

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Air craft: David T Waller, left, and his brother John with their walkthrough art work.

Walk through a wall of memories

Sculptor and visual artist David T Waller has enlisted the painstaking skills of his brother John to create his latest immersive work on display at Stephens House and Gardens in East End Road, N3.

As children in the 1970s,

the brothers shared a love of building model aircraft and it's a hobby that John has kept up in the decades since, partly as a way of coping with the stresses of his obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).

David's piece, called Plane Wall, brings together all the plastic models made by John

and intertwines them with items of family memorabilia for visitors to discover. It is accompanied by an evocative soundtrack created by David Harris.

"Our intention is to create a nostalgic atmosphere for reflection and thoughts and to invite stories and memories from visitors about aircraft and the objects," said David, who is a member of the East Finchley Open artists group.

Plane Wall is on display at Stephens House and Gardens until Saturday 29 September. Entry is free with donations encouraged in support of the military mental health charity Combat Stress.

Late-night robbery

By Janet Maitland

A man was robbed on The Walks between Leslie Road and Leopold Road, N2, at about 11.30pm on Tuesday 26 June.

He had been walking home up the High Road when he noticed two hooded men dressed in black on the other side of the road, walking in the opposite direction. Thinking no more about it, he carried on walking and turned left down Leslie Road, unaware that the men had crossed the road and followed him.

The robbers caught up with him just as he turned right into The Walks. A scuffle followed. The men threatened him, then grabbed his bag and ran off towards Market Place.

The victim, a man in his 40s, walked home and submitted an online report to the police. "Their faces were covered," he said. "I could only see their eyes and noses."

Anyone who witnessed this incident or has information is asked to call police on 101 or Twitter @MetCC. Infor-

mation can also be reported anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or online at crimestoppers-uk.org.

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Plastics drive on the move... but your help is needed!

By Nick Allan

The campaign to rid East Finchley of throwaway plastics is moving fast with a plan for the community and local businesses to work together and make a real dent in this worldwide scourge.

Ruth Anders, who is coordinating the campaign on behalf of the businesses represented by N2United, has been talking with other East Finchley groups to ensure everyone is able to work together and is looking for ideas and volunteers so that the campaign kicks off with maximum impact when it launches formally later this summer.

Say no to single-use plastic

Ruth told *The Archer*: "The challenge we face in ridding East Finchley of single-use plastics is that we must all work together and get everyone involved."

"The main cause for the increase in plastic production is packaging but the best way to curb single-use plastic pollution is to reduce our own personal plastic consumption, starting by refusing single-use plastics like straws, cups and shopping bags and replacing them with a sustainable alternative."

It's not plastic's fault... it's ours!

The facts speak for themselves when you consider that single-use plastics frequently

do not make it to a landfill or get recycled. It's estimated that one-third of the 78 million tons of plastic packaging produced annually is left to flow into our oceans.

That's like pouring one garbage truck of plastic into the ocean every minute and it's expected to increase to two per minute by 2030 with roughly half of annual plastic production destined for single-use products, including plastic bags. Those bags are used for an average of only 12 minutes before being discarded and their life expectancy is up to 1,000 years.

Ruth added: "We really can make a difference. As a local plan is developed, groups are seeking ideas of how the community can get involved as well as appealing for volunteers and leaders to make East Finchley the first community in London where people shop without using throwaway plastics."

To hear more, share your ideas or volunteer, members of the East Finchley community are invited to write to no2plastics@gmail.com.



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The Archer team wishes to thank all the generous people who give up their spare time, in all weather, to deliver the paper for us.

If you have a story for us, please contact us at the above address. Comments to The Archer may be published unless clearly marked 'Not for publication' within the text.

Copy deadlines – **September: 10 August;**
October: 14 September; November: 12 October

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Benefits Agency	020 8258 6500
Employment Service	020 8258 3900
Haringey Council	020 8489 0000
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East Finchley Library	020 8359 3815
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Muswell Hill Everyman	0871 9069060
Phoenix Cinema	020 8444 6789
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National Express	0871 781 8181
Heathrow Airport	0870 000 0123

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EF Advice Service	0300 4568365
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National Blood Centre	0845 7711 7711

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Victim Support	0845 303 0900

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Litter on the agenda

The issue of street cleaning standards in Barnet (The Archer, May and June 2018) will be discussed at the Finchley and Golders Green Residents Forum in September after East Finchley resident David Attfield gathered enough petition signatures to get it on the agenda.

David said: "Sadly, there seems to be an increasing gulf between Muswell and East Finchley with the street scene generally being far more attractive and better maintained in Muswell Hill. I feel that this impacting on our village centre which to me is looking increasingly quiet and run down."

Everyone is welcome to attend the residents forum, which takes place at Avenue House, Stephens House and Gardens, East End Road, N3 at 7pm on Thursday 6 September.

Ledley runs rings round the park

Spurs Club Ambassador Ledley King led a hula hoop warm-up and gave the starters' orders for the annual Rainbow Run in Trent Park in aid of Noah's Ark Children's Hospice. The former captain signed t-shirts, posed for selfies and gave autographs to fans.

More than 180 runners took part in the event on Sunday 8 July which saw families run either a 1.5km Little Loop or a 5km Big Loop while being showered in a kaleidoscope of coloured powder. Noah's Ark mascot Henry the Hippo was there for the warm-up and the cool-down too.

Ledley said, "It has been fantastic to see so many people here today supporting a cause that is so close to everyone at Tottenham Hotspur. I have had the privilege of meeting some of the families who are supported by Noah's Ark and hearing how the charity helps them."

Noah's Ark serves young people with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions in Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Islington, Haringey and Hertsmere. You can help at www.noahsarkhospice.org.uk/donate.



Give us a twirl: Ledley King leads the hula hoop warm-up with hospice mascot Henry the Hippo.

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Planning Applications

Barnet Council

99 Abbots Gardens, N2

First-floor rear extension.

39 Bedford Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Depth 4.8m, eaves height 3m, maximum height 3.15m.

26A Church Lane, N2

Part single, part two-storey building, including lower ground level, to provide one self-contained dwelling. Cycle storage and refuse and recycling storage.

2 Deansway, N2

Roof extension including two rear dormer windows.

5 Deansway, N2

Single-storey rear extension with terrace. Conversion of garage into habitable room.

13 Elmfield Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension.

25 Elmhurst Avenue, N2

Roof extension involving hip to gable, rear dormer window, four front rooflights and new side gable window.

5 Greenhalgh Walk, N2

Four conservation rooflights to side and rear. New external

windows and doors to side and rear of ground floor. Rebuilding existing chimneys.

