



Ready to lend: Toy library helpers Elaine Phillips and Ewa Golota

Time to play

High-quality educational and fun toys are available for parents and children to take home from the Finchley Community Toy Library.



High in the Peruvian Andes the latest on the library protests courtesy of The Archer. Photo Ian Cormack

Never mind the view

Readers may remember our photo of writer Janet Maitland reading THE ARCHER underneath the statue of Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro in October 2015.

Well, we've been back to South America, this time in the suitcase of Diana Cormack. She made sure that news of the fight to save East Finchley Library reached the World Heritage Centre of Machu Picchu in the High Andes in Peru.

It works just like a book library. Children can choose toys by well-known brands including VTech, Little Tykes, Play Toys and GALT and keep them for two weeks for a small donation of about 50p.

The library is free to join and all families are welcome. You can find it in Newstead Children's Centre, Tarling Road, N2, on Monday morning from 9am until 10.30am during term time.

Help needed

Do you have a few hours to spare on Monday mornings? The organisers of the toy library are looking for volunteers to help out with taking donations, sorting toys and generally helping parents choose toys in a fun and chatty atmosphere.

Finchley Community Toy Library is run by Barnet Lone Parent Centre, a registered charity that supports lone parents in the borough. Their main office is at the Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale, N2. If you would like to know more about their work call 020 7021 4146.

London honours a remarkable man

By Ann Bronkhorst

At the end of January three elderly South African men were honoured by David Cameron and received the Freedom of the City of London. They are the three survivors of the 1963/64 Rivonia trial. The youngest, 82-year-old Denis Goldberg, lived in East Finchley for many years and may still be remembered locally.

When Nelson Mandela faced trial for plotting the overthrow of the South African government and its system of 'apartheid' six other men were accused too. All were jailed but, being white, Goldberg was not sent to the notorious Robben Island.

On his release after 22 years in prison he went into exile, joining his family who had escaped when he had been arrested. They lived in a house in Huntingdon

Road where his wife Esme later took in paying guests.

Many South African political exiles and activists were, or had been, living in north London: people like Joe Slovo and Ruth First in Camden Town, Ronnie Kasrils in Golders Green, Oliver Tambo in Muswell Hill. The African National Congress, today the ruling party in South Africa, had a London office where Goldberg worked for a while.

His wife died in 2000 and two years later he returned to South Africa. By the mid-90s he had become involved in several non-political African development charities. Affable, shrewd and a good communicator, Goldberg has travelled widely to promote them and to explain South Africa's needs, post-apartheid. His Facebook page shows his public profile including these recent honours.

RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

Honestly, young people today

These are weird times as today's youth is turning its back on the things that made life worthwhile to embrace designer cupcakes and jogging. The shock has yet to sink in, but across the country the should-be-out-to-lunch generation is literally going out to lunch in a designer pulled pork or sushi bar sort of way.

Forget drinking each other under the table, apparently today's youth prefers a kale smoothie to a lunchtime pint, and that is not anything I can understand.

This trend towards a non-drinking, drug-free, pop-up juice bar world is proof that we are getting more like the buttock-clenchingly neat and polite Europeans. According to some latest survey we are no longer ASBO central. What has gone so horribly wrong?

Once upon a time you went to university for the sex and drugs and rock'n'roll. Getting a degree was a by-product, the life and lifestyle was what mattered. You'd move to a far off town and get far out of your mind and really experience the mind-expanding joys of higher education. And it was all free and came with beer money, or 'student grant' as your parents called it.

Now you go to the one at the bottom of the road, live at home with your parents and think of the debt waiting for you. And because you're living at home with your parents you have to live by their rules and be nice and normal, never crawl home smashed and never drag home someone you know you'll not want to introduce to your dad at breakfast. The worst bit is that you can bet your life that your dad never had that problem.

But, wait, all is not lost. Through my half open window I can hear the sound of feedback and the scream of an electric guitar. It's a sound that tells me all I need to know. Someone out there is dreaming of forming a band and disturbing the neighbours. And that's the way it should be.

Film club gets advice from an expert

By Floyd Singh Power

At Christ's College Finchley, after lessons are over, there is a film club on Tuesdays every week. This was started this year and fast became the highlight of my weeks. The idea of the club is to expose the members to films that they wouldn't usually see, films like Nosferatu, Duck Soup and Rashomon.

One week we had a visit from screenwriter Annalisa D'Inella. She explained that screenwriters write out stage directions, and more importantly, write *how* stage directions ought to be acted.

D'Inella seemed to be in her element, explaining something she loved to students eager to understand. Every point was made and explained well, taking into account language we might not understand, like 'treatments' and 'exposition'.

Showing not telling

After reading the openings from 'Despicable Me' and 'Breaking Bad' we looked at 'showing not telling'. We were asked to think of a way to show that a person was having an extra-marital affair as subtly as possible. The suggestions included the characters slipping wedding rings on, having a close up of a picture of one of the two with a different woman and so on.

The session ended with D'Inella telling us how we could look further into screenwriting by searching for screenplays easily online. We were told a few pointers on conveying a character's personality. The best way to show a very specific personality to an audience is to give them something they recognise from their own lives.

The lesson ran into break, but against all the laws that govern teenagers in school, not one person went for their belongings.

Gift shop gift

The Cherry Tree Gift Shop in the High Road is celebrating 10 years in East Finchley this month. As a thank you to all its customers, there will be a 15% discount on all purchases made on Friday 15 April.

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