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THE ARCHER




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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Santa hats on for High Road festival

By Roger Chapman

East Finchley's very first Christmas festival on the High Road is shaping up to be a day to remember. The organising team, who run the hugely popular summer festival in Cherry Tree Wood, want to establish the event as north London's premier High Road winter festival, with festivities and activities for all ages on Saturday 8 December.

The fun starts on Friday 7 December with a Christmas-themed sing-along at the Windsor Castle pub from 9pm; then the festival proper gets under way from 10am on the Saturday.

Twenty community and local business stalls will line the pavement along the High Road from the Barracuda Café up to KFC, as well as stalls in the regular European market from the Bald Faced Stag down to the tube station.

A performance stage will host carol singers, a brass band and rock bands performing from 12 noon to 6pm, with two other performance spaces along the High Road featuring magicians, street performers and musicians throughout the afternoon and early evening. Coronation Street's Michelle Collins will be coming along at 5pm to switch on the Christmas lights.

A Tea Dance will be held between 2pm and 4pm at the East Finchley Methodist Church with tea, cakes, music and lots of dancing, and there will be children's storytelling in the library.

A choir from local churches will be roving the streets singing carols and a giant Christmas tree will be in place at the corner of Leicester Road, with East Finchley Open artists running a stall to make tree decorations. Santa will be available to have his photo taken throughout the afternoon.

Santas on the run

For those who fancy being active, there'll be a 5km Santa fun run starting at Bike and Run, for which the minimum qualification is to wear a Santa hat. The store will also be hosting a Santa turbo bike time trial.

In the evening, The Cabaret of Pottiness will be performing in Finchley Youth Theatre, and The Applelips Brothers and/or Those Naughty Lumps will be playing at the Windsor Castle pub from 9pm.

The festival promises to be a great chance to do your Christmas shopping locally and to try out the numerous excellent cafés and restaurants in the High Road.

The organisers are still looking for help from people who can deliver publicity materials, help set up on the day or act as stewards; and from anyone who wants to perform in one of the performance spaces. To offer help or find out more, email eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com or telephone 07983 360 834.



Left to right: Gill Hayward, Deborah Meaden, Peter Jones and Kellie Forbes.

Enter the Dragons' Den

By Diana Cormack

An East Finchley resident and her business partner have achieved the rare success of having all five entrepreneurs on BBC TV's Dragons' Den desperate to invest in their product. The team was obviously as impressed by the product, a children's activity rucksack, as they were by the presentation.

Despite the pressure, Gill Hayward of Durham Road and Kellie Forbes from Essex remained calm, eventually persuading Deborah Meaden and Peter Jones to join forces in backing their YUUbag.

Three-minute pitch

Although they had prepared well for a grilling by the dragons, Gill told *THE ARCHER* that walking into the "den" was a frightening

experience. It was filmed in Manchester last March, following a long and vigorous selection process. She describes the filming session as being like a business meeting. There was a maximum of three minutes allowed for their sales pitch and, after one and a half hours of filming, the final televising on 23 September lasted just over 12 minutes.

Ergonomics with extras

The couple had the idea for an ergonomically designed bag in 2009 and asked the Backcare charity for advice to ensure the product was comfortable and

fitted well. They researched thoroughly, asking hundreds of parents and children, including their own, for suggestions.

When I looked into the backpack my first comment was: "It's like a Tardis!" Inside there is plenty of room for kids' clobber, along with a variety of useful net or see-through compartments, including a clear plastic bag for lunch remnants. There are useful bits and bobs, such as a colouring pad and pencils and a magnetic gamepack. Visit www.yuubag.com to see what is available and to view customer comments.



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