



YOUNG ARCHER



Wing Commander Hale presenting David and George Eristavi with their Jack Petchey award medals.

Squadron flying high

By Nick Young

393 (Finchley) Squadron of the Air Training Corps held its annual awards ceremony in November. There were promotions and awards for many of the squadron's members, who have spent the year participating in a wide range of activities including sports, camps and trips abroad.

The squadron band took part in the Lord Mayor's Show, the Remembrance Sunday parade in Finchley and, a week after the awards ceremony, East Finchley's Christmas Festival on 8 December.

Jack Petchey awards

Brothers George and David Eristavi, both of whom are sergeants in the squadron, received Jack Petchey awards from Wing Commander David Hale, who is in charge of the ATC's Middlesex Wing.

The brainchild of the London-born businessman of the same name, the Jack Petchey awards scheme for young people was established in 1999 to recognise "extreme endeavour and to help young people to help themselves". As well as medals

for the winning cadets, 393 (Finchley) Squadron receives £200, but the twist is that it is the Eristavi brothers who get to decide how it spends the money.

The squadron's commanding officer Squadron Leader Michael Albone, described the ATC as "a great mixer, a great leveller for young people of all educational abilities, classes and creeds ... it's good to see them come out of their shells and do something."

The ATC caters for young people aged between 13 and 18. The 393 (Finchley) Squadron, which currently has 35 members, is located at 444 High Road, North Finchley. Further information can be found on the squadron's website www.393atc.50megs.com

Sixth formers debate

hot topics

By Issy van der Velde

A sixth form conference at Christ's College Finchley on Wednesday 14 November focused on the raised school leaving age as well as other issues. It was a great success with over 150 students from five different schools attending.

Chairman Nick Byrne and Chief Inspector Andy Mariner connected with the audience instantly with their unique humour and fantastic audience participation techniques. The opinions of panellists Ken Battye and Jules Jack on whether or not



The panel on stage at Christ's College.

we should trust our youth caused some interesting debate amongst the two.

It was wonderful, considering their party political differences, seeing Conservative MP Mike Freer and Labour councillor Alison Moore sharing some of the same views.

The students got to see that as well as being politicians, policemen and youth magistrates, the panellists were also people with families and varying backgrounds. Thank you to all the students and panellists for making it an afternoon to remember.

Fireworks gone but not forgotten

By Fiona Mitchell

Bonfire night, a time of 'oohs' and 'ahhs', toffee apples and the excitement of a firework display. But for a while, East Finchley and Muswell Hill have been left out of the spotlight.

With only one major firework display available for years, things didn't look like they were going to change. The situation reached a critical point when Alexandra Palace cancelled its display for the third year. For lots of residents it seemed bonfire night would be a let-down.

But then Fortismere School stepped in. There had been an enormous gap in the market and Fortismere knew what to do: create a fantastic display with good food and entertainment. They would put the fire back into bonfire night; it was sure to be a success.

Mud, mousles and magic

I was only one of thousands of spectators queuing with my ticket outside the school. Inside, you could hear the shrieks of laughter and the roars of an excited crowd. On entry, you were greeted with delicious aromas of food. Food vans were offering anything from Bowler's Gourmet Meatballs to mousles marinade.

Stepping onto the field, my feet squelched into mud and I was glad I'd worn my wellies. Above my head, kids squealed in delight as a retro fairground ride spun their chairs high into the air.

I saw a crowd at the end of the field and investigated. Fire-eaters were putting on a great show in time to the pop music blaring out of speakers around the field. There weren't just fairground rides; I tried my luck at various classic stalls including hook-a-duck and darts.

Before I knew it, it was 7.30pm. I moved to a good spot and waited for the magic. I wasn't disappointed. Although the fireworks didn't last as long as at some shows, they were of

a much higher quality. Well, I guess that's expected when you hire the same company responsible for the London

2012 Olympics opening and closing ceremonies' displays! It seems firework nights in East Finchley won't be boring again.

Library cards for all

Barnet Council is set to be among 22 local authorities testing automatic library membership for children and young people. The initiative from Arts Council England aims to lead to an increase in children, young people and families using their local libraries, and stimulate more reading for pleasure. Ultimately, it's hoped that 100% of children will become library cardholders.



Love in a shoebox

By Lisa Omar and David Winton

Children from St Theresa's Catholic Primary School, East End Road, got stuck in to help with packing presents for Operation Christmas Child at St Mary's Church in East Finchley.

After encouraging their parents and families to wrap and donate a whopping 100 boxes to the shoebox appeal, some of them joined organiser Cath Walker and other volunteers to experience firsthand how to wrap, donate and pack a shoebox to be sent to children in countries all around the world.

They were told how special items like toiletries and pencils

are needed in every box, and to make the box feel like it had been packed with love. The shoeboxes were distributed to a number of countries including Swaziland and Azerbaijan.

The final count of shoeboxes packed and sent off from St Mary's over four weeks was amazing: just short of 4,000. If you are interested in volunteering for next year, please contact Cath Walker on cwalker50@hotmail.co.uk. Find out more at www.operationchristmaschild.org.uk

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www.eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk

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With Crèche and Young Church**

Worship Music Social events Wheelchair friendly
e-mail: info@eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk Room hire tel: 020 8444 9887

PARENT & BABY/ CHILD ACTIVITIES

- ⊙ **Baby & U baby massage.** Contact Ruth at babymassagewithruth@gmail.com, www.facebook.com/baby-andubabymassage
- ⊙ **Bringing up Baby.** Screenings of the latest films for parents with babies. Phoenix Cinema. Wednesdays 11am. Box office 020 8444 6789.
- ⊙ **Coffee & Kids,** Fri 9.15-11.15, Green Man Ctr. Rachel 8343 6147.
- ⊙ **Dads' Club:** Get-togethers for dads looking after young children in East Finchley. Adam 07957 441435.
- ⊙ **EF National Childbirth Trust** contact Ruby Yang or Patrizia Canwell at east-finchleynct@googlemail.com
- ⊙ **Newstead Parent & Toddler Group,** Thurs 9-12-30, Green Man Ctr. Sajni 8359 3460.
- ⊙ **Parent & Toddler Group,** Green Man Centre, Julia 8444 2276
- ⊙ **Stepping Stones,** interactive play session for under 3s. Karen 07957 278860.
- ⊙ **Teddy Bears' Music,** singing for 0-3s in Holy Trinity Church, N2; Thursdays 9.45am & 10.45am. Liz 07836 284538.