



Only words: The framed telegram found by Louise Davidson thousands of miles from home.

What's the story behind this telegram?

Sent to an address in East Finchley on 19 April 1945, the simple message on this wartime telegram reads: "Arrived safely see you soon, Bernard."

The original recipient was a Miss M Geoghegan at 32 Beresford Road but the telegram surfaced recently in a charity shop 10,000 miles way in the town of Bairnsdale in southern Australia.

Set in a photo frame it piqued the curiosity of local woman Louise Davidson who bought it for \$5 (£2.80) and then posted it on Facebook in a bid to find out what the story behind it might be. Where was it originally sent from and how did it end up so far away in Australia?

Early clues have already emerged. Michelle Eshkeri, who runs Margot Bakery on East End Road, saw the post and did some research. She

found that in the 1939 register there were two M Geoghegans living at no 32, a Marion, aged 57, and a Margaret, aged 59, who had a younger brother named Bernard.

John Maguire commented that he recalls a Miss Geoghegan on the teaching staff at St Albans Prep School in the 1950s and Jerry Lennon said that he went to Bishop Douglass School in East Finchley with a Tommy Geoghegan around 1970.

But that's as far as it goes so far. Do you know anything about the Geoghegan family that could shed light on the story of the telegram? Please email us: the-archer@lineone.net, or write to us (address on p2). Thank you!

Max starts plotting his moves

Seven-year-old Max Bird, a year 3 pupil at Coldfall Primary School in Muswell Hill, is one of two children selected to represent England at the European Youth Chess Championships to be held in Latvia in August. He'll be facing off against the best young players from across Europe in nine gruelling days of chess matches.



Max (pictured) said: "I'm excited about going to Latvia and playing for England. The best thing about playing chess for Coldfall has been going to Pontins for the national primary schools semi-finals because it's a fun weekend away with Coldfall and other teams."

Headteacher Evelyn Davies said: "To be chosen to represent your country at such a young age is a tremendous accomplishment and we'll all be cheering Max on from the UK this summer."

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Courses begin 13 September 2018. For information contact the Highgate Literary & Scientific Institution, 11 South Grove, London N6 6BS (on 143 & 210 bus routes); www.hlsi.net; 020 8340 3343.

Letters

Motorcycle marathon

Dear Editor,
Having read your articles on the Motorcycle Diaries of a round-the-world rider (The Archer, June and July 2018), it made me think of my granddaughter's boyfriend who is doing a solo sponsored cycle ride (self-financed) from his home near Hastings to Hong Kong, hopefully in a year as she wants him back for her graduation next May. He left on 25 March and is now in Turkey, having cycled 2,000 miles, leaving only 10,000 to do!

He is doing this for CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably) which is a charity dedicated to preventing male suicide, the single biggest killer of men under 45 in the UK.

The death of his brother seven years ago prompted him to take this challenge. His biggest problem so far has been being chased by wild dogs. Luckily he has managed to outpace them. He has found the people in Europe to be very friendly and helpful both to cyclists and backpackers, and hopes this continues through the rest of his journey in Asia which looks rather bleak and isolated compared to what he has experienced so far.

He has a tracker so we are able to keep up with him. His family and friends wish him a safe journey and can't wait to hear all about it next year.

Yours faithfully,
Vivien Mallindine,
Address supplied.

Quick thinking averts station fire

Dear Editor,
On Tuesday 3 July at 3.45pm, I was watering the plants on the bank outside East Finchley tube station, and went inside to get more water from the tap at the other station entrance. Walking down the corridor I was met by billowing smoke coming towards me from just outside the other entrance.

Someone had obviously thrown away a cigarette onto a pile of dry leaves, right by the entrance, which had started to burn. Fortunately I had a two-litre container with me, and also

knew where the water tap was, so while others looked uncertain, I was able to reassure them that I could deal with the fire, which by then was flames rather than just smoke.

The fire was extinguished easily, but it was so near the entrance. I didn't really look to see whether or not the building itself could have caught fire, but went instead to find a member of staff to let them know what had happened. I knocked on the 'staff' door, and looked around the entrance hall, but could find no-one.

Although not the rush hour, this was a relatively busy time of day, with schoolchildren around. Whilst it may not have become a major incident, had I not put out the fire there would have been a lot more smoke. Were there any staff members at the station at the time and if so how do passengers find one in an emergency?

I'm happy that the trains run, but if the stations are to become unmanned more and more, then the public need to be made very aware that there is no staff assistance available should it be required for any sort of emergency.

Yours faithfully,
Harriet Copperman,
Address supplied.

Strawberry Vale stable girls

Dear Editor,
I am trying to trace some of the 'girls' who were at Strawberry Vale Riding Stables in the 1960s. I was the first paying customer of the proprietor Mrs Tessa Evans in 1959 and stayed on as a voluntary worker for several years.

There were a group of us there and I'd very much like to get back in touch. The names I remember, with maiden surnames, are: June Davidson, Anne Bolton, Christine Fowler, Wendy Jones and Shirley Taylor.

Anyone with any information please email me: jilliegilbert@msn.com.

Yours faithfully,
Jill Gilbert (nee Finch),
By email.

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.

Surprise in the post

Dear Editor,
I have a mild obsession with British postboxes and pillar boxes. I can hear the groans and 'oh dears' from readers.

The earliest have VR engraved on them for Queen Victoria, the latest have E II R for Queen Elizabeth. However, the rarest are E VIII R for Edward, who abdicated the throne and married an American divorcee before he could be crowned. Only 118 are recorded in England, Scotland and Wales.

I have lived in East Finchley for 40 years only to discover last month that there is an Edward VIII pillar box on the High Road just yards away from our tube station. It's an unassuming box on the left hand side heading towards Highgate as you pass by The Bishops Avenue.

Yours faithfully,
Martyn Steel,
Address supplied.



Rare: The Edwardian pillar box

Headscratcher

Solution from page 10:
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