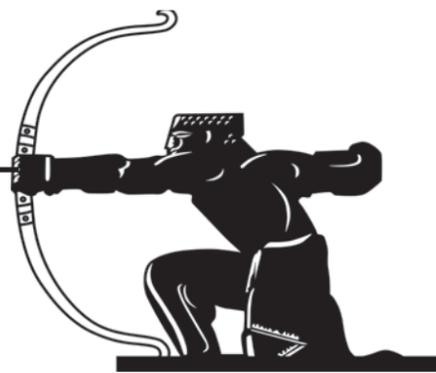




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The Archer

Local News is our Aim



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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Station stallholders: Julie Badger and Tony Mackie outside the tube. Photo Mike Coles

Cab journeys must be safer for everyone

East Finchley resident Corrina Suri is launching a campaign to improve the safety of passengers using taxis. You can find it on Facebook and Twitter @camsforcabs. Here Corrina explains what lies behind it:

Picture this: You're out with friends, or visiting family, or finished a business meeting. It's quite late so you decide to do the sensible thing and book a cab. As it arrives, a sense of relief washes over you, knowing the journey will be quick, straightforward and safe.



Cab safety call: Corrina Suri

You exchange pleasantries with the driver. Then they start to ask personal questions. They comment on your appearance. They try to touch you, or ask for payment that doesn't involve cash. This happened to me recently. I emailed the driver's company and they did nothing about it, because there was no proof, no camera or audio to capture the incident. I'm not trying to sell you a sob story. I am a true believer in learning from a bad experience and doing something about it. That's why I am starting an official petition to demand cameras/audio in all licensed cabs. Making this the law will help identify those who have committed a crime, or at the very least act as a deterrent. There are all kinds of vulnerable people who use them, often alone: children, people who are intoxicated, the elderly, or those with

disabilities. How do they stand a chance against a predator? But let's not forget this is a two-way street. I have spoken to several drivers who have stated that they experience abuse from passengers on a day-to-day basis. They also need protection. If you believe in improving the safety of passengers and drivers, sign the petition @camsforcabs on either Facebook or Twitter. If there is anyone who would like to help, or if something like this has happened to you, please email your story to: camsforcabs@gmail.com. You can also message me through the Facebook page. Let's make cab journeys safer for everyone!

Fruits of their labour

By Ruth Anders

Everyone who travels by tube is familiar with the fruit and vegetable stall that has stood outside East Finchley Station for 40 years, offering fresh produce from apples to avocados.

When Tony Mackie's uncle gave it up five years ago, Tony decided to throw in his teaching job and take over.

With the benefit of his early experience helping his uncle, the stall has gone from strength to strength.

Trained florist and friend Julie Badger helps serve the eager queue, and it was her idea to introduce cut flowers. Between them they have built

up a loyal following, and Julie's welcoming smile is just what's needed at the end of a tiring day in town.

Flexible work pattern

After starting life in Highbury, Tony studied economics at Cardiff University. From there he moved on to 11 years of teaching in Oxford, Newport, Bahrain, Abu Dhabi and Hendon.

Continued on page 4

The place to live

East Finchley has been named as one of the best places to live in London in a list published by *The Sunday Times*. The annual ranking combines data on crime rates, house prices and school performance with knowledge from local residents.

East Finchley was found to be more desirable than traditional local favourites like Hampstead and Highgate partly because it's more affordable.

Topping the Best Places to Live Guide 2019 in London was the Isle of Dogs, singled out for its riverside location, for being a short walk from Canary Wharf and 15 minutes to the City, and for low house prices for a Zone 2 location.

The full list was: Isle of Dogs, Battersea, Belgravia, Bermondsey, Blackheath, Crystal Palace, East Finchley, Highbury, Leyton and Teddington.

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Thank you to The Bald Faced Stag and New Local Cafe for providing us with a meeting place.

