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# THE ARCHER



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*A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.*



On your marks: Martin Offiah proves he's still quick off the mark.

## Rugby superstar shows his pace

Rugby superstar Martin Offiah came to Christ's College Finchley on Friday 27 February to offer inspiration and insight into what it takes to be a professional sportsman.

The former Wigan and London Broncos player delivered a motivating assembly to Years 9 and 10 on the theme of 'having high aspirations' before embarking on a tour of the school buildings and facilities. He then delivered an action

packed rugby session to a very lucky Year 9 class, who thoroughly enjoyed this once in a lifetime experience.

Martin 'Chariots' Offiah showed he still has some of his trademark blistering pace in a game of Bulldogs at the end of the session. Two of the school's budding rugby players, Will Prior and Elliot Gold, described it as "awesome".

## Primary school bids to expand

Coldfall Primary School in Muswell Hill is making a bid to increase its intake of pupils by more than 60% to help with the demand for primary school places in the area.

Coldfall claims it could accommodate more children on its site off Coppetts Road, N10, which borders the ancient woodland of Coldfall Wood.

The proposal would take the school from being a three-form entry with 680 pupils to a five-form entry school. The school's submission to Haringey Council says extra places would meet demand from local

families for places.

Coldfall, rated as 'outstanding' by Ofsted, would accommodate more pupils by renovating its existing buildings and adding a purpose-built new structure within the current school grounds. The timescales are still unclear, but plans could be implemented by 2019.

Evelyn Davies, Head Teacher at Coldfall Primary School, said: "All children should be able to go to a local school that provides an excellent education. I believe Coldfall has the capacity, and therefore the duty, to offer this to more children."

## Unsung heroes

Two East Finchley residents have been named as Civic Award winners in the 15<sup>th</sup> annual ceremony run by Barnet Council to celebrate unsung heroes.

Mary O'Toole was recognised for her outstanding contribution to Noah's Ark Children's Hospice and Richard King was recognised for his outstanding leadership at the East Finchley Allotment Society.

The special ceremony, held at Hendon Town Hall on 17 March, rec-

ognised 46 nominees for their hard work and commitment to their community. The Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Hugh Rayner, said: "The Civic Awards Ceremony is a chance for us to express how grateful we are to these selfless residents who give their time to causes which enrich so many lives in Barnet."

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## A beer with your pizza?

Barnet councillors have granted Pizza Hut at 70 High Road an alcohol licence and extended opening hours. This will allow the outlet to deliver food and drink from 10am to 5am seven days a week. Previously the take-away was open from 11.30am to 11pm Monday to Wednesday, closing at midnight the rest of the week.

Conditions were attached restricting delivery to drivers aged 21 and over. This was in response to concerns raised by the Metropolitan Police who also had fears regarding the targeting of deliverers who could be carrying alcohol.

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Council Tax 020 8359 2608  
Recycling & refuse 020 8359 4600  
Primary Care Trust 020 8201 4700  
Benefits Agency 020 8258 6500  
Employment Service 020 8258 3900

#### Haringey Council

Leisure  
Alexandra Palace 020 8365 2121  
East Finchley Library 020 8883 2664  
Gt North Leisure Park 0870 240 6020  
Muswell Hill Odeon 0870 505 0007  
Phoenix Cinema 020 8444 6789  
Tourist Info Service 0870 128 8080  
Warner Cinema Village 020 8446 9933

#### Transport

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City Airport 020 7646 0088  
London Transport 020 7222 1234  
National Express 08705 808080  
Heathrow Airport 0870 000 0123

### Help & Advice

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Cruse Bereavement Care 0870 167 1677  
Disability Info Service 020 8446 6935  
EF Advice Service 020 8444 6265  
Lone Parent Centre 020 7021 4146  
Missing Persons Helpline 0500 700700  
National Debt Line 0808 808 4000  
NSPCC 0800 800500  
Rape & Sexual Abuse helpline 020 8683 3300  
Relate 020 8447 8101  
Samaritans 08457 909090  
Refuge National Crisis Line 0870 599 5443

### Health Advice

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Alcoholics Anonymous 0845 7697555  
Barnet MENCAP 020 8203 6688  
Cancer Support 020 8202 2211  
Carers' Line 0808 808 7777  
Drinkline 0800 917 8282  
Drugs Helpline 0800 776600

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MIND 020 8343 5700  
National Blood Centre 0845 7711 7711

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Finchley Police 020 8200 1212  
CrimeStoppers 0800 555111  
Victim Support 0845 303 0900

### Hospitals

NHS 111  
Barnet General 020 8216 4000  
Coppetts Wood 020 8883 9792  
Edgware General 020 8952 2381  
Finchley Memorial 020 8349 7500  
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Royal Free 020 7794 0500  
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Barnet Age Concern 020 8346 3511  
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Help the Aged 0808 800 6565

## Man attacked on bus

By Janet Maitland

**A man travelling on a 134 bus from Muswell Hill had his nose broken in an unprovoked attack on 12 February. The 36-year-old man was assaulted from behind while the bus was travelling down Muswell Hill Road at about 11pm.**

The assailant then got off and ran towards Archway Road. The injured man was taken to a north London hospital where he was later discharged.

The suspect is described as a black man, 30-35 years old, wearing dark clothes and a black beanie hat. He had deep scars across his nose and cheek.

Anyone with any information is asked to call police on 101 quoting reference 2803355/15 or, if you wish to remain anonymous, Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

## Cannabis grower

### pleads guilty

By Janet Maitland

**A local man has been convicted of growing cannabis plants in his home. Police arrested 36-year-old Colin Etherton of Boucher House, The Grange, N2, after a search of his flat uncovered cultivation equipment and a number of cannabis plants.**

Etherton pleaded guilty to producing a class B drug when he appeared at Hendon Magistrates Court in January. He was sentenced on 23 February to a 12-month community supervision order with a drug rehabilitation requirement. He must also pay costs of £85 and a victim surcharge of £60.

## How to deal with bogus callers

By Janet Maitland

**"Just because a stranger at your door says they're from your water or gas company, the council, or even the police, it doesn't necessarily mean that they are," says PC John Kenny from the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT).**

"Remember: even unknown youngsters who say they're looking for a lost pet, or think their football's in your garden, may just be trying to distract you."

### Lock up and check up

Keep back and front doors locked, even when you're at home. If someone calls at your door, look through a window or spy hole to identify them. If you don't recognise them, either call "Who is it?" through the door, or put the door chain or door bar on first before opening the door. Keep it on while talking to them.

Ask for an identity card and check it carefully, even if the caller has a pre-arranged appointment. If you're not sure, don't let the caller hurry or pressurise you. Just ask them to wait outside while you confirm who they are and then close the door and lock it. A genuine caller won't mind you doing this.

Don't ring any telephone number that the caller has given you. Instead, use directory enquiries or a telephone directory or Google to find the number of the company the caller claims to be from. If the caller(s) say they are the police, call the police on the non-emergency number 101 to confirm this or, if you're frightened, call the police on the emergency 999 number to check if the callers actually are the police.

