



All hands on deck for East Finchley Christmas festival

By Chris Hampson

The disappointment of cancelling this year's East Finchley Festival as a result of the wettest summer for 100 years has spurred the organising committee into thinking about things differently.

The French Market will be visiting the High Road on 8 December and the East Finchley Festival committee thought that this would be a great opportunity to organise a winter Christmas festival. This could, of course become an annual event for East Finchley.

There are a few principles for a winter festival. Firstly, there should be something for everyone, of all ages and ethnic groups. Secondly, this is a chance for local Christmas shopping, so it helps local traders. Thirdly, this is an opportunity to showcase local groups and charities and, finally, it is the festive season and a time to enjoy life, particularly for the young ones.

Making it happen

Time is tight and clearly we need all hands on deck. Everything's possible with a lot of help and support from the community, which has always worked for the summer

festival in Cherry Tree Wood.

Planning has already started. Ideas being worked on are: an East Finchley Christmas tree, a performance stage, better Christmas lights, street entertainers, Christmas films at the Phoenix, a choir, secret Santa, East Finchley Christmas puddings and stalls for local groups.

John at Barracuda on the High Road has generously provided the committee with an evening meeting space and a financial contribution to get things started. We have also already talked to Maddens, Tony's, Bike & Run, the Phoenix and, so far, it is all positive.

Now we need help and ideas from everyone in the community, particularly to make the current plans come true. New ideas will be welcome too. If you can help then please contact eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com

Time travel by phone

From mid-October QR codes like the one pictured will be appearing on lampposts around East Finchley and Hendon. These QR codes offer a glimpse of the past: scanning the code with your smartphone will show you a photo of the same street corner as it appeared 50 or even 100 years ago. Time travel was never so easy!

The Past Present installation is part of Barnet Libraries' celebration of the Family Learning Festival 2012 and will be disappearing again in November. If you haven't used a QR code before, now is the time to try. It's a chance to introduce your family to East Finchley's history and the QR codes link together to make two history trails for children.



David and Nicola Baldwin at the Pilates Nation studio in Church Lane.

Pilates hope for David

By Julia Lawrence

Pilates Nation will be opening its doors in Church Lane for a marathon 12 hours of physical fun this month to help a local headteacher in his fight against cancer. Staff at the studio have chosen to donate all money raised on the Pilates for Good Day on Sunday 14 October to send David Baldwin to Mexico for a course of alternative treatment not available in the UK.

David, 54, who lives in Durham Road, is the headteacher at Clifton Lodge prep school in Ealing, and husband to Nicola, a pilates teacher at the studio, which is owned and run by Alison Goodman. David and Nicola are parents of three children: Eric, ten, Evangeline, 15, and George, 17, who are students at Fortismere School. David was diagnosed with breast cancer six years ago, a disease most people assume affects only women, but which afflicts more than 370 men each year. Recently, the family was devastated to learn that the cancer had returned,

this time to his lungs, chest and spine.

Raising the money

They are hoping to raise £40,000 to send David to the Oasis of Hope hospital in Mexico, which offers hope to those fighting seemingly incurable cases using a combination of both conventional and alternative treatments. So far, the community, friends and family have thrown their support behind David, with a number of fundraising projects, and the appeal currently stands at £10,000. But more is desperately

needed if David is to have a chance of getting the treatment. Nicola says a number of Pilates classes will be available on the day, including tower classes for £15 per person (maximum eight people), semi-privates for £25 per person (three people) and one-to-ones for £50 per person, with all the money going directly to David's appeal. To book a session, call Pilates Nation on 020 8444 5244 and to learn more about David's story, visit his blog: www.davidbaldwin.co.uk

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