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CARS & COURIERS

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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Arts festival: Martin School Choir sing to a packed house at All Saint's Church. Photo Mike Coles

East Finchley Arts Festival

Turn to page 4 for our festival reviews and more photos



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Get set for Christmas Festival

By Diana Cormack
Preparations are in progress for the East Finchley Christmas Festival which will take place on Saturday 5 December. This event is organised by volunteers from our community who work hard to produce the festive fun which has drawn ever-increasing crowds to the High Road over the last three years.

Stalls run by local businesses, charities and schools will open at 10am offering a wide variety of things to buy, taste or experience.

Continued on page 3

Supermarket chain plans to take over two High Road shops

By Diana Cormack

Following months of rumours, a planning application has been made to convert two High Road businesses into a Sainsbury's Local convenience store situated on the corner of Leicester Road.

The sites concerned are Bike and Run at 134 and Mama Jack at 132, which only recently changed from being the Italian restaurant Va Pensiero. Now the gourmet burger restaurant faces relocating, whilst 'Bike and Run' would have to move into their smaller existing premises at 128 High Road.

Benefits

Sainsbury's says a new store will benefit the locality by creating up to 20-25 new job opportunities and adds that, in similar high street locations across London, by attracting more people to the area it has brought increased trade to neighbouring businesses.

The opening hours for such shops are usually from 7am to 11pm seven days a week. An ATM machine and disabled access are included in the plans. At the time of writing, details of their liquor licence application are fixed to a post on the pavement nearby.

Differences of opinion

Some local residents who have been contacting *THE*

ARCHER on Twitter and Facebook have welcomed news of the proposed development, saying it will bring more choice and convenience for shoppers and more competition for other chain stores on the High Road.

Others object to another in-coming chain store and fear it could damage the small independent businesses for which East Finchley High Road is noted. In trying to allay fears, Sainsbury's have pointed out their desire to play an active role in local communities. This includes promoting safer neighbourhoods, supporting a nominated local charity each year and running its nationwide 'Active Kids' programme.

Memory lane

The prospective arrival of a new supermarket will revive memories of the 'Warning on Waitrose' campaign run by a group of residents in 2003. The proposal to build a huge superstore opposite the tube station, demolishing homes, shops and offices and involving the loss of East Finchley's Grade 2 listed library, divided opinion in the area and still does.

See Letters, page 11.



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THE ARCHER

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If you have a story for us, please contact us at the above address. Comments to THE ARCHER may be published unless clearly marked 'Not for publication' within the text.

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

Haringey Council

Leisure 020 8489 0000
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
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Planning Applications

Barnet Council

75 and 91 Bedford Road, N2

Roof extensions, involving rear dormer and three roof lights to front.

12 Chamberlain Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

32 Church Lane, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Proposed depth 5.9m, eaves height 2.68m, maximum height 3.872m.

10 Deansway, N2

Ground floor patio extension, with raised terrace to rear garden.

17 Durham Road, N2

Single-storey rear/side extension, following partial demolition of existing rear extension.

First floor flat, 107 East End Road, N2

Roof extension, including rear dormer window and three roof lights to front. Removal of chimney stack.

257 East End Road, N2

Basement extension to front and rear, with new light wells.

132-134 High Road, N2

Replacement shop front, with access ramp and new ATM machine. New entrance to flats. Single-storey side and rear extension, following demolition of part of existing building. Balustrade to flat roof of extension. Security gate. Replacing bicycle store with

new structure. Air-conditioning units within timber frame enclosure at first floor. Three internally illuminated fascia signs and one internally illuminated projecting sign.

18A Juliana Close, N2

Roof extension, involving one rear dormer window and two roof lights to front.

364 Long Lane, N2

Two single-storey rear extensions. Proposed depth 6m, eaves height 2.7m, maximum height 3.7m.

409 Long Lane, N2

First floor flat side and rear extension. Roof extension, involving dormer window with three roof lights to front, to facilitate loft conversion.

88 Manor Park Road, N2

Single-storey side/rear extension. New storm porch at side. Alternative fenestration on ground floor. One skylight each to existing garage roof and existing kitchen roof.

Oak Lodge School, Heath View, N2

Details of conditions from previous planning permission.

67 Summerlee Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

Land at Tarling Road, N2

Details of conditions re.previous planning permission.

Parking: get your money back

Barnet CPZ Action, the campaign group that backed the successful legal challenge to Barnet Council's increased residents' parking charges, has been busy returning donations made by its hundreds of supporters.

The legal action saw the cost of a resident's parking permit fall from £105 to £40 and the cost of a visitor voucher cut from £4.16 to £1.00. The council was also ordered to pay the legal costs of the case and, with the lawyer's bills now paid, sufficient money remains to return all donations of £20 or more.

David Attfield, who brought the successful High Court action, said "I'm delighted that we're able to honour the commitment we made at the start of the campaign to refund donations of £20 or more. It's a very pleasing end to our successful campaign that I can repay residents who put so much faith in me and who made the legal action possible." With some donations having been made four years ago, the group is concerned that some contact details may be out of date.

Any residents who would like to claim a refund and who has not been contacted should write to Barnet CPZ Action at barnetcpz@gmail.com or 88 Summerlee Avenue, East Finchley, N2 9HQ. Barnet CPZ Action has stated that any remaining money will then be donated to the North London Hospice.

Launch of the East Finchley Business Network

By Hilary Townley

The East Finchley Community Trust held the inaugural meeting of the East Finchley Business Network on Friday 16 October. It was the culmination of 10 months of hard work and research responding to the oft-repeated cry up and down the High Road: "Why don't we have a local business network?" Well, now we do!

The response has been overwhelming and enthusiastically positive. Every single business along the High Road has pledged their interest in taking part. The meeting was held in The Bald Faced Stag and new manager Gemma Hampton-Davis extended warm hospitality to all comers.

A Friday forum

Everyone agreed that the network should be about celebrating the local community, providing mutual support for local businesses, finding ways to make local businesses grow and providing them with one powerful voice. It should also be a forum for ideas and for

debating local issues.

Everyone agreed that the network would meet on the first Friday of every month. Although for this first phase it was businesses along the High Road that were invited to join, the aim of the network is to include everyone who has a business in East Finchley whether in commercial premises or run from home.

