



Letters

Parking spot hogs

Dear Editor,
I have multiple sclerosis and was recently paralysed by a brain haemorrhage. Although I have learned to walk again with the use of two sticks, my mobility and stamina are severely compromised.

I'd like to make a plea to all able bodied drivers who think it's OK to sit in a disabled parking space as long as they keep their engine running and look as if they are about to leave at short notice.

While you are idling in a Blue Badge holder spot, thinking it doesn't matter as long as you are only five or 10 minutes while your friend nips into a shop, spare a thought for me and others like me, circling the block, waiting for you to go.

On numerous occasions, I have had to park further away than I otherwise would need to, and struggle as best I can, or turn the car around and just go home because a disabled spot has been taken by a non-disabled person using the bay as a sort of won't-be-a-minute-so-it-doesn't-matter parking space. And, whilst I'm on a roll, please do try to refrain from offering me violence, like a gentleman did the other day in Market Place, when I asked him politely if he had a Blue Badge...

Yours faithfully
Name and address supplied.

Grave concerns

Dear Editor,
Thank you so much for the piece in your June edition about the restoration of the gravestone of Ford Madox Brown and his family.

I wanted to highlight that this is just one of many magnificent, and sometimes very neglected, plots in this wonderful cemetery.

Also, fans of the illustrator and designer of strange contraptions William Heath Robinson might be interested to know that he lies in a modest and equally neglected plot in East Finchley cemetery on East End Road.

Yours faithfully,
Harriet Connides,
Address supplied.

Post Office pressure

Dear Editor,
Thank you for inviting comments on the recently re-located Post Office in the High Road. I use the Post Office a lot and know all the services offered, even the thickness letters and packages need to be for the various price levels.

Already I've used the new Post Office a number of times and am unhappy at the way customers who are not so familiar with the services, particularly older people, are persuaded to pay for premium services they don't need at considerable additional cost. When I am posting a package I always say clearly the service I require, often for instance First Class UK with proof of posting (which is free). Inevitably I'm asked if I want the item signed for and I repeat what I have already said and, reluctantly, that is processed.

While waiting in the queue recently I watched an elderly man posting a small parcel. There was a lot of discussion with the counter clerk and, it being a Friday, he asked as he left if it would arrive on Monday. The reply was, "Oh no, tomorrow," meaning that he had paid for Special Delivery on a Saturday which, from what I had overheard,

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the-archer@lineone.net.

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was well beyond what he needed and expensive.

Then a woman who hadn't complete command of English discussed a pile of brown envelopes she had to post with staff whose English is not entirely colloquial either. Again the attempt was made by both the counter clerk and the supervisor to pressure her into sending them by Special Delivery. She said, "Is there something less expensive?" and the reply was "No"2, which isn't true. On other occasions, when a customer asks the cost of sending their letter or package First Class they are asked if they want it "to arrive tomorrow" and as the answer is often "Yes" it is then proposed that they should use a higher service. I wonder if other readers of THE ARCHER are reporting similar observations.

Yours faithfully,
Celia Rufey,
Address supplied.

Post Office plea

Dear Editor,
On my two last visits to our late lamented Crown Post Office I was reassured that the exterior letter boxes would remain *in situ*. However on Thursday 22 May, wishing to post a first class stamped letter I discovered that they had in fact been sealed. A Post Office representative standing on the pavement outside advised me to discuss my concerns with the managers at UOE.

At UOE I was informed that they would accept my letter but had no idea when it would be collected. Further if I was really concerned about a swift delivery I should send it express delivery. Rather a non-sequitur!

Moreover the staff thought the nearest letter box was either at the far end of Lincoln Road or at the sorting office on Market Place.

Name and address supplied

Janet in the jungle

This is Janet Maitland, one of our contributors, with her trusty copy of THE ARCHER in the Amazon jungle. Janet went to Peru in May, unprepared for just how adventurous an adventure holiday could be.



Archer in the Amazon!