46 Hertford Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension, new side window.

54 High Road, N2

Change of use from Class A1 (Retail) to Class A3 (restaurant.)

58-60 High Road, N2

Variation to planning permission dated 20/08/15, for 'Part single, part-two storey rear extension to provide two self-contained residential units'. Amendments include front infill extension to No. 60, rear extensions to Nos. 58 and 60, and additional rooflights.

127-133 High Road, N2

Roof extension including two front, two side, and four rear dormers with two front rooflights, to create four self-contained flats. External frosted glazed privacy screen at second floor, with central rear roof canopy.

350 High Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Depth 6m, eaves height 3m, maximum height 4m.

32 Huntingdon Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Roof extension, including rear dormer window with juliet balcony.

21 Ingram Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension.

13 Leicester Road, N2

Roof extension, including L-shaped rear dormer window to main roof slope and rear projection, and four front rooflights. (Retrospective application).

424 Long Lane, N2

Roof extension involving rear dormer window and one rear rooflight.

Old Barn Youth Club and Land Adjacent, Corner of Fallows Close and Tarling Road, N2

Details of acoustic walls/fencing/barrier, etc and electric charging points pursuant to previous planning permission.

11 Park Hall Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear extensions. Summer house in rear garden.

Haringey Council

34 Bancroft Avenue, N2

Proposed rear dormer extension.

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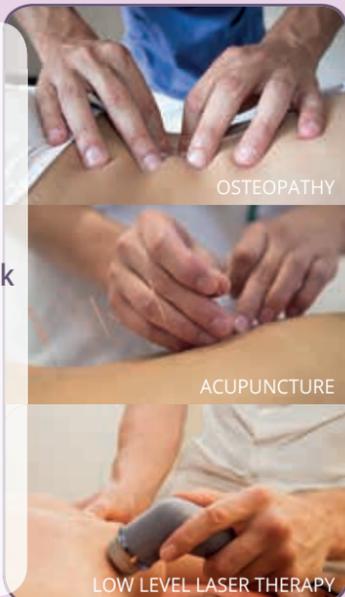
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Eye in the sky

Our thanks to former East Finchley councillor Alon Or-bach for sending us this tremendous photo capturing pretty much the whole of N2 in one shot from the window of his plane on a flight home from Berlin.

Alon told us: "I've spotted the Wembley arch on previous flights but never managed to see Finchley. Either we've not gone over this way or I've missed it. After spotting Wembley this time, I stared out and saw the High Road and North Circular junction by Strawberry Vale so rushed to take the photos."

Local landmarks

Immediately above the plane's engine, you can see the David Lloyd centre and leisure park complex, and then moving right you can pick out the North Circular, Strawberry Vale with the large wooded area of the Islington and St Pancras Cemetery behind and beyond that Muswell Hill Playing Fields and Coldfall Wood.

Continue to follow the line of the High Road right and you'll see the long rectangular green space of East Finchley Allotments, with Martin Primary School and its playing field and the regimented lines of the



Above the clouds: Alon's panoramic photo from his plane seat.

County Roads.

This side of the High Road are the curves of the roads off Oak Lane and the Grange Estate, then the buildings and fields of

The Archer Academy and Holy Trinity Primary in Eagans Close.

Keep looking right to see the white roof of the McDonalds headquarters building and the

tube station just hidden behind the cloud. The Northern line is clearly visible going from lower centre to far right, where it passes Cherry Tree Wood.

Other landmarks easily spotted are Fortismere School, top, Bishop Douglass School, bottom, and Highgate Wood, far right.

Makeover for Budgens as new manager moves in

By John Lawrence

Budgens is to stay on the High Road in East Finchley under a new manager who is promising to transform the store with a full makeover and wider ranges of fresh produce.

Having submitted a planning application to install its signage along the front, Co-op Food was expected to bid for the Viceroy Parade site where Budgens has traded for almost 50 years.

But Paul Gardner, who has run the Budgens franchise in Islington for 10 years, beat them to the deal and takes over on Tuesday 7 August. He said East Finchley had been in his sights for years and held great potential.

Fresh food, fresh ideas

"It's a busy store but it has been neglected," Paul told *The Archer*. "When we take over the first job will be to smarten up the whole place, give it a good clean, get all the lighting working and freshen up the paintwork."

"We will have a new fascia outside and we want to open up some of the blocked-off windows to let in some natural light. Then we'll start to think about a fuller makeover maybe in a few years' time."

Staff to stay on

Paul promised that the store's existing staff will remain in their jobs and the workforce may even be expanded. He aims to share some operating costs and suppliers with the Islington store.

"East Finchley is a more family-orientated location and it deserves a better Budgens than it has at the moment," he said. "I want to introduce some premium ranges using local

produce and smaller suppliers. There will be more fresh food like sushi and I have a butcher working with me in Islington who will supply fresh cuts to East Finchley."

Local competition

The change of management at Budgens comes as Sainsbury's gets ready to open a Local store 100 metres away on the opposite side of the High Road. Paul is not worried about the competition, claiming his store is in a better location and will soon have a better offering.

He cites the recent makeover at near-neighbour Iceland as an example of how investing in a store can attract customers back in.

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Check out the Friday Club at Strawberry Vale

By Diana Cormack

Twelve years ago Strawberry Vale resident Maureen Clemetson launched the Monday Club, somewhere for nine to 15-year-olds to go on a Monday evening and join in a variety of activities.

Over the years it has been based in several church halls and schools and is now settled at The Compton School Powerleague, where Joe Strong and Kieran Wilkinson organise a thriving football club with a group of willing helpers.

Maureen's second club

Another club created by Maureen began ten years ago in the living room of her home on the estate. This club caters for seven to 13 year old boys and girls and is what Maureen refers to as "the religious one", having always included bible stories and prayers after the evening's games and activities.

Meetings are now held in The Green Man Community Centre on a Friday evening with each one still finishing with a bible story, prayer or thought for the day led by an adult or by one of the children.

"They know it's about God," Maureen told us. "With all the problems in the world outside,

What a day!

Organisers of the East Finchley Festival on Sunday 24 June have thanked everyone for making it a joyous occasion celebrating the great community spirit of N2.

Speaking on behalf of the organising team, Hilary Townley said the event couldn't have happened without a lot of help from volunteers working tirelessly over several months and on the day itself.

Hilary said: "We thank them all. Special thanks go to all those local businesses without whose generous sponsorship the festival couldn't happen, particularly *The Archer* newspaper for the community stage, Martyn Gerrard Estate Agents for sponsoring the owls, McDonalds via Atul Pathak of APPT, who gave the festival a generous community award, Rogers Removals for the main stage and Sainsbury's, who are just about to become a local business, for general sponsorship.