The next meeting will be on Friday 6 November at 8.30am at The Bald Faced Stag; everyone is welcome. Until further notice all enquiries should be addressed to The East Finchley Community Trust: eastfinchley-festival@gmail.com.

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Sophie takes us into her kitchen

By Nick Young

East Finchley's foodie credentials have been on the rise recently, with local resident Emma Spitzer doing well on the BBC TV cookery show *MasterChef* earlier in the year.



Last year's winner of the celebrity edition, actress Sophie Thompson, has lived in N2 with her family for 14 "very happy" years and has now brought out her first cookery book, *My Family Kitchen*. "It's a love song really to my family and friends," she told *THE ARCHER*. "It's made me enjoy cooking again."

The *MasterChef* challenge

Cooking has been part of Sophie's life from an early age. "I did it with my toys," she said, "even on an old vintage toy stove that ran on meths: health and safety nightmare! My grannies, Uncle James and mum [actress Phyllida Law] influenced me most."

MasterChef, though, was a big challenge. "The thing that prompted me to take part... was to surprise myself. It was all fantastically challenging. I think doing things to such rigorous time restraints was the hardest."

What does Sophie like about East Finchley? "So many

things," she said when *THE ARCHER* asked her this question. "All our wonderful local independent shops: Tony's Continental, Amici, Scotts the fishmongers, Black Gull Books, Majjos, Cherry Tree Gifts, the new Aliya J, Kokos, Campbell & Syme our very own coffee roasters, to name but a few."

TV and theatre

As well as seeing her book published, Sophie has recently been in Huddersfield filming *Jericho*, an eight-part costume drama for ITV in which she plays a publican. "It's a sort of English western," she explained. "And now I have started re-rehearsals for a production of *Guys and Dolls* I was involved with last year in Chichester. We are bringing it to town at the Savoy theatre, through Christmas and into next spring."

My Family Kitchen is on sale locally in Black Gull Books and in Tony's Continental.



Get set for Christmas Festival 2015

Continued from page 1

The ever popular dog show is scheduled for 11.30am with this year's theme being 'The Most Christmassy Dog'. It will take place at the Lincoln Road festival stage site, where the information tent is also situated.

On-stage activities begin at 12 noon and continue to 5pm with musical activities covering singing, dancing and instrumentals reflecting the Christmas music and carols being heard on the streets.

Father Christmas will be

there with his sleigh. Children will be able to pet his real-life reindeer and make Christmas tree decorations. A new Christmas tree will be planted at Budgens corner.

There will be story-telling sessions for the under-sevens in the foyer of the Finchley Youth Theatre and the Phoenix Cinema will be holding special events for youngsters. Fit people can participate in Santa's Fun Run and anyone can enter the Great East Finchley Christmas Bake-Off, with individual mince pies being tasted by a mystery judge.

The organisers are hoping for a strong showing of local traders at the festival and welcome any enquiries about this, as well as from anyone wanting to volunteer their help (stewards are needed on the day) or to make some sort of contribution or sponsorship.

Email eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com for any information, offer or suggestion. Details will also be available on Twitter @N2Festival and East Finchley Festival on Facebook, and keep your eyes open for posters giving more details.

Could you be a star baker?

Everyone is invited to enter the Great East Finchley Christmas Bake-Off competition which this year is setting out to find the best mince pie maker.

Entries for the competition (one per person) should be brought to the information tent by the stage on Lincoln Road from 10am onwards on the day of the festival (Saturday 5 December).

Place your pie on a paper plate with the following information written on the back: your name, age (if under 18) and phone number; if the pie is vegetarian, non-vegetarian or contains nuts.

Prizes will be awarded for the best one made by a grown up and by a non-grown up. The decision by the surprise judge is final!

Festival specials for all ages

East Finchley Altogether Better (EFAB) are working in partnership with the Christmas Festival team to ensure there is something for everyone at the East Finchley Christmas Festival on Saturday 5 December.

Oakdale Pharmacy on the High Road, and possibly others, will be offering free health, or 'elf' checks, throughout the day. Drop in to get advice on healthy living including diet, aids for daily living, smoking cessation, and blood pressure monitoring.

Some of the restaurants who regularly offer the EFAB Silver Service, a £5 menu deal for over 60s and their guest on Tuesdays, will be offering the deal on the day of the festival. They are the New Local Café (4-10pm), Pelican Fish bar (9am-2pm and 6pm-9pm), the Phoenix Cinema café (12-5pm) and Seasons café (11am-9pm).

Christmas classic

The Phoenix Cinema will also be showing a free screening of *White Christmas* for those over 60 who can bring up to two guests of any age, such as friends, family and carers, on the day. The screening, starting at 10am, will also be 'Dementia Friendly', with brighter lighting, quieter sound and a break in the middle of the film for a sing along and comfort break. Free popcorn is also available, and of course you can enjoy the Silver Service lunch deal there afterwards! Contact Phoenix Cinema on 020 8444 6789 for more details.

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Home sweet home: How the Muswell Hill cohousing project will look.

Co-housing community looking for members

A different type of housing scheme is under construction in Muswell Hill aimed at people mostly aged 55 plus who want a separate home in a cluster with others as part of a self-governing community.

There will be 30 homes in the co-housing project being built on the old St Luke's Hospital site off Woodside Avenue. All residents will have access to a shared common house for community activities, a shared garden with allotments and a shared car pool.

There are currently vacancies, including one, two and three-bedroom flats, for residents who would like to move in when the scheme opens in May 2017. A group of future residents is already meeting monthly.

Sheila Fletcher, who is one of them, said the idea for a cohousing group in Muswell Hill came from local people who wanted to live sustain-

ably and together with their neighbours. Most will be downsizing from larger homes. Sheila said: "The benefits for me are getting to know my neighbours and finding that I like them, even before I have moved in. I am ready to move into a smaller home now and it will be much easier to manage, but I will still have a shared garden and allotments. Both the flats and site will be fully accessible so mobility will be easy for the future."

The entire site is being developed by a joint venture partnership between Hanover Housing Association and Hill Residential. Find out more at www.cohousingwoodside.co.uk.

