



Mary lands a zippy little Italian

By Linda Sansom

It was when Mary Barry was visiting an Italian car show that she fell in love with a Tazzari. No, not a hunky Italian, but this rather zippy model, which has been attracting attention in the streets around East Finchley and North London.

Mary, a sprightly 92, is the proud owner of the Italian-made electric car, which she says she bought "on the spur of the moment", but which she doesn't actually drive herself.

Her daughter Maria, with whom she lives, just off Twyford Avenue, said: "Mum wanted a new car and as her chauffeur I had to have it. We had a test drive where a racing car driver got up to around 70 mph, which is fast for an electric car."

With no after-sales service provided by the makers, when it needed a service and a couple of other repairs the company sent an engineer especially from Malta, from where the right-hand drive models were exported.

One of three

The car is unusual because, although there are plenty of electric cars in England, as far as Maria knows there are only three Tazzaris.

"I use it all the time. There



Small but energetic: Mary Barry with her Tazzari electric car.

is no tax or congestion charge, and there are several electric car spaces where you can plug it in, although not yet in Barnet. The range is about 90 miles, but I have taken it further than I meant, and then I get range anxiety. We have a socket in the drive where I plug it in each night."

The car attracts quite a lot of attention and gets very positive

feedback when she is out, as people often come over to ask about it. "It's so much fun to drive," she added.

Ironically, Mary Barry has never driven, although she has always been interested in cars. "I have photos of her at car shows and she is more fascinated by them than I am," says her daughter.

Guides go large at new venue

By Toni Dietmann, Unit Guider

The 4th East Finchley Guides are moving to a new meeting hall. Since it started in September 2008, the group has met every Thursday at Holy Trinity Church on Church Lane. From this month, it moves to St Mary's on the High Road.

We would like to thank Holy Trinity Church for its generous support over the last four years. Without the encouragement and kind welcome we received from Rev Laurence Hill, which continued after he left through Michael Stanway, East Finchley would not have its Guide unit.

The tree we planted in the grounds to mark our first birthday, which is commemorated by a plaque unveiled by Cllr (now MP) Mike Freer, also recognises that kindness.

Coming home

We now look forward to many years at St Mary's. We are very excited to be moving for two reasons. St Mary's is a much bigger hall so we can significantly increase the number of girls we can welcome to the unit.

Secondly, it seems that we are returning to the original home of 4th East Finchley Guides. When we started, we knew that we were technically 'reopening' the number of an old East Finchley unit, but we didn't know anything about it. On visiting St Mary's we found a storage cupboard with a sign on the front that said '17th Finchley Scouts & 4th East Finchley Guides'. It must be 30 years old. If you have any memories of Guiding in East Finchley, particularly at St Mary's we'd be delighted to hear from you.

The bigger hall means we can grow Guiding in East Finchley. We meet on Thursdays during term time from 7.30-9pm. Guides is open to girls aged 10-14 years. If you are interested in joining, we are having a taster session on Thursday 17 January from 7.30-9pm.

Please email 4theastfinchleyguides@googlemail.com to let us know if your daughter wants to attend. Come along to find out what modern Guiding is all about and read more at www.girlguiding.org.uk

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KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Your carriage awaits

In the cold grey of a January morning the post-Christmas misery starts to grip the huddled commuters waiting listlessly on the platform. The only sound is them quietly moaning that there's never a Charing Cross train when you want one while they prepare to kill to get the last seat. But not me, because I love the tube.

The sprawling network, Harry Beck's wiring diagram tube map, Charles Holden's art deco stations and Eric Aumonier's Archer statue at East Finchley make it the jewel in the crown of London. And it's been like that since the first Metropolitan Line trains rattled between Paddington and Farringdon 150 years ago.

It's not just the history or the architecture that make me love the tube; it's something else that does it for me. Why? Because I grew up in the suburbs and it became my transport of delight, my spaceship, my time machine and my escape pod from somewhere I didn't fit in.

Growing up, nothing could touch the excitement of going into London to sample the alien world of shops, buses and cars that contrasted with the sleep-inducing banality of home. The local shops were just a shop, but Hamley's was heaven. And when I became a disreputable youth I discovered Camden and Kensington Market and the dark and exciting underbelly of the city and I knew that was where I belonged.

Black leather jacket, jeans, baseball boots, shades and soft pack Marlboro got me funny looks as I shambled through the early evening. The net curtains twitched and the middle classes muttered a chorus of uncomprehending disapproval. But ahead of me was the sanctuary of the tube. My passport to freedom.

First, there was the crawl past back gardens and then the rush of entering the tunnel. Blackness outside, a blur of names of stations I never used, everywhere from Bounds Green to Tufnell Park, from Archway to Turnpike Lane. The unknown and the unknowing of Holloway Road and Kentish Town and then I was there.

Emerging into the night-bright neon of Piccadilly Circus or Leicester Square, into the sleaze and sophistication of the city, heading for bars and clubs and loud music and mind-altering experiences, the suburbs seemed like another planet. There in some club in Wardour Street I could find my own slice of heaven where no one sneered and net curtains didn't twitch. The tube had taken me there and even if it would eventually bring me back wasted but unashamed it was still my transport of delight. So, for that reason and many others, on Thursday 10 January I will celebrate its 150th birthday.

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