### Basic precautions

Do not open the door unless you are 100% sure the caller is who they say they are *and* you feel comfortable letting them into your home.

"Please ask your readers to tell family, friends and neighbours, especially older people, about these precautions," says PC Kenny. "Review their security as if it was your own home."

## Planning Applications

### Barnet Council

**224 Creighton Avenue, N2**

Hip to gable roof extension, including rear dormer with Juliette balcony, and two front roof lights.

**219 East End Road, N2**

Hip to gable loft extension, with rear dormer and three front roof lights. Metal staircase from rear of property to first floor.

**14 Elm Gardens, N2**

Single-storey rear extension: depth 4m, eaves height 3m, maximum height 3.8 m.

**20 Elmhurst Avenue, N2**

Single-storey side extension. Partial removal of wooden fence. Construction of brick wall.

**92 Hertford Road, N2**

Hip to gable roof extension to facilitate loft conversion, including rear dormer with Juliette balcony, new gable, and three roof lights.

**27 Ingram Road, N2**

Roof extension, including rear dormer and front roof lights, to facilitate loft conversion.

**Islington and St Pancras Cemetery and Crematorium, N2**

Construction details re. previous planning permission.

**406 Long Lane, N2**

Porch to side elevation.

**100 Ossulton Way, N2**

Setting back of side passage access door.

**Stanley Road Playing Field, N2**

Details of conditions for flood-lighting and lighting levels.

**Tarling Road land, N2**

Details re. contaminated land, demolition and construction methods, and landscaping.

**13-18 Wardell Court, N2**

Replacement of windows and doors.

### Haringey Council

**14 Twyford Avenue, N2**

Single-storey rear extension.

**34 Twyford Avenue, N2**

Single-storey rear extension. Depth 4.5m, maximum height 3m. Eaves height to match existing.

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# School and sports complex just months from opening

By Diana Cormack



Almost ready: Academy headteacher Mick Quigley, second right, with a construction manager, Councillors Arjun Mittra and Alison Moore, Chair of Governors Avis Johns and MP Mike Freer

Two dreams will come true simultaneously in East Finchley when the Archer Academy's Stanley Road campus opens in September, with all its sports facilities being available to the community out of school hours. The desire for a mixed non-religious secondary school and the demand for locals to continue to use Stanley Fields will then both be realised.

## Setting up for September

One hundred days before hand-over headteacher Mick Quigley gave a group of guests including local councillors and reporters a tour of the building. Everything is on schedule for mid-June, when furniture and fittings will be installed along with

IT services and equipment, prior to the pupils now based at the Beaumont Close site moving in.

This will be in September when the 450 students of Years 7, 8 and 9 will occupy the lower school campus, with Beaumont Close behind East Finchley station being used for enrichment

activities until it eventually becomes occupied by Years 10 and 11.

## Facilities for learning and sport

The new school has been designed to offer flexible zones for teaching and learning, with large science labs, music rooms, a recording studio and 24



classrooms. Disabled access is provided not only in the school building but also in the huge sports hall, where there is an inclusive climbing wall specifically designed to suit climbers across a wide range of abilities.

Grants from the London Marathon Charitable Trust helped with this and with the floodlit all-weather pitch outside, where there will also be two multi-use games areas. Among the variety of activities

available will be football, basketball, netball, tennis, badminton, cricket and trampolining.

Chair of Governors Avis Johns told *THE ARCHER* how proud she is of the people who have given freely of their skills and time to bring all this about. It certainly doesn't seem that long since we were reporting on attempts to keep Stanley Field for East Finchley and now it is poised to become an important part of community activity.

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## What's happening to the pavilion?



The Cherry Tree Wood pavilion March 2015. Photo: Mike Coles

**Upset by the present state of the building, readers have been asking what is happening to the pavilion in Cherry Tree Wood.**

It is virtually 30 years since the place closed down, save for some football teams using the changing rooms when matches used to be played on the field. Various redevelopment schemes have come and gone over that time, but last

year hopes were raised when a notice went up announcing that a coffee bar would be opening in the spring of 2014.

Work started on the building and the surrounding area was

cleared. However, this did not last for long, with the theft of expensive equipment from the site last autumn not helping the situation. Expense seems to be the main problem. In view of the increased cost of repairing the existing structure, the lessee is still waiting to receive a new funding proposal from Barnet Council.

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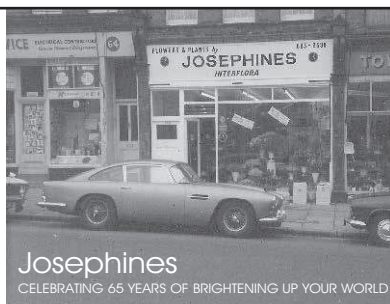
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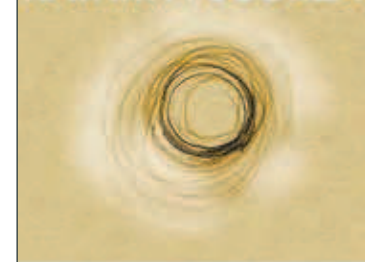
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# Every vote will count in May

By Neil McNaughton

As we have been warned, this year's general election is on a knife edge and a close result is almost certainly assured. Voters in East Finchley, which makes up a large part of the Finchley and Golders Green constituency, can content themselves in the knowledge that how they vote is likely to tell us about how the rest of the country will go. There are three reasons why Finchley and Golders Green can be considered a 'bellwether' constituency.

First, it is a mixed area, containing a range of income groups, from the very wealthiest at The Bishops Avenue and Garden Suburb end to more deprived social groups like those in the northern part of East Finchley. There is also a lively ethnic mix in the area.

Second, there are five parties, each of which can hope to win substantial numbers of votes. Third, it is not a safe seat so every vote will count. The Conservative majority of nearly 6,000 looks fairly comfortable, but opinion polls tell us even this majority may be vulnerable.

This is how voters in Finchley and Golders Green voted in the 2010 General Election on a turnout of 61%:

Mike Freer, Conservative, 21,688 (46.0%)

Alison Moore, Labour, 15,879 (33.7%)

Laura Edge, Liberal Democrat, 8,036 (17.0%)

Susan Cummins, UKIP, 817 (1.7%)

Donald Lyven, Green, 737 (1.6%)

This May, Mike Freer is defending a 5,809 majority and will have four opponents (at the time of going to press; late entrants in the race may be nominated at the last minute). The Conservatives gained the seat from Labour in 2010, although the 2007 boundary change confused the significance of the result. The boundaries have remained unchanged since then.

**These are the candidates at the time of going to press (in alphabetical order):**

• **Jonathan Davies, Liberal Democrat:** A solicitor by profession, he is a former Barnet councillor and unsuccessfully contested the parliamentary seat in 1997. He has lived in the borough of Barnet for 20 years.

• **Mike Freer, Conservative:** He is a former Barnet councillor and led the council for several years. Before becoming an MP he had a career in management in the food industry and then in financial services and banking. He lives in Finchley.