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

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All Saints' also has a strong musical tradition and an enthusiastic choir.

Experienced singers are always welcome.
Contact Geoffrey Hanson on 020 8444 9214.

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

Arts festival unleashes fireworks of sound

By Ken Carter

Each year, All Saints in Durham Road comes joyously into bloom for nine days with East Finchley's very own Arts Festival. You missed it? Become a regular in 2016!

On the opening day in early October, after Punch and Judy in the morning, we had Handel's 'Messiah'. All Saints, being somewhat smaller than the Albert Hall, gave us a rousing 18th century-style 'a capella' affair. No orchestra, but Ben Woodward drew seductive, gentle sounds from the church's organ. Nor was there a choir. 'Come & Sing', the brochure said. A score or so of women and four men rehearsed in the afternoon and performed an hour or so later. Ad hoc? Rough edges? Shaky timing? Not a bit of it. I sat back and relaxed, delighting in the lively, accomplished choral flow.

Later in the week, the **London Mozart Players** gave us Handel, Hanson and Schubert and played conductor-less for the two American pieces: Adagio for Strings [Barber] and Quiet City [Copland]. In the first half, Geoffrey Hanson's 'Trumpet Piece' blazed triumphantly in the splendour of its first performance.

The next night gave us string quintets from **Divertimenti**, dominated by the massive D 956 of Schubert's by-now-dying genius. The performance had a searing, unforgettable intensity. This was a different musical world indeed from the Opus 1 of Ethel Smyth, slighter but with its own sprightly charm.

Thursday brought us 'Crocodiles In Cream', the late David Horlock's endearing, engrossing 'portrait' of Lewis Carroll. With captivating skill, Kevin Moore conveyed something of the person who lived for 31 years in rooms at Christ Church, Oxford ... and died 17 years' later at his sister's house in Guildford. With great virtuosity, Moore conveyed to us the languid, somewhat distracted manner of a mathematician of brilliant, restless mind looking for somewhere to go.

Kosmos, the next night, was bright-eyed and luminescent. Harriet MacKenzie [violin], Meg Hamilton [viola] and Milos Milivojevic [accordion] each



The Massive Violins. Photo Mike Coles



Kosmos. Photo Mike Coles



Pop-Up Opera. Photo Mike Coles



Divertimenti. Photo Mike Coles

shone with vitality. The audience greeted these fireworks in sound with loud acclaim. Earlier, the trio had performed for children from Martin Primary School. And Martin children had joined with Holy Trinity Primary pupils to front their own concert for an appreciative crowd.

When only 21 years old, Rossini wrote 'L'Italiana In Algeri' in 3-4 weeks. This was the closing night's illustrious bloom from

Pop Up Opera which revels in joyous mayhem of this sort, where impeccable singing meets knockabout farce in a fiesta of riotous incongruity.

Festival director Geoffrey Hanson hopes to make a CD of some of the music he has written for the festival over the years. He is looking for £10,000 to fund this project and would welcome any donations. Contact him by email at eastfinarts@btinternet.com.

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Safer Neighbourhood team may be axed

By Janet Maitland

Have you noticed that far fewer Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) are patrolling our streets? Their numbers have been progressively cut since 2010 and soon we may have none at all. The Metropolitan Police is considering scrapping all 1,017 of the PCSOs working in London neighbourhoods in order to meet expected Government spending cuts of £800m.

PCSOs may have fewer powers than police officers, but their presence makes a significant difference to levels of crime and antisocial behaviour. "All the evidence shows that fewer police on local streets means higher crime," said Andrew Dismore, London Assembly Member for Barnet and Camden.

Crime prevention plus

But PCSOs do not just patrol the streets. The PCSOs based at the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) on the High Road, have provided invaluable crime prevention advice over the last 10 years, both in the community and at surgeries in their office, including an email service warning residents when a crime was committed in their street. They also kept an eye on vulnerable people at particular risk of crime.

Jan Lovell, the last remaining PCSO in East Finchley, saved the life of an 89-year-old man when she checked on him and found him close to dying from hypothermia one cold winter's day in 2010.

"PCSOs are not just tested familiar faces in our communities but a valuable source of intelligence and a vital part of neighbourhood policing," said local councillor Alison Moore.

Cuts without consultation

In East Finchley our SNT has been progressively cut from nine officers for each ward to just one Police Constable and one PCSO. If PCSOs are abolished, it seems

unlikely that the SNT office will remain open if just one Police Constable remains.

Met Commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe has warned that the budget cuts could mean the overall loss of up to 8,000 officers in the capital. Police stations may also be sold, leaving

only Colindale station for the whole of Barnet.

Andrew Dismore said these decisions will be made in December, after no consultation with local people. He urged residents to register their concern by writing to the Mayor at City Hall SE1 2AA.



Victory Auto Services are on the move

By John Dearing

Victory Auto Services has been located in East Finchley for some 26 years. Originally based in the High Road, principals Mark Bharadia and Wayne Adams moved their operations to the current site in Fortis Green about ten years ago.

Last year their lease expired but they have been allowed to remain on a monthly basis. Mark said that although they fully intended to stay in East Finchley for as long as possible, it had become apparent that they would eventually have to move as the owners intend to redevelop the site for residential use.

As a result, they moved to the former Clarendon service garage in Muswell Hill, at 57 Coniston Road, off Alexandra Park Road, and have been operating from there as a second site. Wayne said the garage was formerly used by a limousine hire company that used to bring film stars into London from Heathrow.

Mark said he was upset about having to leave East Finchley and many of his customers had also expressed concern to him. He thanked them for all their support over more than a quarter of a century. All existing customers are very welcome at the new site and Mark hopes they will be willing to drive just a little further in order to continue receiving the service they are used to.

It is likely that the Fortis Green site will remain empty for an extended period, given that the owners have yet to apply for permission to redevelop.



Movement classes at the Ann Owen's Centre. Photo Mike Coles

Keep your motor running

By Toni Morgan

'Move Every Way Every Day' was the message at the Ann Owens Centre in Oak Lane, N2, as part of an international scheme to encourage older people to stay active.