"Huge thanks also to the two wonderful hosts of both stages, Cecilia Holmes and Kate Galston, and we thank everyone who gave prizes for the raffle and took an advert in the festival programme to help keep the festival free. There are many more who deserve our thanks but most especially, you, East Finchley!"



Cooking at the Friday Club. Photo Mike Coles

they need to know about good things."

Cook, eat, create and play

Good things were happening on the night we visited, with former East Finchley resident



Friday Club organiser Maureen Clemetson. Photo Mike Coles

Katie Louise Barber giving one of her voluntary cookery lessons, the products of which the children were able to take home.

Other activities included air hockey, art and craft, basketball, mini pool, Subbuteo, swing ball and table tennis. Energy levels were kept up by a tasty selection of food and drink available, with some still left at the end of the 6.30-7.30pm session.

On average, 30 children attend the Friday Club, supported by a stalwart band of volunteers. Various outings are organised jointly for both clubs, including theme park and seasonal seaside visits, with the Monday Club running throughout the year and The Friday Club in term time only.

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Jan Lovell, of the East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team, updates us on the latest crime news. Jan and the team can be contacted by email at: EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk, or by phone on 020 7161 9014. Follow the team on Twitter @MPSEastFinchley.

Summer burglaries

There were six burglaries or attempted burglaries for June and the first week of July, which is about average. In Claybrook Close, car keys were taken through a letterbox, but the car was not stolen. In Summerlee Avenue, there was an attempted burglary through a forced back door. In nearby Cherry Tree Road, a window was forced overnight but nothing was taken.

In Abbots Gardens, a first-floor window was forced from a flat roof and jewellery, cash and computers taken. Nearby in Brim Hill a rear window with no locks was forced and jewellery and cash taken. In Howards Walk, a window was left open overnight and a handbag, car keys and a car were stolen.

Please make sure you lock up well and get a holiday buddy to look after your home if you go away.

Moped crimes

Two officers spotted a moped on Ballards Lane, N3, trying to avoid them. It made off at speed but before the officers pursued it the moped crashed. The rider

and pillion passenger ran off, chased on foot by the officers who detained them both after a violent struggle. The moped was stolen and possibly linked to multiple incidents involving a machete. An angle grinder was also found on the moped.

Separately, a resident sent us some excellent photos of two men riding a moped down The Walks, N2. We hope to identify the owner and the riders as we have a part registration for the vehicle. As they say, a picture paints a thousand words unless it's a registration plate number!

Parking meter fraudsters

There have been several incidents of men approaching folk returning to their cars parked on the High Road and trying to convince them that they have limited time to pay for a parking offence. They produce a machine for the victim to pay by bank card or escort them to a cash point. The council do NOT take on the spot payment for parking tickets. Spread the word and don't let these men take advantage of sadly mainly senior drivers.

Woman injured in pub attack

By Janet Maitland

A man and a woman have been arrested following a violent incident at the Five Bells pub on East End Road, N2. Police were called there at about 6.30pm on Saturday 7 July following reports of an altercation.

When police officers and the London Ambulance Service arrived they found a woman in her 20s with a slash injury to her neck, believed to have been caused by a glass. She was taken to a central London hospital. Her injuries are not life threatening.

A 63-year-old man and a 38-year-old woman were arrested on suspicion of violent

disorder. The man was taken to a north London police station. The woman was taken to a north London hospital for treatment to some minor cuts. She was then further arrested on suspicion of grievous bodily harm and taken to a north London police station. Both have been bailed to return on dates in August.



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Square deal: Auction winner Chetna Patel with Steve McFadden.

It's EastFinchleyEnders!

The Archer Academy's latest fundraising campaign got a boost with the help of parent and *EastEnders* star Steve McFadden who donated an Albert Square road sign, autographed by the programme's cast. The little piece of Walford was won by Chetna Patel at a quiz night and auction arranged by the school's Friends Association.

The academy is hoping to raise £250,000 to fund the building of a library and study centre for its GCSE students at its site in Beaumont Close, N2. Anyone wishing to support the Make Beaumont Brilliant campaign can visit <https://tinyurl.com/archermbb>.

Bus goes term-time only

Passengers using bus route 603, which runs between Muswell Hill and Swiss Cottage, via East Finchley, Highgate and Hampstead, are being told their service will not run during the school holidays.

Primarily serving seven schools, but available to other passengers too, it runs twice a day in each direction. However, the number of passengers is falling and therefore it will now operate only in term time.

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Recycling bins disappear as part of waste service changes

Waste collection services in Barnet are being changed, starting with the removal of recycling banks, including those outside East Finchley tube station which were taken away last month.

Barnet Council is also scrapping the weekly brown bin food waste collection introduced in 2013. Householders will be expected to place food waste in their existing black bins.

Furthermore, the green bin garden waste will be suspended for three months over the winter when usage is said to be low. Residents will be given a day in January or February for collection of Christmas trees.

Council response to concerns

Many people have expressed their concern about these reductions in the waste service but the council says the changes are based on results of monitoring usage patterns and on cost efficiencies.

The food waste collection is being stopped, says the council, because only 25-30 per cent of residents participated, making the service inefficient for the amount of waste collected.

At the same time, the recycling bank service generated "significant costs" but only low levels of recycling tonnage.

A Barnet Council spokesman said: "This is largely due to the council having to deploy resources on a regular basis to clear fly-tipped materials that are left around the banks. The removal of these banks will

enable street cleansing resources to be deployed more efficiently, as well as helping the council deliver essential savings."

The council is advising that recycling materials can still be taken to the Reuse and Recycling Centre in Summers Lane, N12. That, of course, is only useful for residents who have the transport to get there.



Bin and gone: The recycling banks outside the station shortly before they were removed.

A cautionary tale and an everyday hero on the Northern line

By Julia Lawrence

In these troubled times, it's a relief to know there are still some good people out there. And I was delighted to find one recently on the Northern line.

Commuting from East Finchley on a day of changeable weather, I'd worn my heavy winter Parka coat, and then of course roasted in the packed carriage so decided to slip it off and carry it. Euston station was completely packed and as I tried to board a new train I got nudged back onto the platform (and obviously didn't stand behind the yellow line).

The carriage doors shut and

the train sped off, whisking my Parka away with it, trapped by its hood in the door. Bad enough, but in the pockets were my phone and my house keys. I did what any other person would do in the circumstances: I burst into tears.



Happy ending: Julia with Peter Gaylor

My new hero

And then London suddenly unclenched itself. Out of the melee of grumpy, malodorous commuters emerged a band of lovely people, offering tissues and calling the station supervisor for help. When Peter Gaylor arrived, he instantly became my new hero.

