



The Guy's Trust team start digging for the new village school

Foundations of hope for a village school in the foothills of Nepal

In our April issue, we reported on Vicky and Tony Joseph, of Southern Road, travelling to Nepal to help build a school in memory of their son Guy, who was killed in a paragliding accident aged 25. Here, Vicky describes their trip.

Guy's family and friends flew to Nepal to join the people of Dhikurpokhari, a village in the Annapurna foothills, to start building the first Guy Joseph Early Childhood Development Centre.

The impact of what we were doing really hit when I saw everyone together wearing their Guy's Trust T-shirts, the first of many moments of camaraderie and pride, although accompanied by a profound sadness.

As we clambered down the hillside it seemed that the

whole village had come out to greet us. Waiting for the local dignitaries to arrive, a small band struck up and the village children pulled us onto the makeshift dance floor.

After many thank-you speeches and a very moving minute's silence in memory of Guy, we went to bless the site and to break ground.

Then the hard work began! While the local women untiringly carried massive baskets of gravel strapped to their foreheads, we started to pickaxe and dig out the trench for the

foundations, passing the earth bowl by bowl down the hillside.

The arrival of the brick-making machine caused much excitement although with the brick team averaging one brick every fifteen minutes, the enthusiasm took a temporary nosedive when we discovered that we needed to make 8,000!

Early education

There is a huge need for schools for younger children in Nepal, particularly for girls and the 'untouchable' dalit class. Despite the government's commitment to free education for all, at least one million children do not go to school. Each Guy Joseph school will provide for 150 children up to the age of seven preparing them for, and ensuring their entry into, primary school.

After a week of hard graft and with the trench complete it was time to say our farewells. At the closing ceremony there was no music or dancing because the local people were "sad to say goodbye". As I handed the memorial plaque with Guy's name to the team that will finish work on the school the tears flowed again, this time accompanied by an enormous sense of pride.

Visit www.guystrust.org to find out more.

A hole lot of digging going on

East Finchley's 'Big Dig' will be taking place on the weekend of 13 and 14 July and you can get involved. The weekend is all about discovering the history of East Finchley and is based on the Channel 4 Time Team archaeology programme approach.

People are being asked to dig a one metre square test pit in their garden and each square will be part of a mosaic that will help to build up a bigger picture of what was going on in the past.

The East Finchley Big Dig is being run by a partnership of the East Finchley Community Trust, Dig Where We Stand (a University College of London research project) and the Hendon and District Archaeological Society.

It follows on from the suc-

cessful test pits dug on Martin School playing field where a mysterious bunker was discovered.

A public meeting will be held at Martin Primary School between 6.30-7.30pm on Tuesday 25 June for anyone interested in taking part. In the meantime if you want to know more please contact Roger Chapman on 07855 304 488 or email efbigdig@gmail.com More information at: <http://eastfinchleybigdig.wordpress.com/>

Local artists open their houses

East Finchley Open artists will be hosting their annual Open House weekends from 11am-6pm on July 6 and 7 and July 13 and 14, the 10th year this popular event has been staged.

This year, 45 local artists warmly welcome you, free of charge, to visit them to discuss, enjoy and perhaps buy their work. Artists' homes and studios set off exciting, innovative pieces and paintings in relaxed, informal settings.

A wide variety of original artwork is showcased in 12 houses and studios as well as other High Road venues. Ceramics, jewellery, painting, photography, textile design, sculpture and glasswork will all be on show.

Seven new members are showing their widely differ-

ing, exciting styles and techniques with the EFO for the first time. New this year is an EFO Art Trail which includes a range of East Finchley shops, eateries and the Phoenix Cinema housing a quirky and inventive 10th anniversary exhibit called 10x10. Look out for it along the N2 High Road!

You can link to EFO on Facebook, www.facebook.com/eastfinchleyopen or visit their website www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk for online maps of venues and artists and information about the EFO members.

Stars at the Proms

The Proms at St Jude's music and literary festival in Hampstead Garden Suburb this summer will feature one of the world's greatest ensembles, The Sixteen, and Women's Prize for Fiction shortlisted author Kate Atkinson.

This is the 21st year of the festival, which runs from 22-30 June at Henrietta Barnett School and St Jude-on-the-Hill church. Other big names include bass-baritone Sir Willard White, violin virtuoso Charlie Siem, and renowned scientist Baroness Susan Greenfield.

"We have a programme to suit all tastes," said Proms spokesman Ron Finlay, "including free lunchtime recitals and concerts for kids."

The Festival raises funds for Toynbee Hall, to help socially excluded young people, and the North London Hospice, which cares for people with life-

limiting illnesses. Last year, the Proms was able to donate £50,000 to these good causes.

For the opening midday concert on 22 June, many of the Pandemonium Drummers will be reviving their ebullient performance from the 2012 Olympics, along with a choir of amazing volunteer games-makers.

Seven guided heritage walks in and around Hampstead Garden Suburb and the City are on offer too.

Online booking at www.promsatstjudes.org.uk. Telephone booking opens on June 5; call 020 3322 8123.

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