



One hundred years of history in the soil

East Finchley Allotments, pictured above, sprang to life 100 years ago in 1917, when what had been pasture land was leased by the Finchley Urban District Council to be turned into land for cultivation.

Three years into the First World War, the Germans had declared unrestricted submarine warfare, which was a huge threat to the convoys bringing food across the Atlantic. The need for Londoners to grow their own food therefore drove a huge growth in allotments where there was available land.

Share the celebrations

The site, set off the High Road behind Martin Primary School, has flourished ever since and has big plans to celebrate its centenary with an Open Day on Sunday 18 June.

Organisers are particularly keen to dig up as much of the allotments' varied history as possible. Readers with any pho-

tographs or other memorabilia of the site through the years are asked please to get in touch with Cathy Schling by email: schling@btinternet.com.

The Open Day will also be a chance for everyone to visit the allotments and see the many types of flowers, fruits and vegetables which are grown there and to buy plants, seeds and allotment produce. There will be activities for children as well and tea and cakes for all.

Sound of birdsong

Cathy said: "East Finchley Allotments offers a wide range of people the chance to experience an atmosphere of almost rural peace, where the sound of birdsong almost drowns out the hum of traffic from the North Circular.

"It offers an escape from the noise and bustle of the London streets as well as the chance to grow fresh food while gaining the benefits of exercise and fresher air. It also offers the chance to be part of a community of like-minded people, interested in nature and cultivation."

Community group loses its leader

By Diana Cormack
Last month members of East Finchley Altogether Better (EFAB) were sorry to learn that one of its main instigators was leaving. Lisa Smith has been a popular and effective coordinator since 2013, encouraging and promoting many new activities during her time with the organisation.

EFAB's purpose is to work in partnership with the local community to make East Finchley an even better place to work and live, with one of the original objectives of the project being that that they would become self-sufficient.

There is likely to be a replacement for Lisa in the next couple of months, but they are not in post yet. All activities are planned to continue as normal and be coordinated by the community of friends who volunteer their time to lead the groups.

Visit www.efab.org.uk for news of this and to see the wide range of activities available in the area.

Sharing time and skills

Lisa, who is moving house as well as jobs, told *The Archer*: "I have absolutely loved working with the people of East Finchley, getting all the EFAB projects started, and have learnt so much and met so many wonderful people along the way.

"Sharing time and skills in the community is a great way of staying in touch with others and I hope that the people of East Finchley will continue to attend the EFAB groups and help keep them benefitting the community."

RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

There is always an alternative. Fact

We're talking about the world of lies, damned lies and alternative facts. Let's start in America, the home of the alternative fact. Here in the land of the dollar and the KKK, President Dumpty Trumpty has united the entire country in volunteering to help him build his garden wall. And Dumpty got name-checked at the Grammys, Emmys and probably the Lemmys, in a way that no president has been since Nixon burgled the Watergate. OK, calling him Agent Orange wasn't just about his tan, but who cares?

Back in Blighty, the NHS is thriving thanks to the massive extra amount of money created by leaving Europe. Meanwhile the fantastic effects of the 25% drop in the value of the pound is helping people holiday at home. And now the Vicar's Daughter is her own mistress of 'alt' the facts.

Elected by the kind of overwhelming 100% majority that would look strange even in North Korea, she too leads a united country.

Welcome to alt Britain, a country where no one voted to stay in Europe and where everyone looks forward to an exciting future as an offshore investment opportunity for the super rich. In the alt facts future there is no alternative to squeezing the middle and fondling the bottom and people everywhere will want to play their part.

Her new erotic blockbuster *Fifty Shades of May* is already being serialised in the Morning Mule, so now you can enjoy the visceral thrill of a woman in baggy brown leather trousers grinding your face into the dirt forever. There is no alternative, these are alt facts and the truth lies bleeding in the gutter, stabbed in the back by Dumpty and the Vicar's Daughter.

Ready for a lively lunch?

By Eric Dalton

If you are an Oldie, you are young enough to join our locally-based Northern Heights Probus Club. We look forward to welcoming you.

Our club was founded in 1986 by former members of Rotary, just one of some 1,800 Probus Clubs in the UK. Our members are retired, or semi-retired PROFESSIONAL and BUSINESS men and women, of varied and interests and opinions, who enjoy getting together over lunch for congenial discussion.

Varied talks

After lunch we have a short talk, followed by questions. This year our programme has included talks about Samuel Pepys, Victorian medicine and Shakespeare & Queen Elizabeth, along with personal reminiscences by columnist Virginia Ironside and Guardian film critic Derek Malcolm.

Still to come are talks about Jane Austen and Marie Curie, an update on Brexit and a visit by Martin Bell OBE, talking about his life as a BBC war correspondent, politician and UNICEF ambassador.

We also arrange visits to

places of interest. Most recently we have visited Apsley House and the Sir John Soane museum.

Finding Probus

We meet from 12 noon on the third Wednesday of each month at Stephens House and Gardens, formerly Avenue House, East End Road, N3, where we enjoy the facilities of this beautiful building and its lovely gardens. Lunch starts at 12.40pm.

Stephens House is close to Regent's Park Road and Finchley Central is the nearest tube station. The 143 bus runs partially along East End Road, turns off towards Finchley Central and comes down Regents Park Road to our nearest stop in Gravel Hill. Unrestricted parking is usually available in nearby streets.

Our annual subscription is £15 and the two-course lunch with coffee is £13. Drinks may be purchased at the bar. For further details please contact me, Eric Dalton, on 020 8449 0566.

Sinfonia in the suburb

On 25 March the North London Sinfonia comes to The Free Church, Central Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb, at 7pm for its Spring Concert, featuring a programme of Brahms' Double Concerto, Schubert's Symphony No.4, and Beethoven's Overture Fidelio.

Tickets priced £10 (£8 in advance, under-12s free), or £1 for the 3pm rehearsal are available from www.nlsinfonia.org or nlsinfonia@gmail.com or 07773 717747.

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