He radioed ahead to Warren Street: had my coat arrived? No it hadn't so that meant it had fallen out in the tunnel somewhere. I mentally waved it goodbye, thinking it would lie there rotting for millennia. Leaving Peter with my contact number, I trudged off miserably.

Two hours later, Peter called. He'd waited until the rush hour was over, then boarded

the cab of a southbound train. Leaning out armed with a torch and special grabbing tool, he'd found my coat on the tracks and plucked it to safety.

The phone still worked, the keys were in the pocket, and despite having been run over by thousands of rush hour commuters that morning the coat didn't look too bad. Shredded and filthy, but still in one piece.

And the message is...

What a gentleman! So thank you Peter (I did thank him in person) and thanks to anyone who put up with a crawling train out of Euston at around 11am that morning. But the message of this tale has to be: stand behind the yellow line, people. It's there for a reason. I was lucky it was just my coat that was shredded!

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Jump start: Dancers entertain the crowd in St James' Square.

Dancing in the streets

Our coverage of the East Finchley Festival in last month's issue unfortunately crowded out news of Muswell Hill's own community event, which happened just the day before on the piazza area close to the Everyman Cinema.

Proceedings at Midsummer Muswell began with the Muswell Hill Brass Band before talented locals took to the stage with dance, comedy and plenty of music to please the crowds. Before long,

brave teddies were lining up to parachute from the roof of St James Church, which raised much-needed funds for roof repairs and for cerebral palsy charity CPotential.

After a public vote, the

inaugural small business awards were presented to Crocodile Café, Toffs, Clissold Arms, Kimberleys and Broadway Pet Store. The fun will return with A Very Merry Muswell in December.

Change to courses at historic Highgate institution

The Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution has opened its doors for 2018-9 booking for its popular educational courses. This year it has adjusted its schedules to provide for longer courses in the autumn and spring term with a shorter four-week summer term, followed by a number of two-day courses.

Anne Jamieson, Chair of the Institution's Education Committee, said: "We have found that a lot of our students have difficulty with summer attendance because of holidays and other commitments. Overall, we will have a slight increase in the number of classes offered, and in addition, there will be a significant expansion of our short one and two-day courses throughout June.

"This summer we have

repeated our Dante's *Divine Comedy* option because of popular demand and in the autumn we have two short courses: Homer's *Iliad* in translation with Isabel Raphael, and an architectural programme called The Development of the Modern Home.

The Institution, founded over 175 years ago in the centre of Highgate Village, is easily accessible by public transport. Courses are open to anybody.

Membership, which currently starts at £91 a year, allows priority booking and provides access to a members' room with newspapers and all the major periodicals, as well as one of London's best libraries with over 25,000 books.

Other activities include a Film Club, a Science Group and an Opera Circle. Further information can be found online at www.HLSI.net.



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How the North London Hospice started in a flat

By Daphne Chamberlain

Did you know that the North London Hospice started life in a Muswell Hill flat? It was the home of Harriet Copperman, and she has told us the story of that hectic time.

In the early 1980s, modern hospices were starting elsewhere in London, but none in north London. Most people with life-limiting illnesses died in hospital or at home, with little specialised help available.

Birth of a dream

The Hampstead Community Health Committee set up a sub-committee to look at palliative care needs for Hampstead Health Authority. Harriet, working as a nurse-midwife at the time, and Dr Chris Hindley, a Highgate GP, were co-opted onto this.

A new palliative care unit was set up in the Royal Free, but the CHC subcommittee decided a hospice project was needed for an area much larger than Hampstead. So, the North London Hospice Group (NLHG) was established as a charity.

Getting started

Help the Aged provided £10,000, and a very generous anonymous philanthropist donated £60,000 for one year, which would pay for two nurses, a part time doctor, a physiotherapist, a social worker and a secretary.

This enabled the Hospice community service to start up. It was 1984, and everything was run from the spare bedroom of Harriet's flat. Local GPs referred patients to the team, and for the first year she never turned off her beeper.

At considerable financial risk, Harriet had given in her notice at the Royal Free palliative care unit, and became the first employee of the NLHG, setting up the home care team. In her words: "A hospice is not a building. It's a concept. If possible, most people want to die in their own beds. We had to offer ourselves and our services to the community. You often had to go the extra 10 miles, not just one, to enable the patient to remain at home. You're on call, working by yourself in the middle of the night, but you get enormous job satisfaction."

Up and running

Headquarters later expanded to a neighbouring flat, then to free accommodation in Ballards Lane, provided by Kurt Weinberg. The NHS funded two



Harriet Copperman with her certificate.

Photo Mike Coles

more nurses, and an anonymous benefactor gave £40,000 a year for home care. Harriet says simply: "We can never express our gratitude."

In 1987 the hospice's current Woodside Park site was acquired. The estimated £2.5million cost of building an in-patient unit there was achieved by fundraising and donations.

Harriet pays tribute to dedicated long-time supporters such as Baroness Julia Neuberger, Jewish Care and the Peabody Trust, as well as Dame Cicely Saunders, known as the founder of the modern hospice movement.

Serving Barnet, Haringey and Enfield, the NLH was the first multi-faith hospice in the UK. It offers care for everyone, of all faiths and none, with home visits, in-patient care when necessary, and day care therapy. Families and friends are supported too. Each individual is helped to lead as full a life as possible. All professional services are free, and three-quarters of the running costs come from donations and legacies.

Record-keeping

Earlier this year, Harriet and David Oliviere, first social work director at the hospice, told The Finchley Society the story of how it all began. Harriet has also lodged her written account with the Society. Already an OBE, she was recently awarded a Certificate of Recognition of her Lifetime Achievement from Barnet Council.



English abroad: Peter's photo of Finchley pupils on arrival in their twin town of Le Raincy. Photo Peter Lack

Out on the town in our twin town

By Peter Lack

Fifty years ago, over the four Easter holidays of 1965 to 1968, I escorted 200 pupils to Finchley's twin town of Le Raincy, a suburb on the eastern side of Paris. I took the photo above as we arrived on one of these trips.

It is hard to credit that these pupils, assembled and tentative on the steps of the town hall there, will now be either retired or approaching retirement. How many of them will see this reminder of their yesteryear selves? Two of the teacher escorts can be seen to the right of centre in the foreground while, to the left, a few French organisers are evident.

Over Easter 1967 the pupils' visit coincided with an Old Finchleians football tour featuring matches played in a tournament organised and

hosted by Le Raincy's neighbour Livry. The players were lodged in the dormitory of a Le Raincy private school. A year later Livry had established its own town-twinning link with Barnet's neighbour Haringey. Le Raincy was twinned with Finchley in 1962 and is still officially twinned with the Borough of Barnet. I wonder if pupil exchanges still take place or do health and safety hurdles now discourage schools and councils from organising them?

