



## First with the news

Here are some of the stories, features and adverts that made those first two editions of *THE ARCHER* in January and February 1993.

On the front page of our four-page first edition was an article titled 'Policing East Finchley'. The writer describes how he attended a press briefing at Golders Green police station and came away with the details of many local crimes.

A charity box was stolen from Walters the greengrocers in the High Road by two 'pimpily faced youths', and an angry drunk refused service by Shillilapi Indian Restaurant punched and shattered the plate glass window as a farewell gesture.

There were reports of burglaries at homes in Sedgemere Avenue, Dennison Close, Cornwall Close, Durham Road and Creighton Avenue, plus a 5am break-in at the East End Road sub-Post Office where thieves stole £100 in cash and cigarettes to the value of £1,600.

Also broken into were bookmakers William Hill and Andrews the chemist, both in the High Road. No wonder the article starts: "What a dangerous area we live in..."

Elsewhere in the first edition, it was reported that **East Finchley Community Festival** would go ahead on 19 June despite losing its Barnet Council grant. Two years earlier, the whole event had been cancelled when the council accused it of becoming 'political', although the accusation was subsequently rejected in a court hearing and the festival organisers were awarded costs.

**Community spirit** was strong right from the start. Issue number one carried appeals for residents to join Neighbourhood Watch schemes, help out at neighbourhood charity CONTACT and offer their skills to the free advice service run by East Finchley Neighbourhood Centre.

There was **news** of a toy exhibition at the Church Farmhouse Museum in Hendon and the edition carried a short his-

tory of the East Finchley area, written by Alan Randle, who worked at the library.

Our **advertisers** in those days included some who are still with us: Stewart Duncan opticians, estate agents Jeremy Leaf, solicitors Cree Godfrey & Wood, CW Andrews pharmacy; and others who have vanished over the years, including Culture Vultures fancy dress, The Old Europeans Hungarian restaurant, A1 Motor Stores and The Bargain Centre for secondhand furniture and bric-a-brac.

We also carried **classified ads**. On offer in the first edition was a drum kit with "symbols" for £40, a solid pine double wardrobe said to be a real bargain at £100 (buyer collects), and a collapsible Scandinavian-style office table for £25. Also advertised was a car share for anyone travelling daily to the Moorgate area between 7.45 and 8am, the opportunity to sample Greek Cypriot home cooking in your own home "at very reasonable prices", plus a new Art for Adults course starting up in Durham Road on a weekly basis.

Finally, back to **crime news**. Our second edition carried another round-up of local incidents but this time they were a bit more weird and wonderful. Over the Christmas holidays, it was reported, villains broke into Bishop Douglass School and defecated on the floor before making off with eight bottles of Tippex. As our writer commented: "There must be an easier way of having a white Christmas".

And then there was the burglary at a home in Long Lane early on a February morning when the only items stolen were £30 worth of magazines. Among the titles taken were *Playboy: Best of the Big Uns* and *Big Ones Over 40 Inches* plus "probably for the thief's mother" a copy of *Woman* magazine and *TV Guide*.

## THE ARCHER at 20: Archie the icon

By Nick Young

As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, the London Underground celebrates 150 years. For more than 70 of those years, the iconic archer statue has dominated the station and the suburb, becoming the symbol of East Finchley.

'Archie' inspired the name of this newspaper and that of N2's new free school to open in September; he features on the benches on the High Road and even represented the London Borough of Barnet on the 2012

Olympic badge.

"Brilliantly sited, fantastically realised, impishly styled and enduringly relevant, the archer sums up pretty much everything worth celebrating about the Underground," says blogger

Ian Jones, whose study of the Tube's "finest features, sensations and oddities" (150greatthingsabouttheunderground.com) has become an online hit.

Although there has been a station at East Finchley since 1867, the current building dates from the late 1930s and was designed by the architect Charles Holden (1875-1960), who was responsible for many Tube stations during the inter-war period.

### Symbolic statue

He wanted several stations to have statues, and the sculptor Eric Aumonier (1899-1974) was commissioned in June 1939 to produce the East Finchley archer which, due to the war, was the only one to be completed. The decision to have him in a kneeling position, looking as though he has just fired an arrow down the line to what was then the longest railway tunnel in the world, was deliberate. As a London Transport staff publication noted at the time: "It is more than a decorative device - it is powerful symbolism."

Archie commemorates the fact that this area was once part of the Bishop of London's hunting ground. Further evidence of this can be seen locally in various street and pub names, and on the old Finchley Council coat of arms which is visible on the façade of East Finchley Library.

Unveiled on July 22 1940, Archie is almost twice natural size and was made from six hundredweight (just over 300kg) of beech timber round a steel armature, covered by five hundredweight of sheet lead.

It is said that there was originally an arrow at Morden which was stolen, although as Morden station (another Holden design) predated East Finchley station by over a decade this may be an urban myth.



'Archie' photo by David Tupman

## Around and About

Sadly, we haven't got room to print all the stories *THE ARCHER* ran in its first edition but this 'Around and About' column by Chinwag gives a flavour of some of the coverage in our early days.

A lot of ladies are more than a little upset about the closure of the toilet in East End Road, opposite Budgens. Barnet is doing nothing about fixing it, and this just isn't good enough. Local councillors had better watch out: Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned!

More and more houses seem to have a sign on their doors saying "No free papers". During November, we knocked on several doors and asked if this also applied to our community newspaper. Everyone agreed that this was an exception and that they would like to receive it. Because it is impossible to

know which houses to avoid and which ones to deliver to, we hope you will bear with us until we get better organised.

Our very own Kevin Finn found something odd one November evening. Delivering leaflets about *THE ARCHER*, he discovered that the only building in the High Road without a letterbox was the Post Office itself! Could it be that the Post Office has found a way to increase profits? If you want to deliver a letter, you have to post it as normal mail. One wonders whether they would have to pay double postage if you forgot to put a stamp on it.

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