"You don't have to be super fit to benefit from exercise," said Cynthia Robinson, chief executive of the EXTEND Exercise charity, as she dropped in on an exercise class led by Lesley Chowen (a former ARCHER deliverer).

The class is one of several that take place at the centre each week and some of the members have been attending for several years. Apart from providing regular exercise, the classes offer vital social contact, entertaining music and

good fun too.

Exercise has been proven to deliver improved movement, enhanced mood and reduced stress levels. EXTEND Exercise delivers classes nationwide to 25,000 participants, almost all of whom have muscular, joint or circulatory conditions, or even all three. The charity has run an international day for older persons since 1991.

To find out more about available classes at the Ann Owens Centre, contact the team there on 020 8203 5040.

Bishop Douglass Christmas party

The Bishop Douglass Christmas party this year will be held on Thursday 10 December from 5-7 pm. All East Finchley residents who are over 65 are welcome and you should book your place without delay.

As usual, you will be welcomed with a glass of sherry by Year 10 students and enjoy a three-course meal followed by carol singing and entertainment by pupils and staff. Games of bingo and a gift from Santa Claus will round off the evening.

Transport can be provided for those who need it. To book your place, phone 020 8883 0433 and leave your name and a contact number and someone will get back to you.

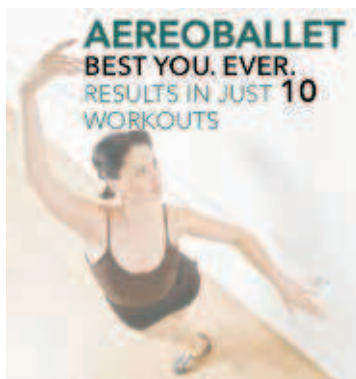
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Rising costs of new community centre

By Janet Maitland

Barnet Council has confirmed that the cost of rebuilding the Old Barn community centre in Tarling Road will be more than the current available funds of £1.7m.

This budget was enough to cover the council's original plan for the centre: refurbishing it and adding a new wing for the Somali Bravanese Welfare Association (SBWA), whose centre on Coppetts Road, Muswell Hill was burnt down in a racist arson attack in June 2013.

The costs have risen because the council, following consultation with local residents and other stakeholders, now proposes to demolish the Old Barn, replacing it with a two-storey building, half of which will be used by the SBWA. "A building of this size will cost more than the current £1.7m budget," said a council spokesperson.

The extra costs (still being estimated) will be met through fundraising from external sources. If there is still a shortfall, the council will "consider meeting it in order to provide an equitable solution that meets the needs of the entire community."

How will the new centre be run?

In the run-up to the council's submission of the planning application, scheduled for late October, there has been much debate about how the centre will be run. A public meeting was held on 27 October at the Green Man Community Centre to bring interested groups together.

We asked the council how the centre will operate.

The Archer: Do you plan to appoint an organisation to undertake the overall management of the centre?

Barnet Council spokesperson: We intend to invite potential organisations to bid for the role of managing the centre in an open and competitive process.

What will be the leasing arrangements?

These are yet to be determined but we envisage that interested groups, including the SBWA, will lease the space directly from the management organisation who will, in turn, lease direct from the council.

Will the leases include any specific stipulations about religious activities?

This is possible but has not yet been decided because the council is still working with groups interested in leasing the space to understand their requirements. Whilst it is anticipated that there will be flexibility for lease holders to conduct some religious activities, such as Christmas or Eid celebrations, it is not intended that lease holders will use the community centre for the sole purpose of religious worship. **What are the plans for resolving any conflict between groups leasing space at the centre or between these groups and the local community?**

A key criterion in the selection of the management organisation will be their ability to demonstrate that they can resolve conflict in a swift and timely fashion.

Surprise move by Santander

On 3 December the Santander Bank is leaving its premises at 87 High Road.

A leaflet informed clients that the team there will be moving to other branches located at 105 - 110 Muswell Hill Broadway, 50 Ballards Lane, Finchley and 760 High Road, North Finchley.

New yoga kid on the block

By Sheila Armstrong

Yogalogy came to the High Road on 21 September. Local resident and long time yoga practitioner Neda Shayeghi searched for a suitable property for some time before taking over the space above Jeremy Leaf.



Well balanced: Neda Shayeghi

Trained in Spain and with *Yoga Alliance*, Neda told *THE ARCHER* that she hopes to set up a creative and supportive yoga based community with an inviting atmosphere here in East Finchley.

Various classes are already running including dynamic

yoga, ashtanga, vinyasa and flow, dance and creative movement for children, and the sound therapy, gong bath. The most up to date details of what Yogalogy can offer are on the website yogalogy.co.uk including introductory deals for lessons.

Majjos is a local gem

Majjo's restaurant in Fortis Green has recently been included as a 'Local Gem' in the *Good Food Guide 2016* published by Waitrose. Inclusion in the guide, which has been running for 65 years, is purely on the basis of anonymous inspections and recommendations.

The Majjo's entry reads: 'The family-run deli-style takeaway has been an East Finchley favourite for more than 30 years, so loyal supporters are delighted there's now a restaurant next door, offering authentic north Indian/Pakistani cuisine based on family recipes and fresh ingredients.'

Consistently good

'The cooking is consistently good, varied in flavour and very good value. Samosas are light and crisp, and there is good papri chaat as well as tender char-grilled lamb chops, chicken ginger, saag aloo and excellent dhal. It's "unpretentious, unexpected" and un-licensed, so you can BYO corkage free.'

Wellbeing: What's out there for expectant and new mums

By Sunnah Rose

Sunnah Rose has been a pregnancy, postnatal and regular hatha yoga teacher for more than eight years in East Finchley. Here she rounds up just some of the classes and groups based locally that help new mums (and dads) find confidence, advice and new friends.

When I was lucky enough to become pregnant I experienced first-hand some of the amazing people and places that support new parents. Please note that these are just a few examples; I hope they inspire you to investigate everything that's going on.

Hypnobirthing is led by Ruth Sabrosa, a beautiful lady who will make you relaxed about

your birth. She's based on Fortis Green Road and her website is www.ruthsabrosa.com.