• **Richard King, UKIP:** A civil engineering graduate, he is now a self-employed IT and investment planner, and has had a career with various financial institutions. He has lived and worked in various countries but now lives in North London.

• **Sarah Sackman, Labour:** A barrister specialising in public interest law, she also lectures part time at the LSE and offers legal advice on a voluntary basis. She is a native of East Finchley.

• **Adele Ward, Green:** She is a writer, publisher (having founded her own publishing company, Ward-Wood) and campaigner on environmental and social issues. She lives in London.

There are big questions to be asked about the prospective result. Can Labour make inroads into the Conservative majority or will the Tory vote hold up? How successfully will the Liberal Democrats hold on to their support when national polls suggest otherwise? Will UKIP make any significant impact and can the Greens maintain their recent progress?

While it is hard to see anything other than a Conservative or Labour win, the three other candidates promise to have a decisive impact on the outcome. So East Finchley will be at the centre of national attention on May 7. There is all to play for. Every vote will count!

## Don't lose your right to vote

With the General Election coming soon, Barnet residents are being reminded that they must first be registered in order to vote. Eligible residents must have registered to vote by April 20 in order to vote on May 7.

If you are a young person and turning 18 on or before May 6 you are eligible to vote and you can register to vote before you turn 18.

Chief Executive of Barnet Council and Returning Officer, Andrew Travers, said: "Every household was recently sent a notification letter showing the names of

everyone on the electoral register at their property. If you have recently moved into the borough, or are turning 18, you still have time to register to vote and I would urge you to do so soon."

Eligible residents can register at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) or contact the helpline by phone on 020 8359 5577.



Way ahead: Visitors tour the careers stands at the job fair in the Green Man Centre.

## Breaking into the jobs market

By Stepan Stepanenko

The Jobs and Apprenticeship Fair at the Green Man Centre on Strawberry Vale is in its fourth year and attracts hundreds of local residents looking for opportunities with local and national employers.

This year's fair on Friday 13 March, which coincided with National Apprenticeship Week, welcomed residents from the Army, the Metropolitan Police and the Royal Free Hospital as well as large commercial organisations including McDonald's and Starbucks.

The Fair is predominantly directed towards the 16 to 24-year group. Young job-seekers were invited to discuss their career prospects with potential employers as well as the Barnet Council Careers Service, who brought along 15 young people from local schools who they believe could benefit from the event. Young people were also given an opportunity to see the range of courses offered by Barnet and Southgate College.

More experienced job seekers had the chance to look for a new start in administrative roles presented at the event, with one attendee searching for a part-time position to fit around his child care needs.

Organisations present at

the event saw this as more than a recruitment drive, with the Army and Royal Free representatives disclosing to *THE ARCHER* that for them the event was predominantly a promotional event designed to showcase the variety of roles within their organisations and answer some of the "burning questions" being put towards them by the job seekers on working hours and pay.

## Tea dance

Bishop Douglass School will have a team of their sixth form students organising an afternoon Tea Dance at the school in Hamilton Road. The students will look after guests at the event on Wednesday 6 May from 2.30pm to 4.30pm. There is an entrance charge of £3 to include afternoon tea.

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# Libraries: the fight goes on

By Daphne Chamberlain

Our libraries are not closed or downsized yet. Although Barnet Council is standing by the “three options” consultation which would certainly see this happening, campaigners are urging all supporters of our libraries to keep fighting for them. The campaign has already attracted the national press, and the message is that it is not too late to get involved. This is what they suggest:

## Sign the petition

Alasdair Hill, organiser of the enormously well supported petition against cutting the library service, spoke at the Council meeting last month. His message now is that that was just the start of what will be a long campaign to keep our libraries open and viable. “The petition will remain,” he says, “and large scale protests are being planned so please keep in touch.” He can be emailed by clicking on the icon next to his name on the petition page: <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/no-to-closure-of-barnet-libraries>

He thanked all the supporters who turned up at the Town Hall, saying: “It really demonstrated the level of anger the people of Barnet have over these library plans.”

## Contact your MPs

All three Barnet MPs have come out against the Council’s policy. With the General Election only weeks away, campaigners point out that the MPs know the importance of listening to their constituents. All three are Conservative, which naturally means they

have links with Barnet Council’s (very narrow) Conservative majority.

The MP for our area, Finchley and Golders Green, is Mike Freer, former Barnet Council Leader. He can be contacted at [mike.freer.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:mike.freer.mp@parliament.uk).

## Go along to the hustings

Age UK Barnet, Barnet Seniors Assembly and Friends in Need are holding public meetings, where the Parliamentary candidates can be questioned on their policies for the over-55s. Policies include libraries. The Finchley and Golders Green candidates will be at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, on Tuesday 21 April, 10am – 12noon.

The Council are expected to come up with concrete proposals for each library at a meeting in June or July. This will follow analysis of the consultation, and will be voted on. Library supporters will be making their voices heard, and hope that councillors will give thought to the strength of feeling shown throughout the borough.



Library closure protesters at the Barnet Council meeting at the Town Hall on 3 March.

Photo by Mike Coles

# Bubbles? No trouble!

By Ellie Farquhar-Smith

Louis Pearl is ‘The Amazing Bubbleman’ and the world’s leading Bubbleologist! During his show he does amazing things such as making square bubbles and smoke-filled bubbles; he even puts children inside bubbles and puts towers of bubbles on top of people’s heads. I really enjoyed this show at artsdepot at the end of March, so I asked if I could interview Louis to find out more about him. So here is what he had to say to me...

**Ellie:** What is the strangest thing you have put in a bubble?

**Louis:** Once I was performing at a wedding and I was asked to put the bride and groom into a large rainbow-shaped tube bubble. The groom had had a little too much to drink and he found it hard to stand still. It was impossible but hilarious.

**Ellie:** Most people use washing up liquid to make bubbles, do you have a special formula?

**Louis:** I have always said that, in the bubble business, the problem is the solution. A simple and easy recipe is water and original Fairy Liquid. About 16 parts water to 1 part Fairy. To make the bubbles stay moist, I recommend adding some glycerine. To get the super big bubbles you need to add gums that allow the bubbles to stretch... try guar or xanthan gum.

**Ellie:** Do you have any celebrity fans?

**Louis:** I’ve done private shows for The Sultan of Brunei, Don Johnson, and the late actor Robin Williams. The show for Williams was about 20 years ago when he had a huge party for his son’s birthday. It was



a big fun show and I felt very happy after that performance. Robin came up after the show and shook my hand. I was aware that he was the only person in that house who understood the feeling you get after a good stage show.

**Ellie:** I hear you have a Blue Peter Badge, how did you get it?

**Louis:** Blue Peter came to my show in Edinburgh two

years ago. They filmed me putting their host in a bubble and did a little interview. This month, I’m going to Manchester to be on set at Blue Peter, so I will get a SECOND badge.

**Ellie:** Do you do children’s birthday parties?

**Louis:** Yes, I do, and you’d be surprised how old those children are getting. I’ve already done two 50th birthdays this year.

