



Letters

Twenty is plenty

Dear Editor,

I stick to 20mph speed limits at all times but I am regularly tailgated, and recently I have been overtaken three times. The first time was outside Fortismere School, the second was opposite the school on Creighton Avenue.

The third person overtook me on Potts Lane just before the zebra crossing where the driver had to brake heavily on the wrong side of the road to avoid the oncoming vehicle. On all three occasions I had my two grandsons in the back. It is pointless having these limits unless they are enforced.

Yours faithfully,
Jan West,
By email.

Hope for hospital bus

Dear Editor

I'm pleased to see that Labour candidate Sarah Sackman has listened to residents and is calling for a 'Hoppa' bus to Finchley Memorial Hospital.

It's a great new hospital but very hard for most of us to get to. So many of the hospital's services are aimed at the elderly (and I'm 80!), yet the nearest bus stop is half a mile away, much too far for us to walk.

Hopefully now, at long last, something might be done to bring easy access. This is not a new problem and people have been angry for quite some time, not least because the original plans had a bus stop on them.

For years we've been fobbed off by politicians, including the

local Conservative MP and the Council passing the buck, but I'm glad at least one candidate has actually spoken to local people about this scandal and is taking us seriously.

Yours faithfully,
Herbie Levison,
Ballards Lane, N3

Coal on sale

Dear Editor,

I write to you for the first time because I was shocked to see today in an East Finchley shop the offer of traditional coal alongside smokeless solid fuel. It is announced on the bags that the coal is not authorised for smoke-free zones.

How can this be on sale in London, especially after recent announcements that our air pollution levels are on average close to danger levels for our health? It only took a recent dust storm for vulnerable people to be advised not to go outside.

I remember the high death toll in the 1960s when coal fires were supposed to have been banned here so it is irresponsible to go backwards again.

I know that diesel-powered vehicles are even worse than coal but, nonetheless, save us from both.

Yours faithfully,
E McNab,
Great North Road, N2.

Just disgusting!

Dear Editor,

I have been an East Finchley resident for over 15 years and I would like to raise a concern.

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page" The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE or e-mail the-archer@lineone.net.

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be printed. Contact details can be withheld on request at publication. We reserve the right to abridge letters for reasons of space.

There's a growing amount of disgusting dog mess on the streets on East Finchley. Only this morning I had dog mess on my door step, and came across it more than ten times on my walk to the tube station.

Please could you urge dog owners to clear up their dogs' mess! Dog mess can be toxic! It's not pleasant to see this every day! Please urge residents to PICK UP their dog mess.

Yours faithfully,
Name supplied
Long Lane, N2.

Show us some respect

Dear Editor,

Regarding the plans to reorganise the Public Library facilities in the Borough of Barnet, I'd like to remind the council that Barnet includes the community of East Finchley. We may be on the borders, a long way from Chipping Barnet or Hendon and other outer reaches, but we need our local library to remain in its existing building with a great deal of refurbishment which has been sadly neglected in recent years.

It needs to be open in normal daylight hours, including lunch-times plus one or two evening sessions per week, and fully staffed by professional librarians.

I was very shocked when attending the Hendon Town Hall for my first and only time two or three years ago in our local protest re the charges for our CPZ Parking systems. The building was well presented and looked after. There were several luxurious features which have been sadly missing in our local library, such as smart lavatories and the use of the wonderful first floor quiet study area which locally is just used as a place to hire and not necessarily for the local population.

We don't actually need a Cabinet for local affairs so money could be saved on this and even the Mayoralty could be scrapped. Get into the real world where citizens pay their taxes and have the right to decide how their money is spent.

I would remind you that if boroughs have surplus funds put aside, as was recently stated by Eric Pickles, these should be used for the refurbishment of East Finchley Library and any other smaller local branches rather than grandiose schemes in the so-called centre of the huge Borough of Barnet.

We are in Finchley and need to be respected. I have lived in East Finchley since I was 24 years of age. I am now 83, still living here and not prepared to see the erosion of our local services by remote and faceless bodies of whatever political persuasion.