The Phoenix Cinema has regular 'Bringing up baby' screenings. Enjoy a film with a bunch of other mums and don't worry if your baby cries (www.phoenixcinema.co.uk).

You may remember the library as a boring place where

you study for exams but for a toddler or young person it's an exciting treasure trove of experiences! East Finchley's library at 226 High Road has a special children's reading room.

There are a number of amazing baby massage teachers so do look around. I went to Baby Yoga with Jaya, another East Finchley resident. For details of all her courses visit www.yogababies.co.uk.

NCTea is an informal get together and a great chance to meet other new mums. It takes place on Tuesday afternoons in Delicia cafe on Fortis Green, close to Muswell Hill.

Teddy Bears Music run by the lovely Camilla has live musical instruments from a trained opera singer. Babies, toddlers and breastfeeding mums are all welcome on Thursday mornings at Holy Trinity Church, Church Lane, N2.

And there are my own pregnancy and postnatal yoga classes held at Holy Trinity Church, Church Lane, N2. For more information visit www.stretchingpeople.co.uk.



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Libraries: a proposed structure

By Daphne Chamberlain

After two Council meetings and many questions, Barnet is going forward with another consultation about their proposed cuts to our library services. The public clearly rejected the three options presented to us nearly a year ago, but the Council has now come up with another proposal.

This divides libraries into three categories. There will be a Core group, with basic stock, opening hours and community use. Branches in this range are East Finchley, North Finchley, Burnt Oak, Golders Green, Hendon and Osidge. For anything beyond the most basic provision, these libraries will have to depend on the Core Plus branches of Church End, Chipping Barnet, Edgware and Grahame Park. This leaves the Partnership or Community Libraries, run by volunteers. Partnership branches will be Childs Hill, East Barnet, Mill Hill and South Friern.

Cameras to replace staff

Although some details have been changed, proposals very definitely rejected by the recent public consultation are still on the table. Barnet is still going ahead with 'technology enabled hours', with staff replaced by CCTV cameras. East Finchley, for example will be staffed for only 16 hours a week.

Barnet say that Core libraries such as East Finchley will concentrate on services for children and older people, but when no staff are present, unaccompanied children and younger teenagers will not be able to use the library.

For the moment at least, East Finchley Library will remain in its own building, but

library space will be reduced from 5,000 sq ft to about 2,100 sq ft. We don't know how this will be achieved. Across the borough, 46% of Library staff will lose their jobs,

bringing about expected redundancy payments of £1.5 million. Full details of the Council's proposals are on www.barnet.gov.uk. We have no details as yet of the consultation.

First street party is a big hit

By Lucy Chaumeton

A weekend in mid-September saw the inaugural edition of the Ringwood Estate Street Party. After extensive canvassing of their neighbours, enterprising local residents Maura O'Neill and Ruth Kay persuaded Haringey Council to close Twyford Avenue to traffic between Beech Drive and Ringwood Avenue from 11am to 3pm, making room for table tennis, junk modelling, games, "beat the goalie", an ice cream parlour and pavement art. Meanwhile the sound stage revealed much untapped local musical talent.



Middle of the road: The street party in full swing

Residents volunteered time, drinks, and some delicious home-cooked food, and enjoyed the opportunity to get to know each other better. Said Kevin Liffey, from Twyford Avenue: "A lot of people wondered why we hadn't done this before and started to feel that we could do more as a community. In fact, we may have to: an Italian family came along who had only been on Twyford Avenue for a week, and they probably think London is always like this!"

The spirit of goodwill spread beyond the immediate community: donations from participants, as well as generous spon-

sorship from Tatlers, JGBryson Printers and the Clissold Arms and spot prizes from The Bald Faced Stag, Finch Restaurant, Haven Estates, Maurizio's Deli, Oxygen and Snappy Snaps, meant that after covering event costs the organisers were able to make a substantial donation to Cancer Research.

If you would like to help with next year's Ringwood Estate street party contact Ruth and Maura at: theringwood-estate@gmail.com.



A walk in the park

By Daphne Chamberlain

This is local artist Laura Fishman's personal impression of Stephens House and Gardens. A couple of years ago, I saw a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* there, and Laura's paintings recreate the gardens as an enchanted, dreamlike place. She has been artist in residence there this year, and until 20 November we have the chance to see an exhibition of her work.

Her brief was to show the history and nature of the estate, which was bequeathed to the people of Finchley by "Inky" Stephens. "Inky" had a smoking room in the tower part of the house, and it was this room which became Laura's studio. She worked from there, and in the grounds themselves.

She works in oil, watercolours, ink and charcoal. At one point, she painted with natural brushes, made from twigs and dried wild flowers collected in the grounds.

Laura says that her primary motivation has always been nature and the world around her, explaining that on her walks nature becomes a magical place where images are

discovered in sunlit spaces or shadowy recesses. She tries to hold onto what she senses in fleeting moments, and the feeling a place evokes. At Stephens House and Gardens she finds constant inspiration.

American-born Laura has degrees in Fine Art from the State University of New York and Middlesex University, London. She also studied textile design in New York. Her work is held in collections throughout the world.

This exhibition runs at Stephens House and Gardens, 17 East End Road, N2 3QE until 20 November. Tel. 020 8346 7812. Find out more about Laura on www.laurafishmanart.com.

Carol concert for libraries

East Finchley Methodist Church is hosting a carol concert on Saturday 12 December in aid of the Save Barnet Libraries Campaign.

London Metropolitan Brass, the band who played on this year's library marches, will provide the music and accompany the carol singing. EFLUG's Polly Napper hopes it will be a positive community event "to celebrate the library service we're fighting to preserve."

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YOUNG ARCHER



On the march: Holy Trinity pupils walk themselves fitter

Children stomp out of school

Infant children at Holy Trinity Primary School took part in a huge school stomp on Friday 2 October to raise money for some of the world's poorest children. Each child bought in £1 and went for a healthy walk around the local area. "I liked it because everyone was together," said one of the young walkers. "I liked helping children in need," said another.

Small change makes a big difference

A young girl has rallied help from pupils and teachers to raise cash for UNICEF's Syrian refugee appeal. She was inspired to help after her return from a family holiday in France was delayed by migrants breaking onto a train at the Eurotunnel.

