



Bishops Avenue petition going to Residents' Forum

By Daphne Chamberlain

Barnet Council says that no further action has yet been taken on their proposal to ban the right-hand turn out of The Bishops Avenue on to the High Road just south of the tube station, and to install a crossing island for pedestrians there.

A council spokesperson told *The Archer*: "A number of people have signed a petition and this will be presented to the relevant Residents' Forum in October. A decision will then be taken on how to proceed."

Only option an island

The petition was concerned not only with the possible effect on local traffic flow, but also with the difficulty to pedestrians crossing The Bishops Avenue. While people are pleased that the council wants to deal with this, many are asking why it has opted for a traffic island.

The Archer understands that Barnet Council is saying that the right-hand turn ban

is necessary because the road is not wide enough to allow turning right once an island is installed. People are asking why, in that case, the council is apparently not considering a zebra crossing, traffic lights or even a roundabout.

One thing is clear, though. Pedestrians regularly crossing at this very busy junction describe it as "taking forever", "a nightmare" and "terrifying".

The issue is expected to be considered at the next Finchley and Golders Green Forum on Wednesday 18 October at 7pm, probably at the Greek Cypriot Centre, 2 Britannia Road, N12 9RU. Check nearer the time at www.barnet.gov.uk.



The gravestone in East Finchley cemetery. Photo Mike Coles

Resting place for the victims of London's first night bombing

By Gail Coles and Sandy Barker

One hundred years ago this month, in 1917, London experienced its first-ever night bombing and in the cemetery on the High Road is a gravestone in memory of four of the 12 victims.

The raid by a German Gotha bomber struck Wellesley Road, NW5, near Gospel Oak, Kentish Town. These were early days for bombing and although the casualties were tiny compared with the third Battle of Ypres going on at the same time the propaganda value was enormous.

The Wellesley Road four

In a newspaper article at the time, a neighbour reported a tremendous explosion in the

road and terrifying screams. At the home of Frederick and Mary Allen, he found Mary dead, their five-year-old daughter Elsie Amelia dying, and Frederick and another woman in the house injured.

Gunner William Calow, 24, who was born in Highgate, was home on sick leave. At the inquest the coroner heard that on the night of the raid Calow and his mother went down the

passage to the open front door when there was an explosion and a flash. Calow pushed his mother aside and fell seriously wounded. He died within a few minutes.

Mary Sarah Verity, 46, was a waistcoat maker married to Henry, a house painter. They had no children. She died in hospital a week after the bombing.

Night-time attraction

Neil Hanson, in his book *First Blitz*, records that London had not seen a bomber for two months at the time of the attack, so planes arriving at night were a novelty drawing people into the street to watch.

The inquest noted that open front doors and failure to take cover had contributed to the deaths. The coroner said the deceased had been killed by "the diabolical act of the Germans in bombing a peaceful place."

The cemetery is managed by Islington and Camden (formerly St Pancras) councils, which is how the victims ended up in a joint grave here. It's not known for sure why they were buried together or who erected the gravestone. Neil Hanson notes that 15 children killed in an East End school in June 1917 were also given a mass funeral, so there might have been a precedent for this.



The Archer's Neil McNaughton, Diana Cormack and Ian Cormack have a moment of inspiration at the Nazareth House quiz.

Hands up if you know the answer

Congratulations to the Friends of Nazareth House who organised an excellent quiz night at the residential care home in East End Road, N2, attracting a full house of teams on Friday 1 September to tackle several rounds of fiendish questions.

The Archer had a team there and we must go into contortions to pat ourselves on the back for finishing with the most points. A good night was had by all and, most importantly, all participants helped to raise £1,170 for the home's funds.

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The wonderful world of radio

Hi there, pop pickers, and welcome to the wonderful world of radio. Not just any radio, but wonderful Radios 1, 2, 3 and 4. Why should anyone in app city care about something as old and steam-powered as radio? Because in these fast-moving times, BBC Radio as we know it is now 50 years old.

Radio might be old enough for your grandparents to dream about the nostalgic days when everyone gathered round the old valve powered cabinet waiting for it to warm up. After a couple of minutes they could listen to some upper class person delivering the news followed by an improving programme about ancient Greece.

But that's not the point, because that was the old radio. The radio of the Home Service, the Light Programme and, for the intellectual few, the Third Programme. That wasn't real radio, it was just boring old Auntie radio.

Real radio started later at 7am on 30 September 1967 when Tony Blackburn, fresh off some floating pirate station, played *Flowers in the Rain* by The Move and followed it with a bit of Bee Gees. This was when the BBC, having got the pirate stations banned for playing pop music and being listened to by teenagers with transistor radios, decided to join the 1960s.

In the parts of Britain that hadn't got over the death of Queen Victoria, the banning of the pirate stations was good news. What the BBC did next was not. Bye, bye Home Service, Light Programme and Third Programme, hello numbers. Never mind the 2, 3, and 4, what mattered was 1, yes, wonderful Radio 1. Very angry of Tunbridge Wells reached for the ground glass and vitriol and wrote to *The Times*. Everyone else tuned in. And sometimes, after listening to John Peel, turned on and dropped out.

It might not always have been the best radio, but it was the best we were going to get. And it is still there, 50 years on.

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