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 – **June: 10 May; July: 14 June**
August: 12 July

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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Barnet	Childline 0800 1111	Drugs Helpline 0800 776600
Admin/Town Hall 020 8359 2000	Citizens Advice Barnet 0300 4568365	Health Info Service 0800 665544
Council Tax 020 8359 2608	Cruse Bereavement Care 0870 167 1677	MIND 020 8343 5700
Recycling & refuse 020 8359 4600	Disability Info Service 020 8359 7637	National Blood Centre 0845 7711 7711
Primary Care Trust 020 8201 4700	EF Advice Service 0300 4568365	Crime
Benefits Agency 020 8258 6500	Lone Parent Centre 020 7021 4146	Emergency 999
Employment Service 020 8258 3900	Missing Persons Helpline 0500 700700	Police non-emergency 101
Haringey Council 020 8489 0000	National Debt Line 0808 808 4000	CrimeStoppers 0800 555111
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Phoenix Cinema 020 8444 6789	Refuge National Crisis Line 0870 599 5443	Finchley Memorial 020 8349 7500
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National Express 0871 781 8181	Carers' Line 0808 808 7777	Independent Age 0800 319 6789
Heathrow Airport 0870 000 0123		Age UK (general advice line) 0800 169 2081

Residents object to changes to homes on Esso garage site

By Janet Maitland
Local residents are objecting to proposals that will increase the number of new homes planned for the empty land at the junction of the High Road and Leopold Road, N2, the former site of the Esso garage.

"They're trying to squeeze as many units on this small piece of land as is humanly possible, for maximum profit," said a resident of Leopold Road, one of the 28 people objecting.

Developers Leopold Properties were refused permission to build here in 2016, as Barnet Council thought the housing would be overbearing, at odds with the surroundings and an overdevelopment of the site. Another application was refused in 2017, despite some changes, so the developers submitted an appeal.

The appeal was allowed by James Brokenshire MP, Secretary of State, last year. He decided the planned four-storey block of flats fronting the High Road and the trio of three-storey terraced

houses along Leopold Road would not be out of place. He thought the houses would tie in well alongside existing Leopold Road properties and the block of flats would blend in with other buildings on the High Road.

However, the developers have changed the plans. They want to replace the planned terrace of houses on Leopold Road with a three-storey block of flats. They also want to reconfigure the flats in the planned four-storey block.

Taken together, the changes would mean 20 mainly smaller homes being built instead of the original nine, with a total of 42 bedrooms rather than 32. The number of parking spaces would increase from 16 to 20. There are no plans for affordable housing.

The developers say their new plans are "similar in size and external design" to those approved by the Secretary of State. Objectors believe there will be a detrimental impact on privacy, the character of the surroundings, parking, traffic and children's safety.

"The development faces the



Artist's impression of the three-storey block on the corner of Leopold Road, with the four-storey block behind, as seen from Creighton Avenue

single point of access for 700 children at Martin Primary School and will increase the risk of further accidents at this junction," said one Leopold Road resident. "Traf-

fic and parking on Leopold and Leslie Road is hugely problematic for residents and this plan with only add to the issues of speeding and parking," said another.

One resident commenting on the application supports it, because "housing is much needed and this plan seeks to maximise it".

Planning Applications

Barnet Council

88 Bedford Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

3 Beresford Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

67 Brackenbury Road, N2

Part single and part two-storey rear extension.

8 Brendon Grove, N2

Rear outbuilding. New front porch.

9 Brim Hill, N2

Single-storey rear extension, alterations to side, infill of two doors, new side access door and new window.

28 Cherry Tree Road, N2

Submission of details of condition 4 (privacy screens), pursuant to planning permission.

219 Creighton Avenue, N2

LDC for single-storey rear extension.

23 Elmhurst Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension with green roof.

27 Elmhurst Avenue, N2

Use as two self-contained flats.

3 King Street Mews, N2

Roof extension, including new mansard, two front dormers, two

side dormers, and one rear dormer, to provide one self-contained flat. Associated internal alterations. (Retrospective application).

Ground Floor Flat, 345 Long Lane, N2

New vehicular access to provide off-street parking.

Old Barn Youth Club, 20 Fallows Close, N2

Submission of details of condition 20 pursuant to planning permission.

30 Park Hall Road, N2

LDC for roof extension involving rear dormer window and four front rooflights, new glazed doors at ground floor level, and replacement of existing side window.