Editor's note: Are you in the photo, did you ever travel with Peter or do you have your own memories of twinning with Le Raincy?

We'd love to hear from you by email: the-archer@lineone.net; or by post to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE.

Fog of confusion hangs over shisha smoking at Oasis

By Janet Maitland

The Oasis restaurant in Church Lane, N2, has made another application to Barnet Council to allow shisha smoking on its premises, despite the Secretary of State ruling against it in January.

Restaurant owner Khahil Jelbouia made the move in May just before he became liable for an unlimited fine if he did not comply with the ruling. Barnet Council is now in a position where it must consider an application which could potentially overturn the ruling, while still having to enforce it.

We understand that local residents have asked the council to take action as they allege that shisha smoking is still going on. The council told us that they have made spot checks.

Supporters and objectors
Only 21 of the 140 people who commented on the application have objected to it; 119 supporters make a large majority even taking into account that 30 supporters mistakenly thought the Oasis would have to close if the application was refused.

Where people live has a major impact on their feelings about the Oasis. Of the 12 Church Lane residents who commented on the latest application, only one has objected. But it's a different story in



Oasis restaurant in Church Lane

Meanwhile, officers considering the Oasis application have to determine whether assessments of the new ventilation system carried out by the two independent agencies consulted by Mr Jelbouia are robust enough for it to be confident that fumes are no longer drifting outside.

Leopold Road closest to the smoking canopy at the rear of the restaurant, where 17 of the 21 residents commenting objected.

These objectors say they are very badly affected by smoke pollution and noise from both the ventilator and customers. Some are particularly concerned about fumes drifting into their children's bedrooms. All of them are angry that the council has allowed shisha smoking to go on without permission and in spite of its own environmental campaign against the practice.

Supporters who have commented say the Oasis is a peaceful, family-run place where they can relax. Even if they don't smoke themselves they are not concerned about shisha smoke because they claim the ventilator is effective or the problem has been overstated.

Green spaces watchdog

The London Parks and Gardens Trust is looking for people to help monitor planning applications affecting historic open spaces in Barnet. Enthusiastic volunteers are welcome, particularly those who have experience of dealing with planning issues. Email office@londongardenstrust.org if you are interested.

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YOUNG ARCHER



Team triumph: The victorious Holy Trinity pupils at the Allianz Stadium.

Runaway success... but only just!

Children from Holy Trinity School in East Finchley ran away the winners after a nail-biting finish at the Barnet Athletics Championships in June.

Forty boys and girls from years 3 to 6 competed in a range of track and field events at Allianz Park, Hendon, against 16 other local schools.

First up were the field competitions, including long jump, high jump and javelin, where the year 6 girls stole the show with golds in all their events. The girls also returned with the relay trophy, and none dropped the baton.

Once all the points were counted up, the Holy Trinity pupils won the overall trophy by the narrowest of margins, finishing just one point ahead of their nearest rivals.

The school's joint PE leader Anna Lacle said: "The competition was tough this year. We are so proud of all our athletes. They showed great skill and determination."



Street stall: Ethan Hurst and friends get ready to sell lemonade and cookies.



Band of four: Clickbait backstage at the East Finchley Festival.

Festival openers set out on road to musical big time

By Gabriel de Leuw

A new band called Clickbait kicked off the music on the main stage at this year's East Finchley Festival in June and, for a band that sounds so good, it's hard to believe its members are 15 years old and have only been playing together for two years.

Hugo on bass guitar, Holly on keyboards, and lead vocalist and guitarist Nathalie all live in N2 and drummer Alex lives in Barnet. Whilst they all go to different secondary schools now, three of the group were at Tetherdown Primary School and started jamming with each other years ago.

Straight after their festival performance when they performed superb versions of the Isley Brothers' *Summer Breeze* and Roy Ayers' *In the Sunshine* amongst many others, we had the pleasure of catching up with Nathalie to find out more about the band. **The Archer: Is music your main love?**

Nathalie: Yes, I first had a guitar in my hand when I was two and I haven't put it down since! I started getting

lessons at primary school and nowadays I practise around two and a half hours every day. Music is my passion!

What's your musical inspiration?

I love Stevie Wonder. He writes amazing songs and I admire the original and wonderful way in which he has explored music.

Does Clickbait write its own material?

Yes, we have many original songs. Our latest one is called *Haze* and we think it's our best yet!

Is East Finchley Festival the highlight of your year?

It was really cool. There was a really chilled vibe around the park and we had a great crowd supporting us on a really sunny day. It was so nice of the crowd to come out and watch us before the England v Panama match began.

What sets Clickbait apart from other bands?

We like to experiment with music, whether it is an original or a cover. We really like putting our own twist on others' music and each member of the band has their own style, which really helps us gel together.

Clickbait have also played East Barnet Festival and in the autumn they have a gig at a live music venue in Leytonstone called Luna Lounge, playing lots of their own new material. Watch this space for details.

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Thirsty work

Well done to 10-year-old Ethan Hurst who set up and ran a lemonade and cookie stall for two days outside his home in Summerlee Avenue, N2, earlier in the summer.

He raised £133 for Oakleigh School in Friern Barnet, a school for special educational needs where his younger brother goes, to help with their fundraising campaign to build a hydrotherapy pool. Headteacher Ruth Harding said: "Wow, a big thank you to Ethan for a very impressive amount raised."

Ethan made the lemonade and manned the stall for a weekend, selling to friends, neighbours and passers-by. On the second day, some young neighbours helped him out and stepped in with a popcorn maker when his cookies sold out.

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A friend to *The Archer* who loved to write

Our Archer colleague Neil McNaughton died last month from a brain tumour. We all remember him with huge fondness and can do no better than re-print the moving address that our writer Diana Cormack, a close friend of Neil and his wife Tina, gave at his funeral.

Many of us here today mourning Neil as a friend know that he had something special about him. Sometimes in a friendship there is an extra something which makes it a bit more special. With Neil and me it was *The Archer*.

Although much of their social life and activities centred around East Finchley, Tina and Neil made their lovely home in Friern Barnet. Then, nearly ten years ago,



Always fun to be with: Neil McNaughton

Neil told me that he would like to contribute to our local paper.

Neil loved to write. However, the first piece he submitted was under the name of Milly McNaughton. Who was she? Milly was their young cocker spaniel and the amusing report was about a dog training course she had been on. She was adorable, but could have entered a competition for the naughtiest dog in the world. Although Tina and Neil were senior teachers capable of quelling a classroom with just one look, Milly could run rings round them and continued to do so for the rest of her life, providing them with much pleasure and fun.

