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Farewell to a local hero

By Daphne Chamberlain

George Robb died last Christmas Day, triggering many memories in Finchley. The footballer called a “dashing, dark-haired raider” by *The Independent* was a local hero in the 1950s. A Tottenham and England player, he also taught PE and Geography at Christ's College. His pupils remember discussing the Saturday match with him, and a film crew turned up at the school for a programme about famous sportsmen's daytime jobs.

This hero was very local, because he started with Finchley Football Club, which was famous then too. In 1953 they reached the third round of the FA Cup, knocking out Crystal Palace at Summers Lane. On winter Saturday afternoons, you knew if they were playing at home by the stream of supporters walking up the High Road.

That year George, their most famous player, a very fast left-winger shooting with either foot, attracted the attention of Italian club Padua. But he turned professional for Tottenham, where he already played as an amateur.

Spurs should have reached the Cup Final in 1956. George Robb appeared to have been brought down before an open goal in the last minutes of

their semi-final, but no penalty was given (some things never change.)

He retired through injury after 200 games and 58 goals for Tottenham, just too early to be in Bill Nicholson's Double-winning side, but did appear in the 1952 Olympics, and stood in for the great Tom Finney in 1956, when Hungary beat England 6-3. He never played again for England's first team, but won three B caps and 18 as an amateur international.

George Robb was born at Finsbury Park, attended Holloway School, and spent the last 47 years of his life at Ardingly in Sussex, but to many people of a certain age the Wingate and Finchley website had his obituary right with these words: “We take this opportunity of saluting the Finchley legend.”



Good neighbours: Leona hands over her mosaic to Spiros at East Finchley Allotments.
Photo by Mary Poulter.

A few of my favourite things

By Mary Poulter

There was a lovely example of neighbourliness and good will at East Finchley Allotments when an artist made a special mosaic to thank her fellow plotholder for his kindness to humans and animals alike.

Leona Matuszczak created the artwork from ceramics and glass to reflect the things that her friend Spiros loves the most: KitKat the allotment cat, Percy the fox, a robin, two dahlias and a cup of Greek coffee.

She said she wanted to say thank you to Spiros, who has turned part of his allotment shed into a sort of café where he makes coffee, fresh mint tea and snacks for his neighbours, and who is always

looking after the allotments' animal life.

Leona runs children's parties, hen parties and teaches art and crafts workshops. Find out more at www.artists-resource.co.uk



Double celebration for estate agent

Martyn Gerrard Estate Agents had cause for a double celebration when it marked its 48th year in business and on the following day won the Silver Award for best Medium London Agent at the Letting Agency of the Year Awards, sponsored by the Times and Sunday Times.

The awards were presented by four times Olympic Gold medallist Sir Matthew Pinsent and more than 5,000 offices from across the country were represented. Managing director Simon Gerrard said: “I am proud that the professionalism, expertise and hard work of our lettings team have been recognised by this award.” Martyn Gerrard has eight branches across north London, including one in East Finchley.

Joyce Harris

Investigators are looking for Joyce Harris, the niece of retired music shop owner Malcolm Jacobs, who died on 13 July 2003.

Joyce may be in line for funds from a superannuation trust in Australia, connected to Malcolm's estate. Joyce's last known address was in Grays, Essex, but she might still have some local connections. Anyone who can help can email Roger Pearce on roger@factual.com.au or write to Roger Pearce, Suite 204, 30 Fisher Rd, PO Box 2086, Dee Why, NSW 2099, Australia.

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