Prospect Ring, N2

Submission of details of condition 32 (Landscaping) pursuant to planning permission.

25 Summerlee Avenue, N2

LDC for single side and rear extension.

81 Summerlee Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Plus LDC for roof extension involving

hip to gable, rear dormer window, three front rooflights and new side gable window.

38 Sylvester Road, N2

Two-storey rear extension with new Juliette balcony to first floor. Also, LDC for roof extension involving hip to gable, rear dormer window, two front rooflights and new side gable window.

Viceroy Court Car Park, East End Road, N2

Submission of details of condition 15 (access entry gates), pursuant to planning permission.

Haringey Council

Westside, 48 Fortis Green, N2

Full planning permission for replacement of top floor aluminium framed windows with aluminium/timber composite frames of altered design. Replacement front elevation plywood balcony fronts and handrails on the first and second floors of altered height and design, in compliance with current building regulations.

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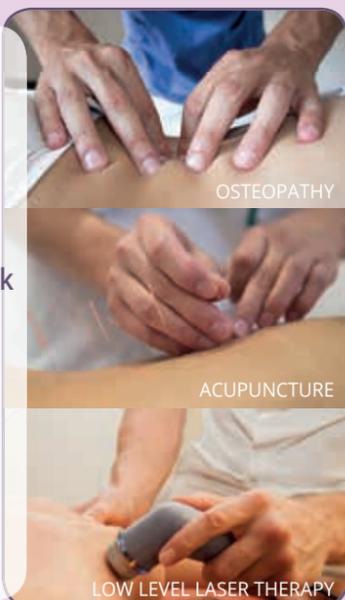
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Before and after: Volunteers cleaning up the Tarling Road wood last summer, left, and how it looks today with a circular path and ground cleared for new growth

Wood is transformed from impenetrable to impeccable

By David Melsome

Nine months ago, the hidden patch of woodland known as the Sleeping Beauty wood was a tangle of undergrowth and strictly off-limits to everyone who lived around it. Now the enclosure off Tarling Road, N2, is a beautifully manicured open space waiting for spring and summer to bring it fully to life. The remarkable transformation was led by local co-ordinator Leo Smith and supported by dozens of hard-working volunteers and landowner Barnet Council. Dense growths of bracken have been removed to be replaced by a circular path and open areas for flora and fauna.

There are plans for the woodland to be opened up for nature classes with children visiting from East Finchley schools, and for special community events. It neighbours the new Tarling Road Community Centre, which is itself due to open very soon.

Drop an item into the food bank any time

Shoppers can now leave items for the Finchley Foodbank in a collection box at the new Sainsbury's Local store in the High Road, N2, for onward distribution to families and people in need. Donations of tinned meat, fish and vegetables, jars of pasta sauce, jams and spreads, packets of sugar, boxes of cereal, along with tea, coffee, rice and biscuits, and any non-perishable food items are very welcome. Shampoo, conditioner, deodorant and sanitary items are also requested.



The food bank is based at St Mary's Church, further up the High Road, past the junction with Church Lane, and donations can also be dropped there directly every Saturday between 12.30pm and 2pm.



Award after Grange fire

A church minister who helped lead the emergency response to the devastating fire that left 60 residents of the Grange Estate homeless last November has been awarded for her service to the community.

Rev Helen Shannon, of the St Barnabas Church network, helped organise a rest centre and essential supplies after the residents were evacuated in the middle of the night from Willow House, just off the High Road, N2. Willow House is currently being refurbished.

She was also recognised for her work in running a food bank in the annual Civic Awards list organised by Barnet Council. Winner of a lifetime achievement award was John Barry Russell, who joined the Finchley Sea Cadets when he was 11 years old and still helps them run their activities from their base in Long Lane, N3.

Man sent to prison for charity shop break-in

By Janet Maitland

A man who burgled the RSPCA shop on the High Road in East Finchley, stealing cash and causing more than £1,000 of damage, has been jailed for two and a half years.

Pierre Wassef, 38, smashed the charity shop window with a slab of paving stone on the night of 19 October last year. Once inside, he shattered the CCTV camera's hard drive, then broke into the safe, stealing £680 in cash. He also grabbed a box of expensive animal medicine and altogether did more than £1,000 of damage.