Louis Pearl is performing at The Udderbelly Festival at London’s Southbank Centre from 15-19 April. For tickets call the box office on 0844 5458282 or see the website [www.amazing-bubblemanuk.co.uk](http://www.amazing-bubblemanuk.co.uk).

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## Old Barn neighbours not forgotten

By Janet Maitland

**Local residents will be able to let Barnet Council know what they think about the plans for the Old Barn community centre in Tarling Road even after the planning application is submitted in April.**

As we reported in our last issue, the proposals include building a new wing primarily for the local Bravanese community, whose centre on Coppetts Road, Muswell Hill, was burnt down in a racist arson attack in June 2013.

After the submission, there will be a four-week consultation period. The council will write to residents' associations and residents living within a 100-metre radius of the Old Barn, and public notices will be put up round the centre. Even if you don't live close by, you can still participate.

"All residents interested in the planning application can make representations even if they have not been formally written to," said Lesley Meeks, the council officer responsible for the project, adding: "After the four-week statutory consultation, anyone who has written in requesting to speak at the Planning Committee will be invited to this meeting to address members."

### Letter to the editor: Neighbours must be heard Dear Editor

I'm writing in relation to the proposed re-development of the Old Barn Community Centre and adjoining land. For the benefit of your readers who are not familiar with the area, the Old Barn Community Centre is located in Tarling Road and is abutted on three sides by Brownswell Road, Fallows Close and Vanderville Gardens.

I am a resident of Vanderville Gardens, so obviously have a strong interest in what happens to the Old Barn and the adjacent land as the area is effectively the 'back garden' for these three roads. I'm sure my fellow residents will agree that we very much cherish having an area of green open space, with plenty of mature trees, in what is otherwise a very densely built up area.

I read with interest the various features on page 5 of the March edition of The Archer. Unfortunately, due to an administrative error, mobilise.org neglected to invite any of the residents in the 24 flats in Vanderville Gardens to the public meeting held on 11 February so we were unable to express our views at that meeting, which has prompted me to write now.

Whilst I am fully supportive of the Old Barn being brought back into use for the local community, I (together with many of my neighbours) am completely against the erection of a further community facility on the protected green space. In the immediate vicinity, we already have the Newstead Children's Centre, the Ann Owens Centre and the Oak Lane Clinic, in addition to the Old Barn. Surely all these Council facilities between them offer more than adequate space for use by the local community without the need to put up yet another building at public expense?

I am also totally against any public building being set aside solely for the use of any single community. All community facilities should be available to the whole community. I may be mistaken, but I'm not aware of a large Bravanese community within walking distance of the Old Barn area which, should the Council bulldoze through the proposed development regardless of local opinion, would cause an issue in itself from a traffic perspective.

I'm aware that the proposed development would come with some parking spaces, but when the Old Barn was in full use before, that in itself resulted in cars being parked around the local streets, preventing residents from being able to park outside their own homes.

As a resident in the immediate vicinity, I also have concerns over potential safety. As highlighted in last month's Archer, the former Bravanese Community Centre in Coppetts Road was sadly the subject of an arson attack. What security measures would be taken to ensure that this is not repeated, and who would fund them? The proposed building is slap bang in the middle of a heavily populated residential area!

I would strongly urge those individuals who are making decisions about the project and the future use of the Old Barn to take into full consideration the views of those local residents who will have to live with the consequences of those decisions on a day-to-day basis. Local residents still have memories of the social gatherings with loud music until midnight (pre-2010), not to mention the particular problems on Youth Club nights when groups of rowdy teenagers regularly messed about on the blind bend of Tarling Road (endangering road users and also themselves) and the throwing of stones at our windows!

The local community doesn't just consist of children and their needs. We have an ever increasing aging population, many of whom will be living in flats in the area without their own outdoor space. Can the open space not just be developed into a small park for the benefit of all local residents?

I did attend the previous public meeting held at Martin School (which I found out about by accident) when the Council's plans were first put forward, and when I asked a member of Capita (representing Barnet Council) if he would want such a development in his back garden, I received a resounding "no", which I think says it all!

**Yours faithfully,  
Sue Steven,  
Vanderville Gardens, N2.**



'Vote for my party' say the children with MP Mike Freer, headteacher Denise Drinkwater and deputy head Jayne Tarbuck. Photo Diana Cormack

## Limespring pupils learn about voting

**Limespring is an independent junior school for children with dyslexia and dyspraxia, situated opposite East Finchley station. Pupils there have been learning about the role of parliament and our voting system as part of their 'Britain' topic. On 12 March Mike Freer MP joined in their mock election and the pupils reported on this:**

Cassy and Osaro explained that we had made our own political parties, written our manifestos and had slogans and logos. Another child described how we each told him of the issues that are important to us and then he had to choose which team to vote for. Daniel enjoyed standing to say our slogans and snappy moves. Mr Freer said he would ask David Cameron and other leaders to do snappy moves in the House of Commons as it would make things more interesting!

Joe asked how Mr Freer had become an MP and learnt that it had taken him seven years to get voted in. Another child was told that he needs to knock on around 35,000 doors before the election. The children wondered how many bills he had passed this week and if it was

scary being an MP.

They were surprised to hear that Mr Speaker in the House of Commons was like Ms Drinkwater, our headteacher, and he told them off when they

were being naughty. They were also told that an MP would be remembered if they screwed their face up or sent a text message when the TV cameras were on them.

### All Saints' Church, Durham Road, East Finchley Church of England

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Contact Geoffrey Hanson on 020 8444 9214.**

<http://www.allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk>

## Could you drive the Barbara Bus?

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They are always on the lookout for volunteer drivers and will give them the necessary training. So if you hold a driving licence and are over 25 and under 75 years of age, why not get in touch? For details visit [www.barbarabus.com](http://www.barbarabus.com), call 8416 0733 or email [office@barbarabus.com](mailto:office@barbarabus.com)



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Game on. Dan Fineberg, left, and Greg Kythreotis work on *Cloud Critters*. Photo Luz Mosquera

## Games makers grow their business in the back garden

By Luz Mosquera

Advances in technology allow for easier access to video games-making tools for the average person, and digital distribution now provides a direct line between developer and consumer. So, small groups of like-minded individuals have cropped up across the globe creating exciting new video games with little or no outside financial support and operating completely outside the confines of the traditional video games industry.

One such independent company, based in East Finchley, is Shedworks, named for the garden shed the team of four shares as their workspace. The team consists of James Valencia (sound designer), Greg Kythreotis (designer), Ed Davis (programmer) and Daniel Fineberg (programmer).

With a focus on app-based games available to download for Android and iOS, they have already released one game, *Weird Orb*, available free to

download, and are currently in the process of creating a new game, *Cloud Critters*, an arcade-style video game with traces of *Flappy Birds* and *Crossy Road*.

### Democratised and flexible

Asked about this new independent movement in games developing Greg said: "The industry as a whole is more democratised; anyone can make progress, anyone can make games now. It's a young industry which makes it exciting because you can inform the discourse."

With no formal game design education, and their roles and duties within the company all fairly flexible, the team provides a unique approach through skill-sets developed from other training. This feature is what makes the independent games community exciting and innovative, providing a unique approach to games development.