Whatever Neil was asked to write about, he would invariably reply: "I'm on the case" and it wasn't long before he'd submit an excellent article. We were lucky to have him to cover the demise of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute and the birth of the Archer Academy, each with its own intricacies. Also, his

knowledge of film covered many an occasion at the Phoenix Cinema. In fact it's difficult to think of a subject he didn't know something about.

Who would have thought that Neil was a friend of Leslie Cavendish, hairdresser to The Beatles, who happens to work in East Finchley? I'm sure they had great fun together writing his book *The Cutting Edge*, with Neil resisting many an opportunity to slip in a pun.

All the members of the *Archer* team were very fond of Neil. We are deeply saddened by his death, grateful for the work he put in and feel privileged to have known him.

Tina told me that the first thing she saw when Neil moved into the North London Hospice was the June edition of our paper. Though I've known Neil for over 25 years, I wasn't sure if he could hear or understand me when I last spoke to him there. So I told him who I was and that I was his friend from *The Archer*. He responded with just one word: 'writing'.

What lies beneath

In the dark days of winter, 90 adults and children planted a potato each in black sacks full of compost. In the height of summer they brought their crops to be weighed for the Grow a Potato competition run by Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society.

Judges used digital scales to find out who had the heaviest overall crop and who had the heaviest single potato during the society's summer show at the Free Church Hall, Northway, NW11.

In the children's competition, Sebastien Eames, aged three, tipped the scales at 933 grams and he also claimed the heaviest potato, weighing 145 grams. Adult first prize went to Anthony Hewstone, with a crop weighing 980 grams, but the heaviest potato prize was won by Jane Herbert, whose single potato weighed in at 102 grams.

Blooms and brass

The society's 286th flower show will take place on Saturday 8 September, when Grimsdyke Brass will be paying a return visit to play live music in the Free Church Hall garden.



Dirty work: Judges get down to the serious task of weighing potatoes.

Need some muscle?

Are you a charitable organisation or community project that needs some help? The runners at Goodgym Barnet are looking for physical tasks they can carry out during one of their weekly evening runs from the centre of East Finchley. Decorating, gardening, moving and shifting... anything will be considered. Phone Goodgym's Paul on 07768 353108 or Damian on 07525 357369.

Allotment open day

Gordon Road Allotments, off Dollis Road, Finchley, N3, will be holding an open day on Bank Holiday Monday 27 August from 1.30pm to 5pm as part of the National Garden Scheme. All money taken will go towards the scheme's charities.

Visitors will be able to explore a mix of traditional plots and raised beds, enjoy a talk on bees, sample homemade teas and buy vegetables, perennial flowers and honey. Entrance is £3.50, and free for children. Enquiries to finchleyhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com.

RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

Master of the barbie

The heatwave this summer has created ideal conditions for one particular species. Households across East Finchley have reported numerous sightings of Homo Stupido disappearing into his bedroom to cast aside his winter cardigan and emerge in his cooking shorts as the Master of the Barbie.

This reverse Superman sees it as his job, a proper man's job, and he relegates the rest of the family to salad duties. Trouble is, a 10-year-old Aussie could light a barbie and produce a range of perfectly cooked food in the time it takes Homo Stupido to read the instructions on a packet of firelighters.

To be fair, he knows what's required and very little can faze him. He lines up enough raw kangaroo, cow, pig and lamb to feed a family of 30. And that's without the chicken wings as appetisers, and the 24 pack of Fosters to wash it all down.

Then comes the grand moment of fire lighting. What a teenage Aussie can do in ten minutes takes nearly an hour. An hour the neighbours spend nervously watching and hoping that there is no repeat of last year's inferno. Not now, not when they've just had the fence repaired and the apple tree is showing signs of recovery.

Three hours later the first bits of dead animal are sizzling away, the salad is wilting in despair and the cat has run off with the wombat burgers. There is enough burnt meat to keep the foxes happy and Homo Stupido is halfway through a nervous breakdown. Only then does salvation arrive as someone pipes up "Why don't we ring for a takeaway?"

As my grandfather used to say: "If God had meant the English to do barbies, he'd never have given us pizza."

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- **Outdoor Fit Camp** Lyttelton Playing Fields, N2, 6.30pm Wed and 9.30am Sat. Call Martin on 07809 593952.
- **Pilates** Classes Tue 9.30, Fri 9.15 & Sun 11am. www.pilatesineastfinchley.co.uk. Michelle 07767 804 564
- **Tai Chi & Qigong** in N2, Weds 12pm, 1pm, 6pm & 7pm. James 8883 3308/07836 710281 or james@taiji.co.uk
- **Tennis club** with four clay courts off Southern Road. Call 8883 7723.
- **Yoga, breathing & relaxation**. Weekly drop-in classes - N3, N6, N10. Phone Judy on 07956 375607.
- **Yoga beginners' course** at Yogalogy, High Road, N2. Contact 020 70187377 or info@yogalogy.co.uk
- **Yoga**, pregnancy yoga, meditation classes. Call Sunnah 07941 321 772 www.stretchingpeople.co.uk.
- **Women's kick boxing**, Thursdays 9.30am, East Finchley Combat Academy, Church Lane, N2. Contact 07956 340540.

Music, Dance & Creative Arts

- **The Archer Community Choir**, Tuesdays 7-9pm, The Archer Academy, Eagans Close, N2. Email: archercommunitychoir@gmail.com.
- **Art Classes**. Call Henry on 8888 5133.
- **A-Chord**, friendly choir, all genres, open to all. Thursdays 8pm at NNLS, East End Rd. Laura 07732 120464. www.a-chord.uk
- **Ballroom & Latin American Dance Classes** - beginners & improvers. Wed & Fri eve, Bishop Douglass Sch. 8207 2323.
- **'Calm & Sing' workshops**. Contact Angie on missangiea@yahoo.co.uk
- **Creative writing classes** in informal, friendly atmosphere. Tel Sallie Rose 020 8444 7217.
- **Creative Writing** at Friern Barnet Community Library. Every Saturday, 12pm, 07488 230580.
- **Dance conditioning classes**. New body in 10 lessons. Diana: 07580 041270. www.boldbodies.co.uk.
- **East Finchley Writers Group**, Weds at the Old White Lion. Contact Ralph 8444 5903.
- **East Finchley Poetry Writing Workshops**. Monthly on Saturdays. Contact Dennis Evans 8346 9528.
- **Memory Lane Singing Club** - friendly singing club meets every Friday in Finchley. Call Valerie 8458 4508.
- **Over 50s Tea Dance** at Christ Church, North Finchley. Every Weds, 1pm. 020 8444 0280.
- **Learn to sing** at Finchley Methodist Church, Ballards La. Call 8888 4412.
- **Muswell Hill after school ukulele club**, Wednesdays 4.15-5.15pm, ages 6-10. Contact Margie 07909 439513.
- **Rock 'n Roll dance lessons**, 8pm every Weds at the Constitutional Club, The Walks. Drop-in. Call Kav 07721 489489.
- **Traditional tunes** @ TOC Highgate Hill, join in playing by ear - 1st & 3rd Tues monthly from 8.30pm. Free. 07958 282898.