Police identified him by the blood he left on the fridge door handle inside the shop. Wassef pleaded guilty to a total of five burglaries in north London carried out in 2018.

One burglary at the Locanda Italian restaurant in West End Lane, West Hampstead, netted him £3,670 in laptops and other devices and a further £2,800 in bottles of champagne.

Defence barrister Pieter

Briegel told Harrow Crown Court in mitigation that Wassef was being treated for post-traumatic stress disorder triggered by a sentence of 25 years in Egypt for drug trafficking, which he claims he confessed to under pressure. He was released in 2010 after a regime change.

Wassef had also had drug problems for many years and been attacked for a debt of £80,000 he was trying to repay by stealing, said Mr Briegel.

Judge Lana Wood said the sentence took into account the overall criminality involved in all the offences and their seriousness, along with the fact that that Wassef had breached a community order made earlier in 2018 for two break-ins, one of which was at a Scope charity shop in West Hampstead.

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Fruits of their labours

Continued from page 1.

Now an East Finchley resident, Tony's work on the stall gives him the freedom he needs to help care for his small son and cocker spaniel while his wife works full time in central London.

Tony's greengrocer brother is at Spitalfields before dawn and Tony collects stock from the former's shop in Highbury. Although he starts his working day at 6am, Tony said: "This work pattern is perfect for me and provides the flexibility to look after our son." He added: "The weather really affects our turnover. Bad weather means customers don't linger, and in good weather the wholesalers increase their prices."



Early starts: Tony and Julie.

The future

What of the future with Brexit ahead? "Wholesalers are already selling more British produce," said Tony. "Perhaps we'll go back to the days of more seasonal fruit and veg. But there's such a great community feel here in East Finchley and I'll certainly be staying around to serve my customers."

No to plastic

Tony is firmly committed to the anti-plastics cause and articles in *The Archer* have increased his awareness. He couldn't believe the waste he saw in Bahrain ten years ago where there was no re-cycling. "Lots of our customers say no to a plastic bag," said Tony. "The message is finally starting to get through."

Martin Primary gets it right

Martin Primary School in East Finchley is to receive a gold award from Unicef for its commitment to children's rights. Martin Primary staff have been working with Unicef UK since September 2016.

The Rights Respecting Schools Award shows a deep commitment to children's rights at all levels of school life and encourages adults to do the same.

Headteacher Rebecca Bakar said: "The award has had a very positive impact on pupils and the school as a whole. These values are embedded in daily school life and give our children the best chance to lead healthy,

happy lives and to be responsible, active citizens."

Unicef said schools who previously received rights awards reported improvements in pupil behaviour and well-being, leading to less truancy and bullying, better learning and improved academic standards.

Martin School is keen to support other local schools with the Rights Respecting Award programme. For more information, contact office@martinprimary.barnetmail.net.

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Overflowing bins: Photos taken around East Finchley by David Attfield, Einat Sohar and James Vernon

Have you seen litter and rubbish piling up?

Do you have any photo evidence of streets near you not being cleaned or bins not being emptied? One East Finchley man would like you to share them so that he can build a case against Barnet Council.

David Attfield started a campaign last year to get streets in East Finchley and beyond cleaned up, claiming that Barnet Council is failing in its obligations, cleaning less on a much lower budget than neighbouring Haringey.

Send your photos

Now he is asking for help in preparing evidence in support of a complaint about Barnet's performance to the local Government Ombudsman. In particular he is asking for residents to submit photos showing the cleanliness of their streets to dirtybarnet@gmail.com.

"My aim is to submit an overwhelming body of evidence showing that the neglect of streets in East Finchley is not temporary or isolated but is a widespread, ongoing problem," said David.

He acknowledged that Barnet Council had carried out some street cleaning in recent weeks, but said that many East Finchley streets remained dirty, full of weeds and generally looking neglected. Photos circulated on social media in April showing overflowing bins in The Causeway and The Walks.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

LOCAL POLICE, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

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.