More information on both *Weird Orb* and *Cloud Critters* can be found at [www.shedworks](http://www.shedworks), along with a development blog and further information on the new upcoming company.

## Bin quest takes me right around the houses

By Diana Cormack

When *THE ARCHER* was asked to find out what had happened to the row of recycling bins at the junction of Elmshurst Gardens and East End Road it seemed quite an easy request to deal with. So I phoned Barnet Council and was told they would put me through to the relevant department.

After I'd pressed various numbers and listened to several needless messages, a pleasant young lady proceeded to ask a series of questions regarding my identity, prompting me to wonder if I should offer to send a copy of my birth certificate. It then transpired that I couldn't speak to anyone or even email my query direct; she would pass on my message.

### Arms' length

I told her what was amiss. When she questioned me about the location of the bins, something told me I was not talking to a local. Far from it!

"Where are you speaking from?" I asked. "Warwickshire," she replied. But she assured me my message would be given to Barnet Street-based Services, who would contact me within 48 hours.

### ...and hands on

And they did! The next morning I had a call from a man in a van who was driving along East End Road. "About these bins. I can't see any. Where are they?"

My original message must have got somewhat garbled. Helpfully he told me he could see some recycling bins by the flats but none at the junction of Elmshurst Gardens and East End Road.

"That's because they're not

there," I wailed. Only when I began to describe what they might have contained did the penny drop. Not only that, but this Barnet employee was immediately able to tell me what had happened to the bins: they had been "used and abused".

Apparently people had put non-recyclable items in them and, as in other areas where bins were being mis-used or proving to be inefficient, the borough was removing them. Eventually they

will be re-sited at places where they are used efficiently. Residents will now have to use other recycling outlets such as Summers Lane.

## Seed and plant swap day

This spring, the East Finchley Community Trust will be staging another Seed and Plant Swap event where you can take all your surplus plants and seeds and swap them. There is no entrance charge and no money changes hands.

Note that your perennial plants will benefit from being divided now so put some root cuttings in pots and take them along to swap.

The event takes place at Martin Primary School in Plane Tree Walk, off the High Road, N2, from 11.30am to 1pm on Saturday 18 April.

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## YOUNG ARCHER



Good catch: North Middlesex Girls with their silver medals from the 2014 Under-11 Lady Tavers Competition.

## Girls' cricket... twice over!

Two local cricket clubs are urging girls to join the game and are offering spring training sessions to coach new players ahead of the summer season.

Finchley Cricket Club offers training and small side games on Friday evenings from 6-8pm starting on 17 April at the cricket ground in East End Road. Girls aged six to 17 can go along for a free taster session and there's no need to book.

The club says it has an enthusiastic and lively girls' section, with an emphasis on inclusivity and fun. Girls of all abilities including complete beginners are welcome and all players have access to high-quality coaching. Juniors can feed through later into the club's adult teams. Find out more at [www.finchleycricket.co.uk](http://www.finchleycricket.co.uk).

Equally, North Middlesex Girls Cricket team is looking to attract new players and build on its recent successes. The Under-11s were the 2014 champions of Middlesex and its Under-13s have done well too.

North Middlesex Girls practise every Saturday morning from 9am to 10.30am at the club's ground at 185a Park Road, Crouch End, N8 8JJ. There will be two match days in the 2015 summer season in which every girl can play.

If you would like to join, contact the club on this email address: [nmcc.colts@gmail.com](mailto:nmcc.colts@gmail.com)

## Get reading... the same book

By Daphne Chamberlain

Every April, Cityread encourages everyone in London to read the same book in the same month. A friend told me, "You'll love this year's. It's like an adult Harry Potter in the Met." And you would never guess that from the title.

*Rivers of London*, by Ben Aaronovitch, does tell you about London's hidden history, but it's also the first of an urban fantasy/crime fiction series about a policeman apprenticed to a wizard. It's already a Sunday Times best seller, and I'll start it directly I've finished writing this. Why don't we share what we thought of it next time?

### Discuss it with the author

Author Ben Aaronovitch is visiting Chipping Barnet Library to talk about his books on Friday 24 April, 6.30 – 8pm. Entry is free, but you can book a place and/or get more details from the library on 020 8359 4040.

If this inspires you to start writing yourself, Barnet Librar-

ies are running a writing competition between 16 March and 1 May. Your story should be no more than 2,000 words, have a London setting, and the theme of Mysterious Metropolis.

Entrants must be 16 and over. Prizes are Brent Cross vouchers, worth £100, £50 and £25 for first, second and third. Details at [www.barnet.gov.uk/library/events/cityread](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/library/events/cityread).

### Connected events

• Thursday 9 April, 6-7.30pm at Child's Hill Library

Nick Papadimitriou talks about a waterboard main running from Cherry Tree Wood to Kempton Park. 020 8359 3887 for details. Free entry.

• Friday 17 April, 7-8.30pm at Chip-

ping Barnet Library (adults only)

Geoff Barrett gives an adult version of Punch and Judy, and talks about the use of Mr. Punch in Rivers of London. Tickets £3. 020 8359 4040 for details.

• Thursday 30 April, 7-8 pm at Hendon Library

Local archivist Hugh Petrie talks about the violent and mysterious history of the Welsh Harp. 020 8359 2628 for details.



It's a six: Batting at Finchley Cricket Club

## Students support asylum seekers

By Olivia Csaky

At my school we learnt about asylum seekers. They are people who were under threat in their home country so were forced to leave and come to the UK with virtually nothing, to claim asylum. The Archer Academy decided to support a local project to help them.

The project is a drop-in centre where they can get support from doctors, lawyers and social workers. They also receive a hot meal and items of clothing if necessary. Each month we decided to donate different things. So far we have collected new underwear, chocolate coins and warm winter coats. Next month we will be collecting walking shoes.

It has made us realise how lucky we are in the UK and how much freedom we enjoy here.

## St George's Day parade

Barnet Borough Scout District will mark St George's Day (23 April) with a parade on Sunday 26 April. About 700 boys and girls, together with three bands, will march from Victoria Park at 2pm. The route will be along Ballards Lane, Regent's Park Road and East End Road, N3, finishing at Stephens (formerly Avenue) House grounds. Here they will renew their promises around 3pm.

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Fundraiser, Former MP and journalist Martin Bell hands over a cheque to Combat Stress.

## A fine total for soldier's charity

Following the success of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Combat Stress Winter Fair last November, organisers were able to hand over a giant cheque for £5,123 to the veterans' mental health charity. Fair opener and suburb resident Martin Bell, a former MP and BBC war correspondent, presented the money to Josephine Grace, community fundraising manager of Combat Stress.

## Places for preschoolers

A not-for-profit charity run by parents is making plans to open a new preschool venue in Muswell Hill in September.

345 preschools currently operates in Tetherdown and Church Crescent in Muswell Hill, along with another unit in The Grove area of Alexandra Park.