Clubs & Social

- **Bingo evening**, 8pm Sundays, at the Constitutional Club, The Walks, N2.
- **Bingo Club** Mondays 7-9 pm, Green Man Centre, Contact: Jan 8815 5452
- **French conversation** in small friendly group with native speaker. 8444 9395.
- **Friends of Cherry Tree Wood** www.cherrytreewood.co.uk or 8883 7544.
- **Haringey Recorded Music Society** informal meetings locally. Call David Moldon on 8361 1696.
- **Muslim Ladies Lunch Club** 1st & 3rd Weds, Ann Owen Ctr., Oak La. Call 8432 1415 to book.
- **Bridge Club**, Thursday & Saturday afternoons, Age UK, Oak Lane, N2 8LT. Contact Ray Tiano 07944 562180.



Tim Arnold performing at last year's arts festival Photo Mike Coles

The Arts Festival is coming

By Daphne Chamberlain

All our annual jamborees zip past at ever increasing speed, and the East Finchley Arts Festival is almost here. This year it's running from Thursday 27 September until Sunday 7 October at its usual base in All Saints Church, Durham Road, N2. On offer is a mix of old and new favourites and interesting new faces.

Pop-Up Opera pop back again with Peter Brook's re-imagining of *Carmen*. Last year's new boy Tim Arnold will return with another lively show, as will Paprika's Balkan Band. We will meet String Ting, the all-female jazz trio from Tomorrow's Warriors, a UK hothouse for young jazz talent.

Festival director Geoffrey Hanson presents his new work, *Death Be Not Proud*, settings and interludes on Life and After-life. This will be with London Mozart Players and the London Ripieno Singers, when we can also hear a young prizewinning Lithuanian pianist playing Mozart's *Piano Concerto 28*.

Classic film *The Prime of*

Miss Jean Brodie has a festival showing at the Phoenix Cinema.

Back at All Saints, the Art Exhibition runs throughout the festival, with an evening devoted to it.

Take your pick at other times from the Max Bruck Trio, Voxcetera, London Metropolitan Brass, and The Finchley Children's Music Group, who are celebrating their 60th anniversary.

The Archer will print the detailed programme next month, when printed programmes and posters will be available too. Further information and booking facilities will also be available online at eastfinchleyartsfestival.org.uk

What's On...

E-mail your listings to: the-archer@lineone.net

Sunday 5th August

• **Grange Big Local Explorers Picnic** 11.30am to 3pm on Brownswell Green, between Oak Lane and Brownswell Road, N2. Bring friends, family and food and enjoy the summer weather whilst trying out your neighbours' cooking at the same time! The picnic is also an opportunity to help create a new green space in an area which currently has very little. Attendees are invited to help cut back some of the brambles (and help pick the blackberries) and to contribute to a discussion about how to improve the space. Long trousers, closed shoes and gardening gloves are recommended. Tools will be provided for those who wish to do some clearing on the day. For further information, please contact info@grangebiglocal.org.

Monday-Thursday 6-9, 13-16 August

• **Photography workshops for age 10+** Workshops run for 4 days, exploring a different subject each day, including portrait, nature and street photography., learning about composition and basic camera settings, working solo and in teams. Workshop will take place in East Finchley Mon-Thu 10:00-13:00. Limited to 6 places! Email contact@asiamsoci.com for details.

Sunday 12 August

• **Battle of Barnet, a guided walk** with

City of London guide Paul Baker. Meet at junction of Great North Road and Hadley Green Road, EN5 5PP, at 11am. More details from Paul on 020 8440 6805 or from www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net.

Wednesday 15 August

• **Join a Ramblers Association six-mile walk** from Hendon Central station through local parks and open spaces, finishing at The Gate in Arkley. Refreshments can be purchased at The Gate but take a drink with you. Bus 107 from The Gate to High Barnet Station. More details from leaders Julia and John Haynes on 020 8906 0563 or 07803 892 496.

Saturday 18 August

• **Butterfly Morning at Long Lane Pasture**, opposite fire station in Long Lane, N3, 10am to midday. If weather is warm and dry visitors should see many of the species already recorded at the pasture. Booklets available to help with identification.

Monday 27 August

• **Open day at Gordon Road Allotments**, off Dollis Road, N3, 1.30pm to 5pm. Explore the plots, hear a talk on bees and buy produce including honey and homemade teas. Entrance £3.50 (children free) raising money for the National Garden Scheme charities. Enquiries to finchleyhorticulturalandsociety@gmail.com

Revenge is sweet in Ancient Greece

Review by Daphne Chamberlain

Greek god of winemaking (and other things) Dionysus visited north London last month when The Hampstead Players presented *The Bacchae*. The classical tragedy by Euripides seemed a bold choice, but paid off.

"This is a really good play," I heard one member of the audience say to another, as we all strolled or sat outside during the interval, wine glasses in hand. 'Outside' was the graveyard of Hampstead Church, where the Players perform and a very suitable venue for a tale of revenge and grisly death.

Matthew Williams played Dionysus as an evil Kenneth Williams. This is complimentary. We laughed at many of his lines, but we were meant to. The god was visiting Thebes in disguise, bewitching the women of the city into wild revelry out on the hills, while organising the killing of his cousin King Pentheus. And we could never forget that beneath the wit was evil: excellent acting.

Greek drama is easy to understand because the audience has the help of the Chorus to explain the plot. This Chorus became stronger as

the play unfolded. They had some mesmerising moments accompanied by soft, sensuous music and the powerful, haunting voice of their solo singer Veronica Stalberg. And there was nothing soft about the blood chilling screams announcing news of the horrible death of Pantheus, which traditionally happens offstage.

The play was tightly directed and beautifully acted, though acoustics in the church were kinder to the men's voices than to some of the women. I personally don't think dressing the leading actors in present day clothes was necessary, but that's a minor detail. As that audience member confirmed in the interval, a play that has survived for over 2,000 years is still powerful and relevant enough to speak to audiences today.

