



Street art: Jake's vision for the wall alongside Budgens

Are bare bricks a canvas for community art?

By Jake Eiseman-Renyard

I have felt the bare brick side wall of Budgens on East End Road is crying out for a mural and have been developing this idea for many years. My idea is that the mural could wrap around corners of the building, but the main section would effectively be a mirror image of the tube station, High Road and Cherry Tree Wood.

I want to include the Archer statue, people of all ages and races leaving the station or heading for the community festival, birds and squirrels from Cherry Tree Wood, and the mouth of the Northern line tube tunnel. We could even paint the electronics box immediately

in front of the wall to look like a fairground stall, effectively incorporating it into the mural.

I'd be interested to know what other people think of the idea. Please email the-archer@lineone.net or write to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE.

How to make the gift of giving go further

By Thalia Pellegrini

Charitable giving is a thriving trend and never more so than at this time of year. Here in East Finchley, where community spirit is justly celebrated, it is often schools and, in turn, our children, who reap the benefits.

At a time when education budgets are getting ever tighter, it is increasingly down to parents to find ways of raising money for their children's schools. Particularly successful in this respect has been the Martin Home School Association (MHSA).

Helping Martin Primary

The registered charity is a 19-strong committee of volunteers who work hard to organise events through the year, with every penny raised being put back into Martin Primary school to be spent on playground and classroom equipment. Local businesses are generous in their contributions, be it food from Budgens for the summer and Christmas fairs or from smaller businesses like Ryker Kids who donate 7% of the purchase price of school shoes bought by a Martin School pupil.

Online shopping can add value

However, parents are harnessing their spending power in another way too. Easyfundraising has been part of the MHSA income stream for several years. It's an online portal connected

to thousands of major retailers where easyfundraising donates commission on your purchase to a cause or charity of your choice, and there are several N2 causes registered.

"It's a pennies-to-pounds idea," co-chair Emily told me. A pair of gloves, a toaster – the donation may only be a few pence, but if everyone does it, the amount soon builds up without costing the consumer anything at all.

While hopefully we will all head to our local East Finchley shops for gifts and food this holiday season, many will also do Christmas shopping online from the comfort of home. So, if you're curled up on the sofa, laptop at the ready, you could optimise the money you spend on a gift and your local community might get a little something too.

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Letters

Bumps in the road

Dear Editor,

Regarding the article on the front page of October's edition ('Two hit-and-run crashes in one week in 20mph zone'), some years ago you published a letter by me concerning speeding along Church Lane.

I then suggested that a series of humps placed along Church Lane might help to reduce speeding by motorists down to the High Road. Since that time a crossing island has been introduced at the East End Road junction where before there was nothing.

The 20mph speed sign on the approach to the bridge is completely ignored at whatever time of the day. Many motorists increase their speed. So please consider my suggestion of placing speed humps all along Church Lane.

Yours faithfully,
Arthur Palmer,
Thackrah Close, N2.

Post Office praise

Dear Editor,

I was surprised by Ruth Brown's letter in the November issue complaining about the Post Office at UOE.

The old office was only open on weekdays and Saturday mornings. Now UOE is open weekdays until 6pm, Saturday until 5.30pm and Sunday from 12 noon to 4pm.

The old office was spacious and step-free, but economically that waste of space was clearly not practicable in cost terms. As for step-free access at UOE, the simple platform lift taking you up about one foot is easy to use with a button for up and one for down. Regarding queues, there were many in the old office, which rarely had more than two service points open, despite lots of staff doing 'other things'. Now I have not seen less than two of the service points open, with friendly and helpful staff, and there are at least some seats for older people.

If a mistake was made by one of the staff, just ask for a refund. It does happen from time to time.

To then say that all shops like UOE eventually close is overly pessimistic. It is the fact that UOE has taken over that means there is a Post Office in East Finchley. I write not as a particular friend of UOE, just as a satisfied customer.

Yours faithfully,
Barry H White,
Address supplied.

Forgotten tower block

Dear Editor,

It is interesting to note that our local councillors are showing such an interest in whether our local pavements should be paved or asphalted (*The Archer*, November 2017). It seems that this subject is of more importance to them than the destruction of habitable homes and the imposition of a 13-storey tower block in Prospect Ring.

The residents have heard nothing from their elected representatives on this appalling plan being forced on the residents of East Finchley. The additional pressure on the already overstretched infrastructure, schools, surgeries, roads appears not to concern our councillors. The ruination of the 'village' skyline does not appear to matter to them.

Perhaps the councillors should be aware that their indifference to the 300-400 voters affected by this plan will be remembered at the next Election.

Yours faithfully,
D P Donnelly,
Prospect Ring, N2.

Stanhope and the Sparrows

Dear Editor,

I am trying to find information about the grocery store in Church End opposite what was the Queen's Head pub near the junction with Regents Park Road, N3. I believe it might have been called Stanhope Stores at one time. It was run by Mr and Mrs Sparrow. If anyone has any information about the shop or the Sparrows, including photographs, please contact me on tjra1951@gmail.com. I am compiling a family history and I used to live in Templars Crescent; I would be interested in the period between 1950 and 1964.

Yours faithfully,
Timothy Andrews,
Address supplied.

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page" The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE or e-mail the-archer@lineone.net.

Step-free station

Dear Editor,

The result of Transport for London's investigation into installing lifts at East Finchley Station (*The Archer*, October 2017) was disappointing. If this would indeed cost £15m to £20m and the overall London budget is £200m then it is unsurprising that it is not being considered.

However, the description of the work necessary sounds excessive; why do they have to excavate under the tracks? One gets the impression that TFL was out to find reasons why it could not be done, rather than to solve the problem. This sounds like a classic example of an engineering-led organisation being run for its own convenience, rather than the needs of its customers.

So I read Jake Eiseman-Renyard's letter in November's *Archer* with interest. In my opinion his proposal is very practical, and it begs the question as to why TFL did not consider this. A simple search of the web shows that there are a number of companies offering precisely the kind of wheelchair-carrying lifts that he describes, and it is hard to see why the procurement and installation of two such lifts would cost more than a few tens of thousands of pounds, a tiny fraction of the TFL estimate for two lifts.

From the same article, the official advice to those requiring step-free access at East Finchley appears to be to get the bus to Finchley Central and catch the train there, which is pretty crass.

Yours faithfully,
John Dearing,
Address supplied.

Headscratcher

Solution to puzzle on page 8: Coop, cool, fool, foil, fail, mail.

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