



**Letters to the editor...**

**This pointless arson**

Dear Editor,

I am a member of the Hilldrop Community Centre, in Holloway, Islington. A few weeks ago, our Singing Group and Ukulele Group were invited to entertain at St James's Church, Muswell Hill, Teatime Club. We enjoyed the afternoon, and I was invited back again to lead some singing at the Teatime Club for their 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary. A few members were late arriving, as they were delayed by a police cordon, which we later heard was due to a fire in a community centre.

When I heard the news that an Islamic Centre had been razed to the ground and completely destroyed, I was shocked and saddened. This seemed to be a retaliation for the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby at Woolwich, but almost all the Muslim community have been devastated by that atrocity. I pray that the perpetrators of the Muswell Hill fire will realise how futile the burning of the centre is.

Community centres are a life-line and an oasis of friendship and learning in different areas. I couldn't believe that such a thing could happen in such a lovely quiet area of North London. Please may people realise that the majority of residents and neighbourhoods long to live in peace, love and harmony with each other.

**Yours sincerely,**  
**Joan Hewitt,**  
**Hilldrop Crescent, N7.**

**Respect for conservation**

Dear Editor,

Pardes House School, built in the 1860s as Christ's College, at Church End, Finchley, is a Grade II listed building. This should give statutory protection for all the structures on the site, and impose an obligation on its owners.

Despite this there have been significant losses. The Fives Courts were demolished in 1998 and the wall along College Terrace followed; there has been a most unsightly fence there for several years.

Barnet Council took enforcement action in respect of the wall in 2006 to require its rebuilding. It was only in 2012 that the school authorities made any effort to comply, and sought the council's permission to replace the wall with a lesser structure.

This proposal was opposed by the Finchley Society and by local residents, including ones from College Terrace who look straight on to the present fence. The application was discussed by the council on 8 May and refused by a majority vote.

This is a gratifying decision (though it is regrettable that the Church End ward councillor on the committee was one of the minority). The Finchley Society hopes that the school authorities will now engage in constructive discussions with the local community about the reinstatement of the wall and the maintenance of the school buildings generally. They are a very important part of the Church End Conservation Area and must be kept for future generations.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**Carol Halls,**  
**Chairman, Planning Committee, The Finchley Society**

**Cut the cut-back on trees**

Dear Editor,

The trees in East Finchley High Road were pollarded again this year when they had only a small amount of growth on them. They had managed to produce this from the last time they were done, which was last year as far as I recall.

They were lovely before they were "done" as they had some growth and green starting to appear. They are now ugly, horrible stumps with no growth, even at the beginning of June.

The beauty of a tree is in its foliage and also its usefulness in terms of releasing oxygen and taking in toxins. As far as I can discover from local residents, none of them likes the trees being pollarded. I fear they are probably done by rote and not by reason.

It is an unnecessary expense on taxpayers as the trees should only be trimmed if required by a resident regarding one particular tree, not just for no particular reason or for one that does not really stand up against the need of the environment to be preserved and not destroyed.

We need the London Wildlife Trust to be fully consulted in these matters by the council tree department, and a completely new and different attitude to our trees, particularly our street trees, to be cultivated.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**Primrose Chamberlin,**  
**Leicester Road, N2.**

**A bleak outlook on ash dieback**

Dear Editor,

A few months ago I wrote giving the 'received wisdom' on the situation regarding Chalara fraxinea, (ash dieback disease) which was that every effort is being made to identify and propagate resistant genotypes of ash tree, with a view to rapid repopulation, should the disease take hold.

This week, I attended the Ancient Tree Forum 2013 conference (which deals especially with veteran native trees, but includes a vast pool of arboreal knowledge and expertise), and the situation is far more pessimistic.

The chances of finding a suitable resistant strain and solving the problem are seen as optimistic drivel. The disease has now turned up in many places, not just in the southeast, but as far away as Carmarthenshire. In Kent and in the vicinity of ports such as Felixstowe, any efforts to contain the disease have been abandoned, as the spread is too extensive, and even the experts are divided over how to deal with infected trees without bringing about further spread of fungal spores.

That very day, there had been a consultation with the relevant Government minister, to discuss whether there should be a much tougher regime with regard to import and subsequent movement of all plant material (the words 'barn door', and 'bolted horse' come to mind).

It really is a case of waiting to determine the 'best practice', and does of course also depend upon available funding. The advice given to those with ash trees was to do

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nothing yet. The disease seems to affect younger trees, whilst more mature ones seem to have a greater chance of survival but it may be that it is just that the symptoms take longer to manifest.

