



Letters to the Editor

The kindness of strangers

Dear Editor,

I was delighted to read news of a new councillor for East Finchley, Arjun Mitra. A couple of weeks ago I answered the phone to a caller who had mistakenly dialled my number. He began the conversation by mentioning the Labour party. I interrupted and told him he had dialled a wrong number but when I heard he was from a political party, I complained to him that I could never find a telephone number because there were never any phone books these days and I was unable to access the internet.

He had caught me at a bad time, but he listened to my complaint and asked for my email address and the address I was looking for. I explained that I was eager to send a letter of condolence to an old friend who had recently been bereaved.

Later that evening I received an email from Arjun Mitra giving me the address I was seeking. I was so touched that he had taken the trouble for a complete stranger. I wrote back to Arjun thanking him for his kindness. Tolstoy wrote that we

must do the good that is in front of us. Our new councillor is a fine example of this. Good luck, Arjun Mitra.

**Yours faithfully,
Vivienne Kaufman
By email.**

CPZ fight goes on

Dear Editor,

I was so pleased to hear that the residents' legal action is going ahead in the High Court against the new parking charges in controlled parking zones (CPZs) across Barnet. Barnet CPZ Action Group (and all who have supported it) go to show once again what a special place East Finchley is to live.

Hopefully soon the parking charges will be reduced to a reasonable amount, i.e. the amount needed to maintain the CPZ, and not a penny more! It seems to me that many of the residents who have had to pay the new parking charges have had no alternative, which is very unfair.

**Yours faithfully,
Debbie Linton,
Address supplied.**

Tree vandalism

Dear Editor,

One day last week, tree surgeons showed up and removed a magnificent, huge and healthy cedar tree that had stood at the back of Pulham Avenue for many years. There were no notices put up, no consultation with the neighbourhood.

I had always thought that this was protected by a tree preservation order but Barnet Council said it "did not appear to be". So, at the whim of one owner, the loveliest feature on the estate, something that was an asset to the whole neighbourhood, vanished in just a day. It felt like vandalism.

Meanwhile, down the road in affluent Abbots Gardens, a notice by Barnet Council went up the same day. It said the council intended to carry out tree surgery there, and anyone with any concerns could phone a given number at the council, with another number for the tree surgeons given for "any queries about the timing of these works". A council estate may never be a conservation area, but it still deserves its thing of beauty. Why didn't Barnet protect our tree?

**Yours faithfully,
Gayle Goshorn,
Pulham Avenue, N2.**

The war through young eyes

Dear Editor,

I am in the process of writing a fiction book about a child's view of the war and a story based around his life during this time. Though the story is fiction, the details surrounding the novel will be true. As well as being a book of interest to the younger generation, it will also educate them as to what actually happened during those times. I am researching that period so that all details will be accurate and correct. However, I can see no better way to research than have the memories of those who actually lived through this time.

I am hoping that your readers may be able to help me by sending their memories of those times. If someone was seven when the war begun they would be 80 now. There are many out there who, I'm sure, can accurately recall those times. Perhaps they were evacuated. The sounds, the smells, the innocence cannot be dreamed up. These are the memories I need. Who knows, a good response may generate enough material to be a book on its own.

If you have memories of those times, would it be at all possible to send them to me at willisonkeith@yahoo.co.uk. I realise that access to a computer for people of that age may limit my response. Therefore I can be written to at 16 Ibbett Lane, Potton, Bedfordshire SG19 2U. Any photographs, or anything to do with those times will be returned once copies were taken. I feel that these memories need to be preserved and this (or these) book(s) may just be a way of doing that. Please help this project.

**Yours faithfully,
Keith J Willison,
Potton, Bedfordshire.**

Any reader who feels strongly about any matter is invited to use this "Soapbox" column. Please note that opinions expressed are those of the writer alone.



A sporting call to action

By Ruth Brown

Prince William is calling on us to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee by permanently protecting a local playing field. The front page of last month's Archer reported that Haringey has several playing fields that are part of his 2012 Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge. The scheme gives communities an opportunity to vote for an outdoor space in their area to become a QE2 Field. It's then permanently protected, and the council is able to apply for special QE2 Field improvement funds.

The QE2 Fields website says of Barnet: "Unfortunately this local authority has not put any sites forward yet." However, it invites local residents to ask their Council to take part in the QE2 Challenge. If you think Barnet should join in this celebration of the Diamond Jubilee, it only takes a minute. Go to www.qe2fields.com and click on "Call to Action".

As well as its patron Prince William, the QE2 Fields Challenge has many famous supporters. Derek Redmond, gold medallist and 400m record holder, says: "The opportunities that playing fields provide to young people are fundamental in building sporting enthusiasm and this is a brilliant campaign to help our future athletes. I would not be where I am now without having access to my local playing field."

So perhaps Barnet, like Haringey, should be supporting potential local stars of future Olympics.

Thought-provoking dance

A group of dancers from Tudor School won an award for their lively routine and stunning visuals at a national dance event organised by the British Red Cross. Children in Year 5 took part in the national dance event called 'Make Your Move' at the Bernie Grant Theatre in Tottenham in April.

Led by the deputy headteacher Mrs Lockwood, the dance group created a sequence themed around water and the life-threatening problems that individuals and communities are faced with when there is a lack of water.

The group won an award for 'Most Provoking Visuals and Group Performance', a great achievement. This is the second year that the school has taken part in the event, and alongside the dance the children produced a PowerPoint presentation to support the theme of the dance.

Mrs Lockwood said: "The children performed brilliantly and willingly gave up their Saturday to attend the event, which was held in a real theatre. It was a memorable and wonderful experience for us all."

Children's ideas for Stanley Field

By Leo Kucera and Georgia Hunt

Children from Holy Trinity School are making a difference in the Stanley Field campaign by writing letters to the council and putting their point across. They were inspired by their visit to the horror that is now Stanley Field.

Year 5 from Holy Trinity School have been making plans for Stanley Field's make-over. The children feel strongly about the council's plans to build flats and the pollution it would create so close to their school playground. They were interested to hear about Stanley Field's child-friendly past from their teacher, Miss Katie Artemiou, and would like it to be returned to that state.

The children's plan is to develop the field into a sports facility with a basketball pitch, a large grass pitch for a wide range of sports, two small

sand pitches, one AstroTurf pitch, an athletics track and perhaps a small tuck shop. Also vegetable patches and allotments would be a cheap alternative. Both would be green and healthy ideas, creating educational opportunities for children.

These ideas would not cost a lot of money and it would be usable by local schools and hundreds of local families each year. We can't let this peaceful and safe outdoor area we replaced by buildings and roads. We look forward to hearing from our local councillor!

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