With the support of the headteacher and Year 6 head at Brookland Junior School, Georgina Gordon asked everyone to cover a giant picture of a star with their small change. The coins under 50p amounted to £437.

Georgina said: "Everyone brought loads of coins in and it was a great success. I've learnt what you can do with so little. Every little bit adds up to a great amount. £1 can help to give a family clean water for two weeks so every penny counts."



Fundraiser: Georgina Gordon

In the front line

By Frances Buckingham

Martin Primary School now has one of East Finchley's few defibrillators. Children at the school have been taught basic first aid so that they know when the defibrillator might need to be used.

Children in Years 5 and 6 were taught how to call for help clearly and to check airways and breathing. They were also instructed how to put someone in the recovery position while they wait for the ambulance to arrive.

Arjun Garratt in Year 5 spoke about what he learnt: "The training was exciting and fun. I learnt a lot including DRSAB (D- Danger, R-Response, S-Shout for help, A-Airways, B-Breathing)."

Several of the staff have been trained to use the device. It is very simple and safe: the machine gives spoken instructions and will not deliver a shock unless one is needed.



First aid: Martin Primary pupils with the defibrillator



Vanessa Mafuta-Mbuyambo says hello to a six-legged visitor.

Wildlife in your hand

By Josie Dobrin

Some of the pupils at Coldfall Primary School are learning about Africa as their topic this term, so the teachers arranged for an Animal Man to come to the school and introduce them to some of the continent's wildlife, up close and personal.

These included a meerkat, an African Bullfrog, a black spider, a fruit bat, a python, a scorpion, a parrot and a gekko.

Neri Gordon, in Hummingbird class, said: "I held a gekko and he was really dry and scaly. I also touched the snake who was a bit cold and slimy. I loved all the animals."

Eleni Mavlappas, Head of Year Two, said: "We wanted to bring the theme of Africa alive for the children. They were so excited to see the animals and to have an opportunity to touch them and watch them being fed. It was a brilliant morning."

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Everyone gets involved in Grange Big Local event

By Diana Cormack

The Grange Big Local's third community festival took place at Bishop Douglass School, Hamilton Road, on Sunday 27 September. The sun shone all afternoon on stalls representing a wide variety of groups, with members of charities, churches, dance and music clubs alongside people offering advice on art therapy, financial matters and setting up in business.

Youngsters explored a fire engine, had their faces painted and enjoyed the bouncy castle. There was five-a-side football, tennis coaching (provided by Chandos Lawn Tennis Club, who are building new premises on East End Road) and table tennis by the EFAB table tennis group.

Nail art was provided by 'Vale's Nails', a group from Strawberry Vale who recently received a grant from the Evening Standard. They are part of the 'Art Against Knives' scheme



Good food at the Grange Big Local festival at Bishop Douglass School. Photo Mike Coles

which delivers creative opportunities for young people.

One stall was full of soft toys knitted for Age UK by 90-year-old Myrtle Russell who has been a knitter for 86 years! Lately she has raised over £3,000 for charity.

Hot food was available from the barbecue and some stalls had home-made cakes, with Caserole Club members serving to

encourage volunteers to share their home-cooked food with needy neighbours.

Gathering ideas

The purpose of the main stall was to gather ideas for making the area better to live in, since it is one of 150 awarded £1million of National Lottery money to be used in a ten-year project. The scheme focusses on places of deprivation which have missed out on other funding and is intended to make a positive, long-term difference. It covers roads and spaces south of the North Circular, west of the High Road, north of Church Lane and east of East End Road, which includes The Grange, Font Hills and the Thomas More estates. People used sticky notes to add their suggestions to a map. They also voted on priorities by putting sweets into jars, with youth and children, open spaces and environment leading the field. Visit www.grangebiglocal.org for more information.



Award winning Thai restaurant now on the High Road

By Diana Cormack

Living and working in Bangkok for two years inspired Motin Miah to open his own Thai restaurant. He so loved the food there that on his return home to Harpenden he set up his first Bangkok Lounge in the town. Six years ago Motin opened another restaurant in Shefford and is now in business at 138 High Road, where Quality Tandoori used to be.

"We serve fresh, authentic food," he told *THE ARCHER*. "It's the real thing, prepared by three Thai chefs, all of whom live in East Finchley." The restaurant is open daily from 12 noon to 2.30pm with a seven-day lunch starting at £8.50, then from 5.30pm to 11pm. There is a take-away menu with a 15% discount on all orders costing more than £18.

Over the last ten years Motin has raised £20,000 for Macmillan Cancer Research. He plans to do more charity fundraising and says he would like to become involved in the community here.

To get to know locals he is

holding a welcome event on Sunday 22 November, where diners can choose from the lunch menu but when presented with the bill they pay only what they judge the meal to be worth. It is essential to book for this on 020 8883 1557 or 020 8444 1886. Visit www.bangkoklounge.com for more details about the restaurant.

Christmas fair

The Holy Trinity Primary School Christmas fair takes place on Saturday 28 November. Everyone in the community is welcome to go along to eat, drink and merrily raise funds for the school. There will be lots of home-made food, Christmas gift stalls, play areas for children and live music. The fun kicks off at 12 noon at the school in Eagans Close, N2.

Money raised from previous fairs has helped to re-landscape the infant playground, create all-weather access to play areas and boosted funds available for equipment and supplies.

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Big bang is pet hate

It's that time of year again, that two-month stretch when no weekend is complete without some pyrotechnic nut job deciding that it's the perfect time to annoy the neighbours. From Diwali to the Boris Big Bang on New Year's Eve it is firework season when every night is the chance to re-enact the sound of the Blitz.

And every dog, cat, rabbit and small furry animal from Alpha Centauri looks forward to it about as much as they look forward to a trip to the vet. On behalf of the combined Canine Confederation and Felines for Finchley, it is time to complain.

Everyone knows that dogs like noise, but as Butch explained in between walkies and chasing parked cars, the noise he likes is the sound of his own bark. Fireworks are right out and if you don't agree, he'll be round to nick your sausages and prove that his bite is at least as bad as his bark.