From September, the charity will be merging its two Muswell Hill preschools into one new setting in Pages Lane. It will offer three-hour sessions as well as full-day preschool care, with a secure and private entrance.

General manager Lou Colley said: "We are a not-for-profit charity run by our parents, who

form a committee whose role is to oversee our direction and our financial workings.

"Not-for-profit means that we are able to offer our families childcare at cost; it's not our business to make huge profit from children. Our aim is to reach out to all families and build a community of like-minded people who care about their local preschool."

For more details or to register your child for September 2015, see [www.345preschools.co.uk](http://www.345preschools.co.uk) or arrange a visit.

## Change of a dress shop

By Diana Cormack

After four months of running her pop up shop at the rear of Ryker Kids, 162 High Road (see *THE ARCHER* Nov 2014) Aida Khaledi has moved to her own premises at 58 High Road.

'Aliya.J' opened on Valentine's Day, which proved to be beneficial as the florist Josephines next door was really busy, so Aida's fashion shop attracted attention.

Having more space has meant an increase in the brands stocked, with Noa Noa, Fever and Yas from Denmark being added to those from Italy, Spain and Sweden along with British made clothing. Also on sale are accessories including those from the Ted Baker range, plus attractive handcrafted jewellery and some interesting gifts.

## Woodland teaches trust... and how to let go

By Ann Bronkhorst

If you notice small groups of children (plus teachers) busy in Coldfall Wood and wonder why they're not in the classroom, here's the reason: Forest School education.

Curious to know more, I joined a Saturday morning walk led by local teacher Ewan Marshall on 7 March. There were adults of all ages and several young children. Ewan's kitbox produced surprises such as hot chocolate, blindfolds, tools, rope ... and for an hour or two he demonstrated how the theory of Forest School education works.

### Outdoor learning

Basically it's learning, not just messing about: woodland becomes a resource to stimulate children's curiosity, imagination, language, social development and even what were once called the three Rs. Having Coldfall Wood at the back door provides a wonderful opportunity for Coldfall Primary School, where Ewan teaches; another local school is showing interest, too.

Once, school-age children could range freely some way away from their parents; now that sense of what is a 'safe distance' has shrunk to about ten metres. Forest School methods help to build the child's confidence, its own sense of a safe distance from the adult in charge and trust in other children.

For example, a child or adult,

blindfolded, is gently led towards a tree, gauging the feel of the ground, light, wind, sounds and, finally, texture of bark and bulk of trunk. Later, minus blindfold, they find their tree again. All the senses have played a part in their 'internal mapping'; so has trust.

### Whittling, knotting and letting go

On this introductory walk we didn't filter clay or study invertebrates but we did handle knives (with much emphasis on safety) and discover the quiet satisfaction of whittling wood. The physical skills and confidence encouraged by this activity can be therapeutic.

Our final activity must have looked comical because of our different heights and weights. A rope was knotted securely (by a child) to make a circle. We held on to it, letting go with one hand when it was taut and we felt secure. The messages about body awareness, co-operation and trust were clear.

Thanks to Ewan Marshall and the Friends of Coldfall Wood for another interesting walk; see [www.coldfallwoods.co.uk](http://www.coldfallwoods.co.uk) for more.

## RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

### The end of magic

ISHOULD WRITE THIS ENTIRELY IN CAPITALS BECAUSE THAT'S THE WAY THAT DEATH SPEAKS. But if I do that then some wizened sub-editor in the printing district of Terry Pratchett's fictional city-state of Ankh-Morpork will just run a red herring through it before the trolls bash it into shape. And I wonder what will Lord Vetinari think?

In the back streets of Ankh-Morpork there is muttering in the shadows, Angua is unsure about changing from human to werewolf and Captain Carrot wonders if the Dwarf Bread Museum really needs him. Even Arch Chancellor Ridcully cannot decide on a second portion of lunch and wonders if the stumbling towers of the Unseen University can hold up much longer now that the Creator has kept his appointment with Death.

In teenage bedrooms, student residences and the kind of run-down dwellings where former hipsters admire the hot and cold rising damp, there is a great sorrow. Among backstreet cabinet makers and greying book sellers there is nothing but despair that Death has got his man. Sellers of dodgy meat pies fear for the future and shake with terror at the thought of troll health inspectors. Whilst in the far off distance, in a corner of the Disc called Battered Sea, a small swamp dragon finds a partially rebuilt arts centre to explode in.

Terry Pratchett may not have been Dickens or written plays to rival Shakespeare, but he did write the kind of books that low brow readers like me wanted to read. This was not Tolkein making Hobbits, this was the rest of us having a good laugh at pomposity. This was satire wrapped up in a stolen invisibility cloak that had been left out in the mud for the night. This was where everything you thought you knew got slightly twisted and where books had to be chained up to protect the reader, not the other way round.

There was always a point or three to the stories as the Discworld's inhabitants grappled with rock'n roll, movies and gender discrimination. It's just that no one took them seriously because no one takes anything with incontinent dragons in it seriously anymore. And maybe that's why I will miss Terry Pratchett more than I'd miss an entire coachload of Nobel prizewinners. As they say in Ankh-Morpork, the two things in life you can't avoid are Death and taxis.

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- **Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club**, Summers Lane N12. New and experienced bowlers welcome.
- **Keep fit for the Retired** on Wednesdays, Christ Church N12. Call Bridie 8883 5269
- **Ladies Keep Fit Class** for over 50s. Tues 10.30–11.30am at Tetherdown Hall. Sheila 8444 0084.
- **Muswell Hill Bowling Club**, Kings Ave, N10. New & experienced bowlers welcome. Tel: 8883 0433.
- **Pilates** in East Finchley, qualified teacher. Contact Dee on 8883 7029
- **Pilates class** Weds 3.30 & 7pm at Ann Owens Ctr, N2. Call Penny 8444 2882.
- **Pilates Classes** Tue 9.30, Fri 9.15 & Sun 11am. [www.pilatesineastfinchley.co.uk](http://www.pilatesineastfinchley.co.uk). Michelle 07767 804 564
- **Tai Chi & Qigong** in N2, Weds 1pm. James 8883 3308/07836 710281 or [james@taiji.co.uk](mailto:james@taiji.co.uk)
- **Tennis club** with four clay courts off Southern Road. Call 8883 7723.
- **Yoga, breathing & relaxation**. Weekly drop-in classes - N3, N6, N10. Phone Judy on 07956 375607.
- **Yoga**, pregnancy yoga, meditation classes. Call Sunnah 07941 321 772 [www.stretchingpeople.co.uk](http://www.stretchingpeople.co.uk).
- **Women's kick boxing**, Thursdays 9.30am, East Finchley Combat Academy, Church Lane, N2. Contact 07956 340540.