Yours faithfully,
Jeanne Wray,
Baronsmere Road, N2.



Josephines the Florist, possibly in the early 1970s

The oldest shop in town?

By Sheila Armstrong

Josephines the florist has been a feature on East Finchley's High Road for a long time, maybe longer than any other shop. The current owner Mike Doukaki says his shop has been there for 65 years this summer. And there may have been a florist there before 1950.

Other contenders for oldest shop may be Chorak, previously called Hahns, the newsagent called Pacey's and the flower stall near Islington and St Pancras Cemetery. Mike is interested to know of any other claims to the title of oldest shop in East Finchley. Contact him via www.josephinesflowers.co.uk.

The first owners had Josephines from 1950 to 2004 when Mike Doukaki took over. It was run initially by Josephine and her daughter Tricia for 14 years and then Tricia ran it with her brother Michael Blan and husband Jimmy Olney. When Mike Doukaki took over the shop in 2004 Michael Blan stayed on to help him for nine months.

Ideally placed on the walk from the station for those who have forgotten an important anniversary, the shop offers more than flowers. Mike now has four florists working with him and has expanded the business to include champagne,

chocolates, balloons, cards and candles as well as other gifts.

He sources many of the items for the shop on his travels in the East, and has plans to grow the business even further. The flowers in the shop come from as far afield as Holland, Sri Lanka and South America.

Kenwood concerts are KO-ed

The Heath and Hampstead Society has announced that there will be no Kenwood concerts this summer.

In its newsletter the Society says: "Rouge Events, who staged them last year, have not taken up their option to stage them again this year. We live in hope that the concerts of unamplified music drifting across the Concert Pond might one day return."

Any reader who feels strongly about any matter is invited to use this "Soapbox" column.

Please note that opinions expressed are those of the writer alone.



Piazza pizzazz

By Claire Cantor

As I round the corner into Muswell Hill Road dragging my trusty trolley behind me, a warm sense of "Europeanness" comes across me. Have I arrived in Milan or Rome?

What is this inviting piazza I see before me? Lacking only a Romanesque statue or a Fontana di Trevi?

This is our new Muswell Hill Piazza. Complete with café seating and beautiful people. Suddenly the shopping trolley is no longer a must-have of Muswell Hill mothers, but an outmoded albatross to be rid of in the nearest Charity shop.

You may wonder what has brought about this Milanese makeover? Muswell Hill has certainly never been short of an inviting café or two to fuel its caffeinated creatives.

Well, buzzy Muzzy has handed over heart and mind to its very own, newly expanded, flagship Planet Organic store, where a shot of wheatgrass, clean green juice or pesticide free fairtrade coffee can lift your day without guilt, in the most pleasing and wholesome of environments.

Where have all these trendy young couples come from, snuggling up over their carrot juices, brushing shoulders now with the muddy-booted dog walkers, spritely grandparents and mums with buggies?

So why the appeal of this luxurious supermarket? As one dear friend of mine put it: "I just feel happy buying a loaf of bread."

If you can put aside the pain of the cost (85p for particularly delicious organic carrots), forget the grumble of the No 43 bus trundling up the hill (please move that unsightly bus stop), and if Italy doesn't appeal imagine that you are in San Francisco, the birthplace of all things health-giving and hip, you can relish the feeling, albeit fleeting, that we may be able to heal ourselves if not the world.

Read more from Claire at www.musingsofametropolitan-mother.wordpress.com

Holy Trinity Church

Church Lane, East Finchley

Church of England

We're a warm and friendly congregation who look forward to welcoming you

Sunday Parish Communion at 10.00 am

Children's Sunday Club ♦ Meet over coffee after church
Michael Stanway is happy to answer any enquiries:

Tel: 020 8346 8591

www.holytrinityeastfinchley.org.uk

A friendly welcome awaits you

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197 High Road, London N2 (opp. Creighton Ave.)

tel: 0208 346 1700

www.eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk

**Sunday service at 10.30 a.m.
With Crèche and Young Church**

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