Felines for Finchley spokescat Tom is equally adamant that if humans want to chuck high explosives in the air they should find somewhere else to do it. When you like to sleep for 20 hours out of 24, being kept awake by an artillery barrage is too much to take. And it's hard to hear mice rustling though the school kitchens if the headmaster is running his own version of the 1812 Overture in the playground.

Cats and dogs aren't the only ones. The local chapter of the Coffin Cheaters, as the armed enforcement wing of the pensioners' alliance is called, aren't amused either. An anonymous spokesperson explained that being a Coffin Cheater doesn't mean listening to The Archers and eating hobnobs. Some of them like to listen to the music of their youth and having your Led Zep CDs drowned out by fireworks is a step too far.

So it's time to stop this waste of gunpowder and sky, time to attach blond Boris to the end of something big and explosive and launch him over his airport in the Thames. Maybe he'll do better than the seventh century Chinese astronaut who tried the same thing and didn't end up orbiting the earth. But then again, an orbiting Boris could be fun.

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- **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. Michelle 07767 804 564
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- **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.
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- **Friends of Cherry Tree Wood** 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.
- **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.



Lookalike: Woody Allen, left, and Simon Schatzberger

Stand up and be Woody

By John Lawrence

Before Woody Allen became famous as a filmmaker, he spent much of the 1960s earning his living from stand-up comedy. Typically, he said there was nothing about the lifestyle he liked and he's never returned to it.

Tapes of the shows he gave then don't often get an airing. So with Allen just about to hit 80 and still directing films, it would have seemed that his fans today had missed their chance to enjoy his stage patter in the flesh.

Simon's tribute

That's where East Finchley actor Simon Schatzberger comes in. He had been contemplating starting his own stand-up act when he listened to some of the old Allen routines and decided to learn those instead. Now, as Woody Allenish, he could be starting a whole new trend in comedy tribute acts.

"I've loved Woody Allen since I was 16," says Simon. "When I perform as him I'm playing a character. It's difficult standing up with a microphone and trying to be yourself, but I find it more comfortable taking on his personality."

Timeless routines

Simon got his first gig earlier this year at Muswell Hill Synagogue and has since gone on to perform at the Edinburgh Festival. Next step is to take his act to Woody Allen's hometown, New York City.

He adds: "I've gone back to the original material which is 50 years old now but really it's timeless because it was never topical. It was always about relationships or being bullied at school. The response from audiences has been amazing. To some it's like rediscovering an old friend, to younger people it's like finding a whole new comic voice."

Simon believes there's major gap in the market for comic tribute acts. He's holding auditions for

an evening of classic comics, so maybe soon we could see Woody Allen on the same bill as Tommy Cooper, Steve Martin and Victoria Wood.

Meanwhile, you can catch his solo spots at various upcoming gigs. Check out the dates and venues at www.woodyallenish.com

Christmas is coming

St Mary's Church at 279 High Road invites everyone to its Christmas Fair on Saturday 21 November from 12 noon to 3pm.

Come and see the living nativity scene, meet Santa in his grotto and enjoy kids' activities, tombolas, arts & crafts and of course festive food and carols. The event is sponsored by estate agents Martyn Gerrard and entry is free.

Learn Chinese

Language teachers are holding classes at Christ's College Finchley for everyone interested in learning basic conversational Chinese.

The classes are free and will run in term time every Wednesday at the school's sixth form centre from 4–5pm. The experienced teachers are based at the London School of Economics.

If you would like to know more, contact Andrew Bratt, deputy head of sixth form, at amb@ccfplus.com.

Caffeine and celluloid

By Nick Young

Film premieres are usually associated with a red carpet, but back in September it was all about coffee as the Phoenix Cinema hosted the first UK screening of *Caffeinated*, a documentary which provides an insight into where coffee comes from and highlights the role of the producers.

Unusually, this was followed by a professional-style coffee tasting in the cinema's café where movie-goers got to sample coffees from around the world.

The one-off screening was the idea of Campbell & Syme, the café and coffee roastery located on Fortis Green, which supplies the Phoenix with their coffee. "One of my colleagues knows the film-maker," explained co-founder Joe Syme, "so we thought it would be a fun thing to do."



Pour show: Film fans get a taste of coffee in the Phoenix café.

As well as the Phoenix, Campbell & Syme supplies the coffee for Boydens Pantry on Church Lane and the Tintico coffee shop in Finchley Central.



It's for you: Natalie White as Peggy and Maya Ellis as Tessa

Curtain up on Plater play

Garden Suburb Theatre are bringing *Peggy For You* to the heart of Highgate Village. Alan Plater's play about a day in the life of his own larger-than-life theatrical agent was first performed at Hampstead Theatre in 1999 with Maureen Lipman as Peggy.

This witty, wry but sentimental account will be performed at Upstairs at the Gatehouse, Highgate Village, on 26–28 November at 7.30pm and 29 November at 4pm. Tickets cost £12 (£10 concessions). For further details, see www.garden-suburbtheatre.org.uk or call 020 8340 3488.

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What's On...

Sunday 8 November

• **Free concert at East Finchley Methodist Church**, High Road, opposite Creighton Avenue, N2, 7.30pm; Masterpieces for Piano Trio including works by Haydn, Khachaturian, Smetana and Mendelssohn. Free admission with collection in aid of British Red Cross. Venue is fully accessible.

Saturday 14 November

• **Geological Walk in Coldfall Wood**, led by local geologist Diana Clements. Meet 10.30 am, east gate on Creighton Avenue. £3 donation welcomed. Booking not essential but helpful: www.coldfallwoods.co.uk

Sunday 15 November

• **Battle of Barnet: guided walk** with Paul Baker, City of London guide. 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

Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 November

• **East Finchley Open artists hold their 11th annual art fair**, giving the opportunity to browse and buy original jewellery, ceramics, textiles, paintings, photos and more; Archer Academy, Stanley Road, 11am–5pm.

Saturday 21 November

• St Mary's Church at 279 High Road invites everyone to its **Christmas Fair** from 12 noon to 3 pm. Spectacular Living Nativity Scene, meet Santa in his grotto and enjoy kids' activities galore, manicures, tombolas, arts & crafts and of course festive food, refreshments and carols. Free entry.