### Music, Dance & Creative Arts

- **Art Classes**. Call Henry on 8888 5133.
- **A-Chord**, friendly choir, all genres, open to all. Thursdays 8pm at NNLS, East End Rd. Laura 07732 120464.
- **Ballroom & Latin American Dance Classes** - beginners & improvers. Wed & Fri eve, Bishop Douglass Sch. 8207 2323.
- **Creative writing classes** in informal, friendly atmosphere. Tel Sallie Rose 020 8444 7217.
- **East Finchley Writers Group**, Weds at the Old White Lion. Contact Ralph 8444 5903.
- **East Finchley Poetry Writing Workshops**. Monthly on Saturdays. Contact Dennis Evans 8346 9528.
- **Gospel choir**, St Mary's, 279 High Road, N2, Thursdays 7-8pm, all welcome. Contact Sandra 07866 479913.
- **Memory Lane Singing Club** - friendly singing club meets every Friday in Finchley. Call Valerie 8458 4508.
- **Over 50s Tea Dance** at Christ Church, North Finchley. Every Weds, 1pm. 020 8444 0280.
- **Learn to sing** at Finchley Methodist Church, Ballards La. Call 8888 4412.
- **Muswell Hill after school ukulele club**, Wednesdays 4.15-5.15pm, ages 6-10. Contact Margie 07909 439513.
- **Traditional music at TOC**, Highgate Hill, on 1st & 3rd Tues each month from 8.30pm. Free. 07958 282898.

### Clubs & Social

- **Bingo evening**, 8pm Sundays, at the Constitutional Club, The Walks, N2.
- **Bingo Club** Mondays 7-9 pm, Green Man Centre, Contact: Jan 8815 5452
- **French conversation** in small friendly group with native speaker. 8444 9395.
- **Friends of Cherry Tree Wood** [www.cherrytreewood.co.uk](http://www.cherrytreewood.co.uk) or 8883 7544.
- **Haringey Recorded Music Society** informal meetings locally. Call David Moldon on 8361 1696.
- **Muslim Ladies Lunch Club** 1st & 3rd Weds, Ann Owen Ctr., Oak La. Call 8432 1415 to book.
- **North London Bridge Club**, Muswell Hill. Contact 8348 3495
- **Bridge Club**, every Saturday 1.30-4pm, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2 8LT. Contact Ray Tiano 07944 562180.
- **Jewish Friendship Club** for over 60s, Tues 1-3 pm at Muswell Hill Synagogue, Tetherdown. Anita 8886 6140.
- **Muswell Hill Tetherdown Bridge**, contact 8883 4390



Fleur Adcock at East Finchley Library. Photo Mike Coles

## A song to New Zealand

By Daphne Chamberlain

The crowd packing out the Black Gull bookshop last month for the launch of Fleur Adcock's new book of poems and prose had an unexpected treat. It's not every day of the week you can hear Fleur reciting a poem about her teddy bear. She was in dialogue with actress Carolyn Pickles, a fellow contributor to February's library read-in. Asked whether she had always wanted to be a poet, Fleur obliged with a very early example of her work.

It was also appropriate, as her new book, *The Land Ballot*, has a theme of children, young people, and domestic settings. She follows the efforts of her grandparents and her father to create a home and livelihood in New Zealand.

*"I am half-occupying the eyes of my young father, still in his teens much of which he spent, like his school-mates, in bare feet on the back of a horse."*

Fleur's father brought his family to England during World War II, but they returned to New Zealand when she was 13.

Later she returned here,

where she has been awarded an OBE and the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry. She loves East Finchley, and clearly has an unbreakable link with her homeland too. As she said, she has more people living there now than when she left. It is where her grandchildren live.

Research for the book uncovered personal tragedies and triumphs, but she also reveals a picture to English readers of that country on the other side of the world. It is, Fleur says, her song to New Zealand.

*The Land Ballot*, ISBN 978-1-78037-147-4, is published by Bloodaxe Books.

## Far-flung

East Finchley poet Dennis Evans has gone international after his work was published in *The Anthology of Contemporary World Poetry* and the *World Poetry Yearbook 2014*. His poetry has been translated into Urdu, Hebrew, Brazilian Portuguese and Swedish.

Dennis is also the publisher of the *N2 Poetry Magazine*. This example of his work, written in the city of Recife, Brazil, is called *Game*:

*From this privileged third-floor middle-class flat, I watch the school kids play. Coloured, mixed race, black. Pelés in the making.*



Inspiration: Dennis Evans in Brazil.

## Mud, glorious mud

Children's charity The Bobath Centre, based in East End Road, is looking for volunteers to tackle a muddy obstacle course at Allianz Park, NW4, on Saturday 16 May.

It promises to be a huge challenge and great fun, and all funds raised will support the charity's work with children who have cerebral palsy. Entrants aged 14 and above are very welcome. For details call 020 8442 2275, email [fundraising@bobath.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@bobath.org.uk) or visit [www.bobathcentre.org.uk](http://www.bobathcentre.org.uk).

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[www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk](http://www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk)

**Visitors always welcome**

## One of Britain's best back gardens

In January 2015 Susan Bennett's unusual garden in Muswell Hill was featured on the ITV programme "Britain's Best Back Gardens". Here is her story:

As an Assistant County Organiser for the National Gardens Scheme, my remit is to find new gardens of interest. In April 2014 the tables turned when Alan Titchmarsh announced that to celebrate 50 years in horticulture he was seeking Britain's best private back gardens to feature in a TV series. I sent some photos to the production company. They liked them but warned us not to be disappointed if we were not chosen.

Weeks later, a request: "Can we come and see your garden?" In June the director came with a camera. He did some filming, talked to us at length, and mapped out how he was going to present our garden. Another phone call: "Can you think of something Alan could do apart from walking round the garden?"

Earl was working on a bust of Beethoven to scowl at another of Liberace for the mirrored candelabra-clad wall we call "Liberace Terrace". Beethoven was having

a bad hair day. I suggested that, if he didn't mind getting his hands dirty, Alan might give Earl a hand! He was thrilled at the prospect. Art was the only O-level he took at school.

### Discovering magic

At 7.30 am on 4 July in brilliant sunshine the crew arrived with Alan. Seeing our unprepossessing 1960s end of terrace home in a cul de sac, it is hard for a visitor to imagine anything spectacular behind it. But, as if he had passed through a Narnia-like wardrobe, Alan's surprise at encountering the magical place beyond was totally genuine.

From 600 gardens he had whittled his choice to 30, to feature in three, hour-long, themed programmes. Ours was first in his 'Flights of Fantasy'. I think he admired the fact that, as artists, we had created almost every element ourselves. Alan's parting shot was: "No one can hold a candelabra to this garden!"



Alan Titchmarsh (left) helps to sculpture the head of Beethoven for the quirky garden of Earl Hyde (centre) and Susan Bennett for a new TV programme. Photo Nigel Sutton

## What's On... E-mail your listings to: [the-archer@lineone.net](mailto:the-archer@lineone.net)

### Sunday 12 April

• Free concert at East Finchley Methodist Church, High Road, N2 (opposite Creighton Avenue), 7.30pm: Opera Scenes and Personal Favourites; Lucy Elizabeth Elston, soprano, Wendy Silvester, mezzo, Laurence Milne Panter, tenor, William Danes, baritone, and Richard Black, accompanist. Programme to include works by Mozart, Haydn, Schumann and Finzi. Free admission; collection in aid of mental health charity MIND. Venue fully accessible to people with disabilities.

