



Letters

Say no to Sainsbury's
Dear Editor,

Many will have heard that Sainsbury's is planning an 'open all hours' convenience store on what are currently the sites of Bike and Run and Mama Jack's restaurant on the High Road/Leicester Road junction in East Finchley. Our existing High Road represents our diverse and vibrant community with a variety of successful independent shops. We already have Budgens and Iceland and, in my opinion, the introduction of a Sainsbury's can only be detrimental to the existing independents and will ultimately destroy our precious East Finchley village. The strong opposition to Waitrose opposite the station was successful more than a decade ago, and the High Road has continued to thrive since then. It is imperative the local community is made aware of this new application in order for their opinions to be heard before it is too late.

Yours faithfully,
Natalie Baskin,
Maya Road, N2.

Oz supports our library
Dear Editor,

Not a lot of people know this, but Australia fully supports efforts to save East Finchley Library. As kids in East Finchley in the 1940s/50s, the library was our educational boost and should be for the current generation.

We now live in Australia, where councils keep libraries well funded and technologically up-to-date. For instance, rural Eurobodalla Shire, 170 miles south of Sydney with just 37,000 people in 2,100 square miles, funds and upgrades three local libraries.

The Shire has good internet access but, in a pamphlet, the Council states that its purpose in funding libraries, is: "Supporting lifelong learning and a vibrant community life."

Keep up the good work protesters, our old East Finchley hearts are with you.

Yours faithfully,
Brian Timms
formerly Huntingdon Road, N2,
now Moruya, Australia,
and Hazel Astley (nee Spooner),
Melbourne.

Disappearing books
Dear Editor,

Many people in East Finchley may be familiar with the Ripping Yarns bookshop at the corner of Archway Road and Muswell Hill Road. It's been there for years and was like an Aladdin's cave of secondhand titles, many of them suitable for children. I was dismayed in September to see that Ripping Yarns has now gone. It's changed into a largely online business so the premises are up for rent. It's always sad to see a long-established shop disappear but when it's a bookstore there's an added edge of regret. Bookshops, like libraries, are places of discovery. They offer adventures and new experiences to people who choose something to read from their shelves. In the case of secondhand bookshops, their wares can cost next to nothing. I read in the Evening Standard that there are only 100 independent bookshops left in the whole of London.

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.

Truly an endangered species and we can ill afford to lose even one. Too late for Ripping Yarns but we have our own independent bookshop in East Finchley and others nearby in Muswell Hill. Let's keep them in business.

Yours faithfully,
David Melsome,
Long Lane, N2.



Hannah Woldu of Ryker Kids. Photo Mike Coles

Two years in business and going strong

By Cathy Young

"I wanted it to be a little bit more than just a shop," explained Hannah Woldu, of Ryker Kids, the children's shoe shop at 162 High Road, N2. "Setting up a local business is always tricky; the tone has to be right and you need to get to know what your customers are looking for."

It is clear that Hannah has followed her own advice; the shop has just had its second birthday and has successfully extended into children's wear. Hannah now also has a range of women's fashion at the far end of the premises following the success of a pop-up shop last year. That earlier initiative helped to launch the boutique, Aliya J, which has opened next to Josephine's flower shop.

Hannah is keen to support the community. For every pair of school shoes sold in Ryker Kids, a donation of 7% of the purchase price will be made to Martin Primary School.

"The idea grew out of feedback from local parents and I am hoping, if the scheme is successful, to extend it to other local primary schools such as Holy Trinity and Coldfall," she said



Grub up: Tasty treats are served up at St Mary's International Day.

Many tongues, one voice

By Kristy Bradnum

At least 27 different countries were represented at an International Day at St Mary's Catholic Church on 20 September in celebration of the parish's diversity and unity. Many parishioners and visitors came in national costume to take part in a special Mass and enjoyed listening to the readings, prayers and hymns in a colourful tapestry of different languages.

All represented by native speakers were: English, French, Gaelic, Hindi, Italian, Iteso (from Uganda), Luo (from Uganda), Shona (from Zimbabwe), Slovak, Spanish, Tagalog (from the Philippines), Twi (from Ghana), Xhosa (from South Africa) and Zulu (from South Africa).

The parish's teenagers' group Incensed supports two projects in Kenya and Uganda through microloans organisation kiva.org and the Justice and Peace Society

supports a school in Ethiopia, while St Mary's SVP group has been raising money to buy cows for their partner SVP community in Sri Lanka.

People brought a range of foods from many different countries and sat down to eat together. The afternoon ended with a group sing-a-long for young and old, and people left whistling and humming the tune of the hippo song (hip-hip-hip-popotamus) from Zimbabwe.

Food banks: who are they for?

By Chariissa Cheong

Poverty in Barnet has been worsening, with a deprivation rate of 21% and one in four children living in poverty because of their low-income families. So what is being done by food banks to put an end to poverty amongst working families? I began volunteering at the Finchley Food Bank to find out.

The food bank is open every Saturday from 12.30pm to 2pm at St Mary's Church in East Finchley. It is a church-run organisation that strives to give food to people in need. It relies mostly on donations from the public and provides each visitor with enough food for three days.

A very dedicated team not only gives out food but asks the people who come why they need food. A customer card containing the information is passed to the volunteers who pack the food into bags. This is where I am stationed.

Who needs food banks?

At first I expected there to be more working people on low incomes coming to us for help. However, I was very confused to find that the majority of people visiting us were pensioners.

Administrator Vanessa Elsley says: "I think the reason why we don't get a lot of working people is because they don't think food banks are for them. We can't help them if they don't reach out to us to be helped."

Some people say food banks are for the homeless, some say they are for people "who don't know how to cook". But if that is true, why are food banks handing out various goods that require a kettle, microwave or other kitchen appliances to cook them?

Seeking or refusing help

Food banks were designed for working people who are struggling to put food on the table and have a table to call their own. Food banks are for people who possess the ability to cook but do not have enough food to cook.

People will always have their reasons for refusing help, ranging from pride to denial. The working community in Barnet does suffer from food poverty and it is our responsibility to get them to seek help.

For more information about the Finchley Food Bank, visit their Facebook page, or contact Vanessa Elsley at finchleyfoodbank@gmail.com. You can drop off donations at St Mary's Church, 279 High Road, N2 8HG, on Saturdays from 12.30pm - 2pm.



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