For more information about The Hampstead Players, see www.hampsteadplayers.org.uk.

It's good to look odd this summer

Children and parents shopping in Muswell Hill over the school holidays might like to try the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association's Odd One Out competition.

Launched successfully in many of the area's shops last year, it is hoped that lots of children aged 12 and under will again take part.

The idea is to find one strange object in shop windows that is out of place, for example a spanner in a sweet shop or an Oxo cube in a bookshop. The object may be of any size, but the smaller it is, the harder it is to spot.

Participating shops will display an Odd One Out sign in their window and have their own number for you to log your find against.

Entry forms are available in Muswell Hill Library and on the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association website <http://mhfga.org>, which also has competition details, as does its social media channels.

Curtain up at Ally Pally

After 80 years in the dark, Alexandra Palace Theatre will soon be open again. The East Wing Restoration Project has restored one of London's most popular playhouses and tickets for the first season of shows starting in December are now on sale. Opened in 1875, and famous for its magical stage machinery, the theatre took audiences of up to 3,000. Visit www.theatre.alexandrapalace.com to find out more.

Headscratcher

By Oliver Skanberg-Tippen

Can you turn 'Find' into 'Duet' in five steps, changing just one letter each time? Solution on page 11.





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:
Find, Mind, Mint, Dint, Diet, Duet.

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A mission to make out-of-this-world creations

By Ann Bronkhorst

Talbot Designs is one of the few remaining manufacturing companies in north London. Here acrylic, polycarbonate and other hard plastic materials are shaped into varied and beautiful objects, often custom-made. "Only limited by imagination" is their motto and for over 70 years their imagination and technical skills have solved some extraordinary challenges, *Star Wars* fighter craft among them.

Creative ideas

Behind the company's unassuming entrance in Long Lane are workshops, specialised machinery and huge ovens



Screen prince: Prince Harry laughs with actor Mark Hamill as he sits under a Talbot's plastic canopy made for a fighter craft in *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*.

for heat-forming the materials. Many of their products are functional, such as the

clear acrylic domes, dishes and spheres made for protective display uses, but their 'bespoke' fabrications are truly extraordinary.

In an office packed with way-out props from films and witty creations for the advertising world, father and son Charles and Richard Woolff, directors of Talbot Designs, have stories to tell about some of the wilder ideas they have made happen: Darth Vader's helmet; the biggest bottle in the world, holding 1,100 pints of Kingfisher lager; the lectern used at this year's BAFTA awards; the 2012 Olympic torch; the transparent cover for Pope John Paul II's Pope-mobile.

Artists and sculptors like Anish Kapoor and Sir Anthony Caro have worked with Talbot Designs and for his recent world tour musician Kygo performed on a startlingly beautiful transparent grand piano described by Richard Woolff as "less of a job, more of a mission."

Still here
When Charles Woolff's

father bought Talbot Designs in the 1960s a few manufacturers still existed in N3 and N2; older readers may remember Lucas and Simms, both large enterprises, but they and many other smaller firms have departed. Talbot Designs remains, employing local workers, giving work experience to local schoolchildren and liaising with local teachers of design and technology.

To see their innovative creations visit www.talbotdesigns.co.uk and to see the transparent piano go to The Kids in Love Tour on YouTube.

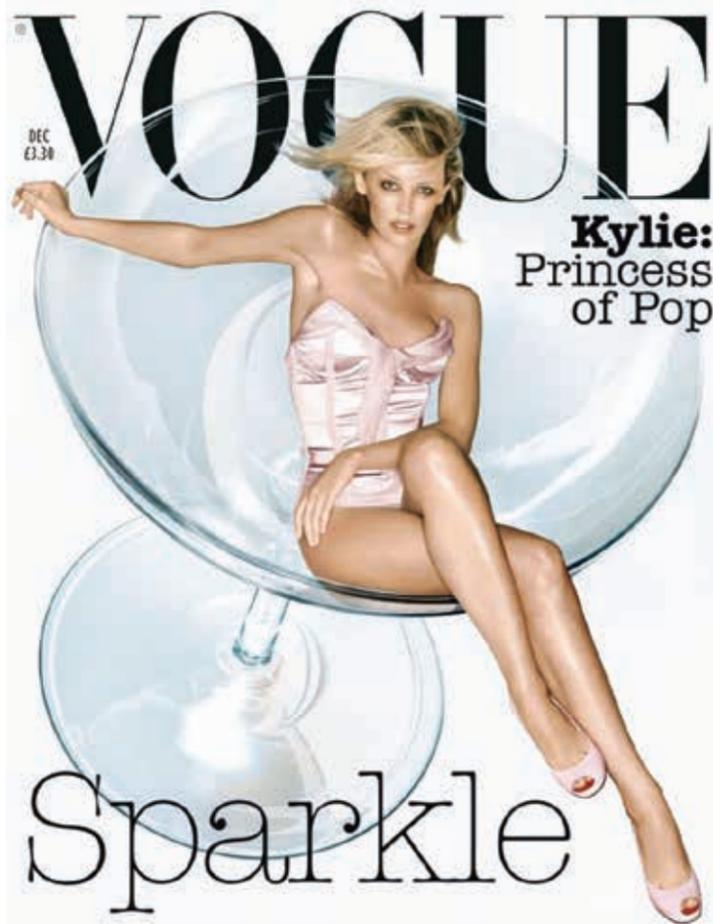
Take-off for Talbot donation units

By Ann Bronkhorst
Talbot Designs won the contract to design and manufacture ten huge eye-catching donation units, four for RAF Cosford and six for the newly transformed RAF Museum at Colindale, which officially reopened on 30 June to mark the RAF's centenary.

Entrance to the museum is free but the units, each proudly displaying the blue and red colours of the RAF, encourage visitor contributions. They are interactive yet noiseless, with giant propellers you can turn for free. Children are entranced!

Talbot's Richard Woolff, who designed the units from scratch, said they were particularly challenging because of the time-scale (seven weeks from start to finish) and because of the range of materials used alongside acrylic, including steel, Hi-Macs, fibreglass and vinyl. He is delighted with the results although he says it was "a baptism of fire".

To see the whole process, go to <https://youtu.be/wJHIBc-QfU38>



Champagne Kylie: The Australian singer reclines in a 4ft plastic glass made by Talbot's for the cover of Vogue magazine

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Food market in the park

A new weekly food market has started in Victoria Park, off Ballards Lane, N3, running every Sunday from 11am to 3pm.

Finchley Food Market brings together a hand-picked selection of food producers and street food traders selling British fare, including bakery goods from Hackney Wick, tomatoes grown on the Isle of Wight, and soft cheese made in Bath.

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