• **Finchley Choral Society performs Kodaly, Gorecki, Lauridsen, Part and Arensky**, St Michael's Church, Highgate, N6 6BJ, 7.30pm. Tickets £15 (adults), £7 (students) and £1 (under 16s) available from box office, 020 7263 3358, and on the door.

Thursday 26 November

• **All Over By Christmas: Life on the Home Front in Barnet during WWI**; David Berquer

will deliver the 2015 Jean Scott Memorial Lecture at 8pm in Avenue House, 17 East End Road, Finchley N3 3QE. For further information, see www.finchleysociety.org.uk

Saturday 28 November

• **Holy Trinity Primary School Christmas Fair**, Eagans Close, N2, 12noon. Everyone is welcome to enjoy home-made food, stalls, Christmas gifts and music.

• **Battle of Barnet: guided walk** with Paul Baker, City of London guide. 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

Sunday 29 November

• **Charles Dickens in Barnet and Finchley: special Christmas guided walk** with Paul Baker, City of London guide. Meet at High Barnet tube station, 11am. For more details contact Paul on 020 8440 6805 or visit www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net

Saturday 5 December

• **East Finchley Christmas Festival**, along the High Road from 10am; live entertainment, carols, Father Christmas and live reindeer, mince pie baking competition, stalls and more. **Monday 14 to Monday 21 December**
• **Alexandra Palace Amateur Productions presents *Cinderella on Ice***, a magical recreation of the classic fairy tale. School shows 14–16 December, public shows 18–21 December. Tickets on sale now at www.alexandrapalace.com

Wednesday 16 December to Sunday 31 January

• **Upstairs at the Gatehouse Theatre, Highgate, presents *Legally Blonde, The Musical***, based on the novel by Amanda Brown and the MGM movie. Winner of three Olivier Awards, this is an all-singing, all-dancing romantic comedy. Box office: 020 8340 3488 and www.upstairsatthegatehouse.com

E-mail your listings to: the-archer@lineone.net



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.



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Food
banks:
who are
they for?

By Charissa 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.



Sport returns to Stanley Field

By John Lawrence

Sport is alive and well again on Stanley Field 15 years after the open space was last used regularly by the community. Football, rugby, basketball, archery and martial arts are all thriving in the new facilities belonging to the Archer Academy.

The return of community sport is a fulfilment of the condition made in 2013 as part of the arrangements for the academy to build on the field off Stanley Road. Staff and pupils moved onto the site in September and the school's outdoor and indoor spaces were immediately made available for public hire on evenings and weekends.

21 groups and rising

There is a floodlit football and rugby pitch with all-weather artificial grass, an enclosed multi-use hard surface for basketball and tennis, an indoor sports hall with a climbing wall, an all-purpose hall with enough space for performing arts, a studio suitable for dance or martial arts, and classrooms with space for meetings or meditation.

So far, 21 groups regularly use the facilities. The Barnet Bulldogs basketball team plays there, a karate club is starting up this month, and weekend mornings are popular for football amongst organised clubs and groups of friends.

Schools Plus

Anyone can book a pitch or hall for use on weekdays from 6-9pm (outdoors) and 6-10pm (indoors). On Saturdays and Sundays, facilities are bookable for a maximum of six hours per day. Prices start from £30 an hour and all bookings are handled by Schools Plus, which manages 40 school sites across

the country.

Venue manager Stan Karol Stanczak said: "Besides managing the booking process, we are on site to make sure the facilities are ready for people to use. Then at the end of every evening and weekend we put everything back so that the academy finds the halls and classrooms just as they left them."

Other users

The Archer Academy's operations director Jane Gibson noted that it's not just super-fit people in sports kit who are using the school's facilities.

"A community choir uses our piano every week and spaces are beginning to be booked for children's parties," she said. "Holiday clubs for primary age children are another area we are keen to explore as there are so many working parents living locally."

"We were very fortunate to be given the opportunity to move on to Stanley Field. We always understood that it was previously a community site and our planning all the way along has been to keep it that way."

Bookings can be made online at www.schoolsplus.co.uk/archeracademy. All users are encouraged to travel by public transport or on foot as there are only a limited number of parking spaces available off Eagans Close.

Champion athlete inspires at school opening

By Charlotte, Iris and Niamh, Year 7

There was a very exciting event in our school on 5 October when the Archer Academy's Stanley Road campus was officially opened by Paralympic champion and member of the House of Lords Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson.

Many students had the pleasure of meeting Tanni and seeing her open the school officially. Our own writer Iris says: "I think I was very lucky to meet Tanni and see her open the school. My form was one of three that got to see her actually cut the rope. It felt amazing to be one of the people who got to experience this."

Sport, politics and passion

As Archer student writers, we asked Tanni a very challenging question: "Which is more important, politics or sport?" Tanni thought about it for a minute before answering. "I think you need to learn both. You need politics to learn sport because you need to know what you can and cannot do and you need sport to keep you active and awake for politics, so I think they are both equally important."

Tanni's reply as to how her school compared with The Archer Academy was: "My school also had good facilities and passionate staff. The passion of the staff and the students here is amazing."

After answering questions, Tanni addressed the whole school and told us many interesting stories about her life and childhood. We learnt that she wanted to be a lawyer and even though she started working in politics later on, she had been interested in it from an early age.

Tanni's message from the stage to all the students gathered in our new sports hall was: "Don't



Tanni Grey-Thompson opens the Archer Academy Stanley Road Campus. Photo Mike Coles

be afraid to try!" She was very firm and passionate about achieving goals and dreams. The students' enthusiasm for Tanni was expressed in a huge round of applause. Overall, not only did she give us facts, she also gave inspiration.

Sing-along for singles

Singing in London is launching a new monthly event for singles and the unattached to share the singing experience. The Sing-Along for Singles will put the emphasis on fun as well as reaching a high standard of singing in a short time. Familiar songs will be easy to sing and the sessions will be a chance to make new friends.

Starting on Wednesday 25 November, then Wednesday 30 December, events will take place at the Clissold Arms, Fortis Green, N2, from 7.30pm to 9.30pm. There is also an option for an early bird dinner at 6.30pm. Book places in advance at www.singinginlondon.com or on 07874 629959.

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