Changes in the team

It's time to say a fond goodbye to PC John Kenny after five years here in East Finchley. John will be retiring towards the end of this year, and has taken an administration post to finish his career with the Met.

John will be missed by us all, but especially by me for his diligence, thoroughness and attention to detail. John can always find any piece of information in any system if it exists! I will also miss his vast knowledge of policing, how to make a computer bend to my will and his dry sense of humour. Oh, and his tea-making.

PC Nikita Pittam

The team has a new member, PC Nikita Pittam. Nikita has been a police constable for two years and joins us in East Finchley after taking a career break. She is looking forward to getting to know the ward, the residents and businesses, and viewing ongoing issues with a fresh eye. You will see Nikita very soon out on the ward, so do come over and say hello.

Cherry Tree Wood

After consultation between Barnet Council and police we are very pleased to say that Cherry Tree Wood will remain a locked park. The park does not have any lighting and could be very dangerous for anyone straying in there after dark, or using it as an alternative cut through to Haringey. It would also be likely to lead to an increase in crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly during the summer months, and be difficult to police.

Vehicle crime

We are still getting a variety of vehicle crime; this week there was a theft of a car via a burglary where the keys were stolen. Remember to take all things of value from your vehicle. Van owners have had bags, phones and wallets taken from unlocked cabs. Do lock them away, even if you are just leaving the van for a minute.

Catalytic converter thefts, particularly from Toyota Prius cars, have increased. This is difficult to prevent and quite pricey too, but you may consider as an investment a Thatcham immobiliser and anti-tilt alarm at around £500. This is suitable for most cars but not for vans as the catalytic converter can be removed without lifting the van.

Burglary

Please do consider fitting an alarm and use it every time you leave the home empty. A family lost a lot last month after being out for only an hour.



Drivers going through red lights at school crossing

By John Lawrence

Parents and residents are asking why motorists are driving through red lights at the pedestrian crossing on the High Road outside Martin Primary leading to several near-misses and children narrowly avoiding injuries.

“For so many drivers to be going through red lights suggests there is a problem with visibility of the crossing on the approach. A through traffic study is needed to investigate this,” said Martin School parent Emily Candler, as she presented a petition signed by 2,227 people to Barnet Council’s Finchley & Golders Green Area Committee. Are vehicles approaching the crossing too fast and does the angle of the hill on the south-bound approach make it difficult to see the lights? In addition, does the difficulty of turning out of Church Lane next to the crossing encourage drivers to pull out fast and take risks? Campaigners are asking these questions following an incident

in February where a young girl and her father using the crossing were injured when they were hit by a car coming from the direction of the North Circular (The Archer, March 2019).

The girl’s ten-year-old brother Kipp Foster bravely addressed the council committee saying: “It makes me scared when I cross this road because I can see how easily it could happen again. But I have no choice because this is road outside school and hundreds of kids must cross it every day.”

Parent Collette Symonds said: “Are we supposed to teach our children that the green man at their own school crossing no longer guarantees their safety?”

East Finchley councillor Arjun Mittra asked the com-

mittee to commission a report on potential solutions, such as a three-way filter light. The last safety study on this crossing was in 2012, since when Martin School has grown by 50% and the school buildings and field have been used more at evenings and weekends for commercial and community hire. Members of the Finchley & Golders Green Area Committee agreed to allocate funding for a study to identify options to improve safety and to report back in July. Council officers will also work with Transport for London, who are responsible for traffic lights, to identify any immediate improvements, such as the phasing of the lights, as well as longer term solutions.



Martin School kids at the Town Hall to present their petition. Photo Mike Coles

Summer festival bends over backwards to ban the B-word

By Hilary Townley, festival organising team

Leave... extend... remain... have you had enough? Never fear, the East Finchley Community Festival will definitely be remaining as an antidote to those Brexit blues!



Soto CIC performing at last year’s East Finchley Festival. Photo by Mike Coles

Its famous cornucopia of delights to celebrate our community will lift your spirits with a mixture of fun, food, interesting stalls, curiosities and entertainment, all taking place in Cherry Tree Wood on Sunday 23 June from 12pm.

