Lion pub.

Voices with Gusto is run by Community Focus for those over 55 and adults of all abilities. Singing is taught in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and nobody minds if you go wrong. The group, which meets on Wednesdays in East Finchley Baptist Church, Creighton Avenue, has a new time this year. Starting on 11 January, the sessions will be from 11am-1pm at £5 a time.

If you’d like to join, just come to East Finchley Baptist Church on a Wednesday or contact Lili Barcourt on 0208 369 5483, email: lilibarcroft@communityfocus.co.uk

## Attempted mugging

A young woman was grabbed from behind as she walked along the footpath between Trinity Road and Manor Park Road on 18 October at about 6pm. The attacker put his hand over her mouth and tried to snatch her handbag but she bit his hand and managed to hang onto her bag. The man, described as black, about 19 and wearing a hooded jacket and jeans, then ran off.

If you have any information that could help the police to solve this crime, please ring 101 and quote crime reference number 2425217/11. To remain anonymous, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

## High-rise fire

By Janet Maitland

Firefighters tackled a blaze on the seventh floor of a block of flats for nearly an hour before bringing it under control.

Emergency services were called out to the fire at one of the high-rise blocks on Prospect Ring on 25 November. Police believe that the four-roomed flat was empty at the time of the fire. The fire service informed THE ARCHER that fortunately there was only a small amount of damage. The ambulance service confirmed that there were no patients to treat.

## Big Fun Walk 2012

The Big Fun Walk in aid of the North London Hospice takes place this year on Sunday 1 April and registration is now open. It’s a chance to join family and friends for a fascinating seven-mile walk through North London’s most beautiful parks, starting at East Finchley tube station and finishing at Westminster.

Walkers are asked to raise at least £30 each towards the work of the hospice, which is based in Whetstone and cares for patients and their families throughout Barnet, Haringey and Enfield. For information and registration forms, telephone 020 8202 5586 or visit www.bigfunwalk.co.uk by 19 March.



## The choir on Platform 8...

By Marian Bunzl

In December, North London Chorus sang carols at Kings Cross Station on behalf of Marie Curie Cancer Care. First, we had to attend a hidden office on Platform 8 (and a half) to watch a riveting DVD on Elf and Safety.

Suitably informed, we gathered round the Christmas tree on the main concourse, a somewhat motley crew. Some wore traditional Father

Christmas caps, one bass chose a tartan beret and a red fright wig, and the rest of us donned bright yellow Marie Curie bonnets and bibs.

Passers-by stopped to look and stayed to listen. We managed to overcome the ambient acoustics of station announcements, wailing sirens, and shrieks of office partygoers, and perform a range of traditional carols in four-part harmony (with descant).

IPhones and cameras recorded us, and we were even asked to sing into a father’s mobile for his daughter’s bedtime. Gratifyingly, we heard the rustle of paper money as well as the clink of coins. At the end, we sang a rousing *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, and melted back into the station crowds. We had fun, travellers enjoyed us and the collecting tins were filled. Job done!

## Register your bike

By Janet Maitland

Did you know that if your cycle is registered with the Bike Register it can be returned to you if it is lost or stolen? To register your bike for free, all you have to do is take it to East Finchley tube station on 31 January between 7.30am and 10am.

The Cycle Task Force, who will be outside the front of the station, will apply a unique serial number to your bike using an indelible paint. They will then register your bike for you, using this number and the frame number of your bike. This process establishes legitimate ownership so that if your cycle is lost or stolen it can be returned to its rightful owner.

Officers from the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) will also be there to answer questions, help out and give crime prevention advice. You can contact the Safer Neighbourhood Team on 020 7161 9014 or 07887 632767 or email them at EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk. You can also talk to the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) you see on patrol.

## KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

### Claim your Olympic glory

As the weird world of 2011 crashes into 2012 it’s time to look forwards, backwards and especially sideways. Why? Because 2012 is going to be a whole new experience in a kind of Olympian Jubilee sort of way and one that will give us a chance to forget about Austerity Clegg, Calamity Cameron and all the other cartoon characters.

Let’s forget comedy and get serious for a moment. Let’s think London, let’s think Olympics and let’s ask not what we do for the Olympics, but what can the Olympics do for us.

As East Finchley failed to be the venue for beach volleyball, archery or dwarf throwing we’ll have to do something else. Why not make a serious contribution to transport by converting the Northern Line into a two-class railway? Let’s have Olympic Class to give our visitors the full London experience. No seats, overheated, overcrowded and stuck in a tunnel outside Camden Town. Meanwhile, we have Londoner Class, a special type of train for special people; you know, Londoners, complete with air conditioning, TV, WiFi, hot and cold running waiters and seats for all.

Then there is the huge waste of money that is the opening and closing ceremonies. Why spend millions when we could have real street theatre for less than the cost of a looted high street? Just let the kids organise it, give them the money and take cover behind a passing soldier as the colourful nightlife of a London street explodes around you.

The only sport I’m going to worry about is the football. We know the world is full of better runners than the motley crew we’ll chuck out on the track, but football is different. Football is the one time a Great Britain side will take to the field. And it will be British with Welshmen, Englishmen, Scotsmen and Irishmen proving that the whole will not be greater than the sum of its parts as the Germans win again. Which brings us back to the other main event, the Jubilee, and more winning Germans as our Royal Family proves that no one does Victorian pomp better than her great-great granddaughter.

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