"We went on a three-day trek in a remote part of the Andes that was described as 'easy to moderate' which nearly finished us off," said Janet. "We climbed to 14,700 feet, finally reaching the summit in a raging blizzard and collapsing on our knees in relief. My hands were so swollen with altitude sickness that my knuckles disappeared.

"Then we flew to the Amazon to recover. We sweltered away in the humidity, looking at sloths and the like through binoculars. It's not in the least like a David Attenborough programme. Animals have the sense to keep away from humans.

"Apart from the alligators in the river by our hut, the closest we got to any wild life was a

baby boar and one of those monster sized guinea pigs pottering round the compound where we stayed. Oh yes, and there were butterflies – thousands and thousands of them."

Janet is happy to report that, despite the humidity and close-packed baggage, her copy of THE ARCHER remained in pristine condition throughout the trip.

Depala day trip

On Monday 12 May, members of the Depala Community from Finchley and Golders Green were welcomed to Parliament by Mike Freer. Members were hosted at a function in Westminster's Jubilee Room by the Finchley MP for the second consecutive year.

The event, which was held to recognise the work of the community locally, was attended by around 50 people. Speaking after the event, Mike Freer said: "It's always a pleasure to welcome constituents to Parliament and the Depala Community were no exception. I enjoyed discussing local, national and international issues with members of the community. I hope to maintain our excellent links going forward." The Depala Community Centre, located on Church Lane in East Finchley, plays host to a number of social and religious events. For further information, please visit sadmm.co.uk

Can you deliver?

THE ARCHER needs a volunteer to deliver papers to Archer Gardens, the new homes between Lankaster Gardens and Strawberry Vale. Can you spare 20 minutes once a month? Please contact us by email at the-archer@lineone.net or by phone on 0800 612 0748. Thank you.

The First World War at Stephens House

By Daphne Chamberlain
Stephens House – formerly known as Avenue House – was once a military hospital. During the first week of August, exactly 100 years after the start of the First World War, we can get a glimpse of what it was like then.

On display will be a recreation of part of a hospital ward, recruitment posters for the war, vintage films from the era, a music hall style show, and costumes from the BBC drama The Crimson Field. Outside, on the rockery, will be another field of Flanders poppies, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Golders Green.

Caring for the wounded

Viewers of The Crimson Field will know that the enormous number of military casualties could not have been cared for without an estimated 90,000 volunteers working for the Red Cross and the Order of St John of Jerusalem, both on the front line and in the UK. Large and small houses, town halls, hotels, libraries, colleges and even asylums were used as hospitals or convalescent homes.

East Finchley had a convalescent home in Fortis Green, where local people who were

children at the time have told THE ARCHER they remember seeing soldiers in blue uniforms with red ties (known as Hospital Blues). The library in Manor Gardens at the Nag's Head, Holloway, housed a surgical unit and Stephens House was used as a hospital by the RAF from 1919 to 1925.

Military models

The exhibition week will run from Saturday 2 to Saturday 9 August, 12 noon to 5pm. On Sunday 3 August, there will be a display and demonstration of military models from the North London Military Modelling Society. Writing workshops, local history walks and talks, and tea with Chelsea Pensioners are also planned.

For more information, see www.stephenshouseandgardens.com. To see personal stories from volunteer nurses and aides, see www.Spartacus-educational.com/FWWnurses.htm.

Our new (recycled) post box

By Mike Coles
Well, the new post box has been installed at the junction of the High Road and Lincoln Road, a few steps from the new Post Office.

But what's this? It's not a new Post Box, it's a 'previously enjoyed' one. A bit of amateur research reveals it's a C-type (double) cast iron box made by the Carron Company in Stirlingshire.

This was apparently one of five small iron foundries that made post and telephone boxes for the Post Office but went bust in 1982. Of the companies who made boxes it seems only Machan, another Scottish company, are still doing so although they have no orders and may be going out of business themselves.

The box in Lincoln Road is stamped 'ERII' so it's post-1953 but was made before 1982, possibly around 1977. At



the time our photo was taken, it hadn't been commissioned and needed a coat of paint.