Come along and enjoy the

day. Better still, come along, enjoy the day and volunteer a very small amount of time to help the festival run smoothly. We are looking for helpers who can spare an hour or so to act as stewards, sell raffle tickets and keep everything running.

Why not ring the changes this year and be part of the team that makes the festival so much fun? We also welcome offers of sponsorship. Please register your interest by emailing eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com.

This annual celebration of the community of East Finchley only happens because of the generosity of time put in by volunteers and the generosity of sponsorship raised by local businesses. We aim to keep the festival a joyous celebration, free and inclusive.

Shorter route for 134 bus

From 15 June, the south-bound 134 bus will terminate at Warren Street, close to University College

Hospital. Passengers wishing to travel onward to Tottenham Court Road can change onto the 24 or 29 bus anywhere between Camden Town and Warren Street.

Transport for London have announced that if the Bus Hopper time limit of one hour is breached by making this change, the Oyster or contactless card used will be refunded £1.50 at the end of the week.

Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association argued against this shortened route, and have said TfL’s postcode analysis showed that the N10 region contributed the second highest number of consultation responses anywhere in London.

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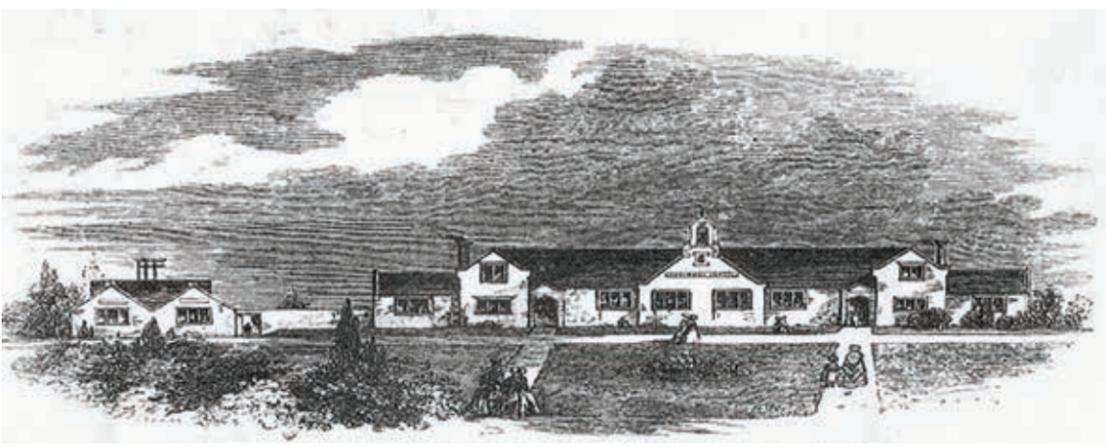
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Above: The Holy Trinity School building among fields in 1850. Below: As it is now on East End Road.



Demolition leaves original Holy Trinity School still standing

By Diana Cormack

During the ongoing redevelopment of the former Bobath Centre on East End Road, N2, and the demolition of some of the frontage, passers-by were concerned about the fate of the old Holy Trinity School building that makes up much of the site.

However, consent had been given to demolish only the parts of the complex built later than the original school buildings designed by local architect and designer Anthony Salvin.

Pioneer school

Opened in East End Road in 1847, Holy Trinity School was the first industrial school in England and was funded by the National Society and donations of money and land from the Bishop of London and local gentry.

The building was divided into infants, girls and boys schools (their entrance signs are still visible from the road) with cottages for the Master and Mistresses. It had a mill,

garden plots, a well and an area for looking after hens, pigs and rabbits.

'Weekly pence'

Industrial training was based on instructions set out in The Finchley Manuals (well worth an online search). The objectives of duty, discipline and cleanliness prepared children for service. Pupils also attended class lessons; 'weekly pence' was paid by parents to combat truancy, but absences were frequent for local fairs, haymaking and strawberry picking in fields nearby.

As the first wealthy subscribers left the area they were replaced by tradesmen and clerks who favoured a more

conventional education for their children. The older pupils were by now mainly concentrating on annual exams. The school received an extra payment for each successful result.

