



Letters

Tube station staff
Dear Editor,

I write to clarify a point made in your article about the reorganisation taking place on London Underground and which includes ticket office closures and movement of staff (THE ARCHER, September 2015).

Most of the staff at East Finchley will still be working at the station; the difference is that we will not be here permanently, instead we will be covering all stations between East Finchley and High Barnet. We have been asked to explain this by hundreds of local residents who were saddened with the news we would be leaving.

Customer Services Assistants Nino Rocha Santos and Michael Haynes, Margaret Osei and Pat Santilale, from the ticket office, and supervisor George O'Sullivan will still be in the general East Finchley area from January next year when the changes are made.

Yours faithfully,
Nino Rocha Santos,
East Finchley tube station.

Old Barn proposal is rushed

Dear Editor,

I am concerned about Barnet Council's handling of the Old Barn project on Tarring Way. Their stated intention is a dual purpose community centre, half used by the Somalian Bravanese Welfare Society and half by the community as a whole.

This project is too rushed. I was told verbally that the plan costs £2.5million, with £1.1million (so far, more expected) coming from Barnet's taxpayers and £600k from insurers (the value of the burned-down Coppetts Road building the Somalis previously used).

This still leaves a £800k shortfall, and fitting out/ongoing running costs have not been accounted for. It seems ridiculous that the online consultation lasted just one week.

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.

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The planning department has been very evasive about the building's day-to-day usage, admitting only "it may have some educational or religious use".

I feel deeply uneasy about reserving half of a public-funded building for the sole use of any one religion or race. We are one (hopefully, welcoming) community in East Finchley and facilities should be equally available to all.

Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied

Best friends forever

Dear Editor,

We are new in East Finchley, two couples with a dog each. We came all the way from Tel Aviv to study in London and we love the neighbourhood very much.

We call our dogs Lola and Sasha 'The Finchleys' because they are so happy since we moved here. Lola arrived four months ago and at the beginning she was a bit scared and didn't get the fact that the nights are so cold compared to the unbearable heat and humidity in Tel Aviv.

Then Sasha came too when our friends moved in with us and now Lola and Sasha are inseparable. They love to kiss and bite each other and if you walk around the house you have a constant shadow of the two who love to follow you wherever you go. Best of all, Sasha showed Lola how to break into the kitchen and eat forbidden goods!

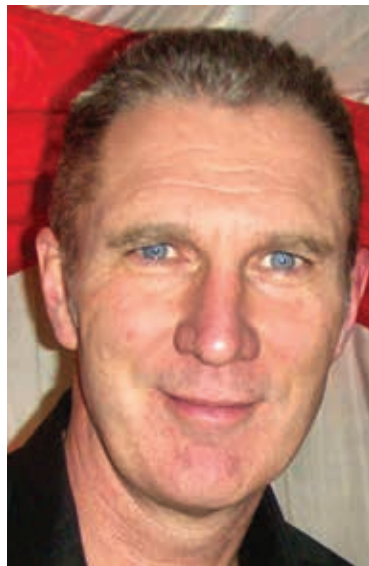
Yours faithfully,
The Segal and Reshef families,
Brackenbury Road, N2.



Best friends: Lola the poodle and Sasha (letters, above).

Patrick McGrath

THE ARCHER is saddened to report the sudden death of Patrick McGrath, who lived in East Finchley for more than 20 years. Patrick, 58, died on 2 September at his home in Long Lane.



Much missed: Patrick

Patrick was a keen cyclist and was very much looking forward to representing the UK in the Union Cycliste Internationale World Cycling (UCI) Tour Final in Denmark on 5 September, competing against 1,500 other cyclists from more than 45 countries around the world.

He was invited to take part in this prestigious race, which is the world championship for amateur cyclists, by finishing in the top 25% of his age group in the qualifying race earlier this summer.

The UCI and Danish Cycling

Association asked competitors to observe a minute's silence for Patrick before the race began.

Earlier this year Patrick had taken part in the London Prudential Ride, supporting the Moorfields Eye Charity. He completed the 100-mile course in a very impressive time of 4 hours 50 minutes and raised more than £900 for the charity.

He worked for St Albans-based law firm Debenhams

Ottaway, joining the partnership in 2013, building up the commercial team and business.

Patrick is survived by his wife Amanda and three sons, Tomás, Milo and Calum and he will be greatly missed by his many friends in East Finchley. His funeral took place on Saturday 12 September. Donations in Patrick's memory can be sent to Moorfields Eye Charity and online donations can be made at: www.moorfields.nhs.uk/content/donate-memory.

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.



The perils of public transport

By Harold Karton

I was on the bus the other day, my thoughts rambling... the anticipated monthly bills, where my wife Erna and I should lunch the coming Friday, the credit crunch...

The bus stopped. A young woman boarded and approached the driver, her head resting on her shoulder and supporting a mobile phone while she rummaged through her library of credit cards, looking for her bus pass without interrupting her flow of conversation. She sat down next to me.

At one time it was thought that the art of conversation had died; if so, the mobile phone has brought about a rebirth. I endured an eternity of mindless rubbish from my new neighbour until the conversation appeared to be winding down. "I'll see you then, yes, take care, ok, take care." And then the dreaded words: "Oh yes, guess who I saw yesterday?" and a new cycle began.

Travel by tube can also be hazardous but in a physical sense. One is beset by half-wits wheeling their mini-trunks and posing a threat to life and limb. There you are on the escalator; the man in front of you suddenly turns and his enormous rucksack smashes you in the face. From the size of the rucksacks sported at Kings Cross, it could be the staging post for the Everest ascent.

Then there's the usual broken-down escalator which means you must walk. They are always waiting for spare parts and this takes forever. Can it be that the spare parts are travelling along the Silk Road and the camel train is being attacked by Genghis Khan's hordes?

As I grow older, women are finding me more attractive, particularly if they have bad colds and coughs and no handkerchief; they instinctively home in on the seat next to mine. Nowadays one is constantly bombarded with charity appeals: save the panda, save the planet, save the child; but what of those unfortunates who use public transport and don't have a handkerchief?

When the time for retirement comes I shall establish a charity which I shall name T.F.T. or Tissues for Travellers.

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