### Tuesday 14 April

• Battle of Barnet: special anniversary guided walk (14 April 1471) with City of London guide Paul Baker. Meet at junction of Great North Road and Hadley Green Road, 11am. For more details contact Paul on 020 8440 6805 or visit [www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net](http://www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net)

### Wednesday 15 to Saturday 18 April

• Finchley & Friern Barnet Operatic Society presents: Hot Mikado! The Intimate Theatre, Palmers Green, N13 4DH. Tickets from [tickets@ffbos.com](mailto:tickets@ffbos.com) or [www.ticketsource.co.uk/ffbos](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/ffbos)

### Until Friday 17 April

• Spring Collection exhibition at Highgate Contemporary Art, 26 Highgate High Street, N6. Five talented and established artists present their personal interpretations of landscapes and their inspirations. Free entry.

### Saturday 18 April

• Seed and Plant Swap at Martin Primary School, Plane Tree Walk, High Road, N2,

from 11.30am to 1pm. Bring your surplus plants and seeds and swap them. No entrance charge. No money changes hands.

### Sunday 19 April

• Stephens Collection open from 1pm, East End Road, N3 3QE. Tel. 020 8346 7812. Sunday lunch available; main course from £7.50, dessert £3. Booking recommended.

### Until Sunday 19 April

• Candida, by George Bernard Shaw, Upstairs at the Gatehouse, Highgate, Tuesday to Saturday at 7.30pm and Sunday at 4pm. Tickets £14-£16 (£2 concession) from box office on 020 8340 3488 or [events@ovationproductions.com](mailto:events@ovationproductions.com).

### Thursday 30 April

• "Outreach" meeting of The Finchley Society; 8pm at artsdepot, N12. Meet the artsdepot team and enjoy a historical film of Finchley, and talk by Kieran Kettleton of North Finchley Town Team on regeneration of the area. All welcome.

### Wednesday 6 May

• Tea Dance organised and run by students at Bishop Douglass School, Hamilton Road, N2; all welcome; 2.30pm-4.30pm. Entrance charge of £3 includes afternoon tea.

### Saturday 18 May

• An evening of music and laughter with The Confections, 7.45pm, St Mary's Church Hall, 279 High Road, N2. Tickets (including refreshments) £8 and £7 concessions from 020 8440 2817 or at door on the night. All proceeds from the concert go to St Mary's.





## 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](mailto: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 re-organise 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](http://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.musingsofmetropolitan-mother.wordpress.com](http://www.musingsofmetropolitan-mother.wordpress.com)

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## Help to build a school in Cambodia



Schoolwork: The dilapidated classroom in a small village near Kampot, Cambodia, that Guy's Trust hopes to renovate.

Three years ago, East Finchley residents Tony and Vicky Joseph set up the charity Guy's Trust in memory of their son Guy who was tragically killed, aged 25, in a paragliding accident in 2011.

Guy's Trust offers educational opportunities to disadvantaged young people in developing countries and focuses on projects that reflect Guy's interests and the countries in which he spent time. You may have read about the charity in *THE ARCHER* before.

To date Guy's Trust has funded 12 marine conservation internships in Indonesia and built three schools and a library in Nepal. In 2013 they took a

team of 30 people to Nepal to start working alongside the local people on the first Guy Joseph Early Childhood Development Centre.

Guy's Trust is now working in Cambodia, building a much-needed primary school in a small village near Kampot. The school there is so derelict that some of the classrooms are unusable and the charity will build the children a new school.

From 12-21 February next year the Trust will be taking a team to start the building work

there and would welcome any local people who would like to join them. No particular skills are required, just enthusiasm!

This will be a unique opportunity to visit a fascinating country, to be physically involved in building a legacy for Guy and to make an impact on a community that needs help. A great sense of camaraderie and fun is also guaranteed.

There's more information at <http://guystrust.org/downloads/Cambodiatrip.pdf> or please contact [vicky@guystrust.org](mailto:vicky@guystrust.org).

## What's it worth?

They arrived with brown paper parcels, cloth bundles and heavy cases, but most left with a spring in their step and wide smiles.

The first joint fundraising antiques valuation day run by Finchley WI and Bonningtons made many new friends. Bringing all kinds of antiques from ornate metal work to Persian mirrors, jewellery to paintings and Oriental art to Welsh ceramics, their owners contributed valuation fees which, together with the receipts from the sales and tombola tables and generous donations, will be shared by local charities which include Cherry Lodge Cancer Care, Stephens House and Gardens and Finchley Food Bank.

Elizabeth Alcock, President of Finchley WI, and the committee, sent a big 'Thank You' to all who supported the event on Sunday 8 March. Finchley WI meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 8pm at Avenue House, East End Rd, N3.

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## East Finchley's best kept secret?

By Neil McNaughton

It's been called McDonald's University and The People's Republic of McDonald's but the truth about the impressive red brick building that dominates the lower part of the High Road is far removed from the rumours.

Hospitality House operations manager Tomasz Szakola told me that few local residents know what is going on there. The answer is, plenty and more to come.

### New administration

It is true that McDonald's, along with Hilton Hotels, People First and other organisations, sponsored the original building and supplied the equipment, but today the administration is facilitated by Barnet and Southgate College in partnership with the Hospitality Guild. It offers a wide range of short, medium and long-term courses concerned with catering, hospitality and food retail.

Students there can study long courses for qualifications such as NVQs and VDQs in catering, but also can gain hands-on experience in shorter courses, work experience and introductory courses leading to apprenticeships or directly into employment.

### Local groups welcome

But the most exciting secret is that Hospitality House has plenty of spare capacity and excellent facilities for local groups to run their own cookery sessions. Now that baking has become so popular, anyone can enrol for short courses or simply hire the facilities for their own groups. Residents can come and learn how to make cupcakes, cocktails or canapés.

Here are some of the ses-

sions on offer in April and early May:

• **Kids Cookery School – Pasta (cook with your kids)**, 9 April, 10am-12pm, £25

• **Cookery School - Artisan Breads**, 18 April, 10am-2pm, £70

• **Classic Cocktails Workshop**, 24 April, 6pm-9pm, £50

• **Cookery School - BBQ Perfect Marinades**, 2 May, 10am-1pm, £70

For more information see [www.hospitalityguild.co.uk](http://www.hospitalityguild.co.uk), email [reception@hospitality-house.co.uk](mailto:reception@hospitality-house.co.uk) or telephone 020 3074 1200.

## Keep in mind

**A four-week Mindfulness Meditation course with Sallie Rose begins on Tuesday 28 April at 7.30pm at a venue in East Finchley.**

Sallie Rose has been meditating for the last 30 years and supports people who want to incorporate meditation into their daily lives. She is the co-founder with her daughter Sunnah of the Rose School of Transformational Yoga, which is based in Holy Trinity Church, Church Lane, N2.

For more details about the course, contact Sallie on 07944 818197 or by email at [sallie@meditationnow.co.uk](mailto:sallie@meditationnow.co.uk).

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