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Archie: 75 years young and still yearning

Archie is 75 years old this month, qualifying him for his free TV licence. But there seems to be something missing in his life. David Tupman sits in on a conversation between our famous tube station statue and his creator Eric Aumonier.

Archie: Well knock me down with an Oyster card. It's my old mentor Eric Aumonier, famous sculptor of yours truly.

Eric: Archie my dear boy I can't believe you're 75. You're looking so sprightly.

Archie: Yes apart from the old trouble in my inspection plate, all is tickety-boo. Well they do say 75 is the new 50, don't they?



Archie points the way to Morden. Photo by Mike Coles

Eric: Such modesty. You know you are one of a kind especially with your gold trim, pointing your bow over London from high on the north plinth of East Finchley station.

Archie: Eric, it's puzzled me for years, but why don't I have an arrow?

Eric: Oh that's simple: health and safety! Old London Transport bosses were worried that resting pigeons might injure themselves on any sharp edges and they couldn't afford the insurance cover.

Archie: Huh, I see. Couldn't you now rustle up a genuine plastic replica arrow?

Eric: If only I could. But I am no longer of this mortal coil and my heart is now based in New Zealand. Then there's the question of getting a work visa and,

of course, the money.

Archie: Surely as I was a London Olympics landmark and am now an icon for the local Archer Academy the National Lottery could spare a few bob for an arrow?

Eric: Archie, you have to face facts. Statues do not feature in the planners' vision of a 21st century transport system. You're simply not strategic and income generating.

Archie: Tush, I don't think this is fair. I might retire to Bexhill-on-Sea and grace the Art Deco pavilion there with my presence.

Eric: Oh Archie, no! Your friends in East Finchley would be mortified if you were to go. You must stay. You're a national treasure. Who would we have in your place? It might have to be an ex-London mayor.

Archie: Lawks-a-mercy Eric, you've convinced me. I know where my duty lies. It's another 75 years for me in East Finchley.

Glorious greenery

By Nick Young

Congratulations to Church Lane residents Caroline and David Broome, who raised £1,250 for charity by opening their garden to the public as part of the National Gardens Scheme on Sunday 14 June.

Caroline and David's very impressive garden, which they have been working on since 1997, has musical water features, a roof garden, borders crammed with perennials and an innovative open-air conservatory (the 'catatorium').

They have been taking part in the National Gardens Scheme for several years, during which

time their garden has featured on ITV's *Love Your Garden* and the BBC's *The One Show*. This year, they had 210 visitors, more than ever before, and the money was raised through a raffle, a plant sale and tea and cakes as well as the entry fee. The funds will support ten charities including Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Cancer Care.



Spring moves into summer: David and Caroline Broome's glorious garden. Photo by Allison Goodings.



Eric Aumonier with Archie in 1940

Eric: You know, Archie, you were one of the biggest commissions of my career at London Transport. I laboured for many hours on your fine features and resolute demeanour.

Archie: Steady on Eric, you'll have me blushing.

A cordial invitation

By Liz Alcock, president of Finchley WI

Last month's meeting of Finchley WI saw us celebrate our sixth birthday, hold our AGM and welcome the Queen's Centennial Baton, all on the same night!

Thanks to the public's generosity, we have raised much money already this year to support local charities. We plan more, starting with Tea and Strawberry Scones at Stephens House Garden Fete on 19 July.

The WI nationally has reached its 100th birthday. It began as a club for Canadian country women and crossed the pond to Anglesey with aims we still share: food production, and to improve the social life of women.

All welcome

If you would like any more ideas, or just want a chat, come along to meet us at Stephens House, East End Road, N3. Our next open meeting will be a Bring Your Own picnic in the grounds on Wednesday 8 July at 8pm (indoors if wet). All ladies over 18 are welcome. Check us out on <http://wifinchley.blogspot.co.uk/>

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