That particular topic at the conference ended with a strong feeling that Britain should consult with tree experts in Poland and Scandinavia, as they are some years ahead of us in terms of the disease having taken hold of their ash trees a decade or more ago, and also, rather realistically it seems, that deadwood does provide a good habitat for many organisms, particularly invertebrates.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**Linda Dolata (small woodland owner)**  
**Leopold Road, N2.**

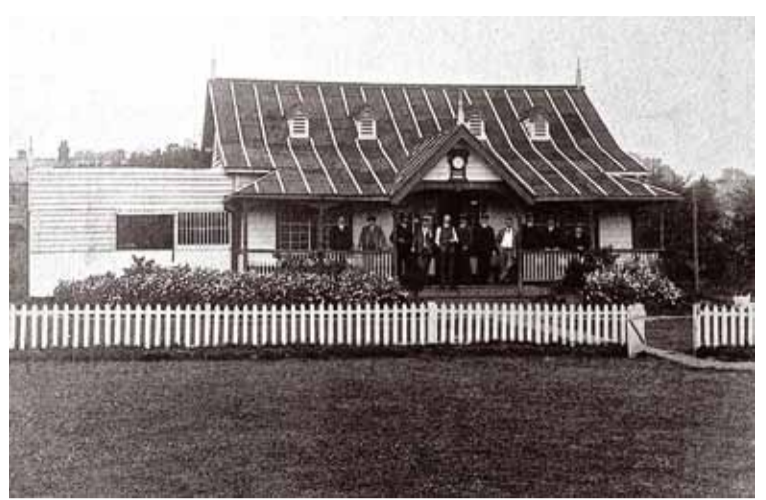
**Preparing for a healthy holiday**

**If you're planning to go abroad, you won't have to travel far for appropriate medical advice and treatment. The CW Andrew Pharmacy at 32, High Road has recently added a travel clinic to its services, offering a convenient local alternative to doctors' surgeries and the Royal Free Hospital Travel Health Centre.**

Pharmacist Paresh Shah told *The Archer* that people should begin preparing for their holidays at least two months in advance. An initial appointment with him will establish what is required for a particular destination, with an on-going plan drawn up for any necessary vaccinations and specific needs. This will include anti-malarial advice, with prescription-free medication being available.

At present the clinic caters for the age range 16 and above (though in some cases for over 12s). This is worth remembering for students going abroad on school journeys, to do voluntary work or on gap-year travels. At the clinic pilgrims for Hajj and Umrah can get the required meningitis vaccination and Meningitis Vaccination Certificate.

Wherever you are going, this advice is available most weekdays and on Saturdays. For more information or to make an appointment pop in to the shop or phone 020 8883 1559.



The North Middlesex Cricket Club was burned down by suffragettes 100 years ago.

**What a difference a century makes...**

**In June 1913 the North Middlesex Cricket Club Pavilion in Crouch End was burned down by suffragettes as part of their campaign for women to have the right to vote. One hundred years on, the club commemorated the centenary of this event with a celebration of girls' cricket.**

Beth Morgan, the Middlesex Womens Captain, was a surprise guest and took the warm-up for the practice. Beth won the World Cup and Ashes while playing for England Women. There were then two under-11 girls' matches followed by an Edwardian tea party.

Under 11 Girls team manager Mike Harris said: "Girls' cricket is one of the fastest growing sports in the country. The girls' cricket section at North Middlesex CC has more than doubled in the last two years and we look forward to welcoming girls of all ages and abilities who want to play cricket."

Find more details at [www.northmiddlesexcc.co.uk](http://www.northmiddlesexcc.co.uk)



Middlesex Women's captain Beth Morgan took the warm-up for the girls' cricket match.

**Art show at the Clissold**

**By Sheila Armstrong**  
**Trained as a lawyer, local resident Raphael Prais has turned his hand to the arts, specifically drawing and writing. In June his art show Drawings by Raphael Prais was showing in the back room at The Clissold, the gastro pub on Fortis Green. Previously he has had a show at the Mango Room in Camden Town.**

Viewing the life drawings in pastel and charcoal *The Archer* was able to talk to Raphael on the opening night. He said it was more exciting to be an artist than a lawyer and he has been known to sketch in court in the past. Previously he has published a novel on Amazon and is also writing another novel at the moment. Whether it will have a legal background or not remains to be seen.

Find out more about his writing and pictures at <http://raphaelprais.weebly.com>. For a trip down Memory Lane the rosily-lit Kinks Room at The Clissold is also worth a look.

**Ally Pally's big birthday**

**Put Sunday 21 July in your diary for the big community celebration to honour Alexandra Park's 150th anniversary. There will be an exciting line-up of free family activities and entertainment from 11am - 4pm.**

According to Duncan Wilson, chief executive of Alexandra Park and Palace Charitable Trust, the "jam-packed programme", to be released soon, will include activities reflecting the park's vibrant and eclectic past, featuring local community groups, entertainers and businesses. It's easy to forget some of the more memorable aspects of the Park's history since its opening in 1863: a miniature Japanese village, hot air balloon rides, a band stand, a diving pavilion, the frying pan-shaped horse-racing course, and a permanent Park circus, not forgetting what's still there, such as the deer park, boating lake and unparalleled views of London.