Moving on

By the turn of the century there had been many changes. Extra classrooms were built to accommodate growing numbers. The classes were mixed and the infant lessons were less formal, with 'maternal chastisement' the only punishment to be administered to the younger children.

The school log book tells of life during the war years. Inspection of gas masks, evacuation of school groups and long periods spent in air raid shelters are recorded. Happier events such as the annual Empire Day song and dance displays and centenary celebrations are fondly recalled by ex-pupils.

The school moved 250m to its present-day Eagans Close site in 1974 where it was opened by Finchley MP Margaret Thatcher.

With thanks to Cherrell Avery, taken from her 1997 documentary produced to celebrate the school's 150th anniversary.

Drivers of worst polluting vehicles must cough up

By David Melsome

Owners of the worst-polluting vehicles won't be able to drive them around East Finchley in two years' time without paying a daily charge of at least £12.50 as the capital's new Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) expands all the way out to the North Circular.

There was a flurry of publicity last month when the ULEZ was introduced to the area of central London already covered by the congestion charge. Motorists most likely to have to pay the charge are those with petrol vehicles registered before 2005 and diesel vehicles registered before 2015. From October 2021, the daily charge currently standing at £12.50 will apply to anyone who uses such vehicles anywhere within the area between the North and South Circular roads. That, of course, means all of N2. By today's count, around 2.5 million drivers across the capital would be eligible to pay. The ULEZ charge applies 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and there is a fine of up to £160 for failing to pay.

While many welcome this attempt to clean up London's air quality, there are concerns that those least able to afford a new vehicle will be most heavily penalised. Glen Gray, who recently retired from running a garage right next to the underpass of the North Circular in Long Lane, N2, said small businesses would be hit hard. "There are a lot of small companies and one-man-bands who drive diesel vans and they're going to find it very hard to afford a new vehicle, particularly as their current one will have hardly any re-sale value," he said.

You can check immediately if your vehicle is liable to the ULEZ charge by going to tfl.gov.uk and searching for 'ULEZ vehicle checker'.

East Finchley's claim on England captain

By Diana Cormack

England is hosting the Cricket World Cup at the end of this month, with Eoin Morgan expected to be the country's captain and hopefully lead his squad to victory.

A couple of unknowns there, but one thing for sure and not particularly well known is that Eoin used to live in East Finchley. Not only that, he lived in a house owned by a member of *The Archer* team!



Although he was born in Ireland in 1986 and played for them at international level, from the age of 16 he used to come over to train at The Middlesex Academy in East End Road, N2.

For the following five years whenever he was in London he lodged at a house in nearby Hamilton Road, opposite Bishop Douglass School. It was owned by the late Pam Kent, *Archer* proof reader and stalwart supporter, who every month sorted nearly 10,000 papers into rounds for distribution.

Eoin made the full-time move to England in 2009 to gain greater scope in the cricketing world and the rest is history.



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Dental practice takes over from doctor's surgery

By Diana Cormack

A new dental practice has opened in the building once occupied by the Cherry Tree GP surgery, which was, controversially to some, closed down two years ago following a Care Quality Commission inspection.

The site in Southern Road, N2, is being given a new lease of life under the care of Dr Ashok Reddy as a smart dental centre housing The Finchley Dentist.

With qualifications from Liverpool University, the Royal College of Surgeons and The University of Manchester, Dr Reddy started his dental career in Liverpool in 2005 and moved to London less than two years ago.

He is enthusiastic about his

profession (he specialises in root canal work) and told *The Archer*: "Going to dental school was the best thing ever."

Dr Reddy's initial plans are to have two, then eventually three surgeries there, with dental nurse Imola Dobos managing the non-NHS practice, which opened in mid-April. Full details can be found at www.thefinchleydentist.com and by telephone on 020 3488 0335.



Dr Ashok Reddy (right) with assistant Imola Dobos. Photo Mike Coles

No inquiry into Barnet's library services

By John Lawrence

A request by library users for the Culture Secretary to order an inquiry into the state of library services in Barnet has been turned down.

Jeremy Wright responded to campaigners who wanted him to hold Barnet Council to account for a decline in user numbers and for, they say, making libraries difficult to access, particularly for young people.

The Culture Secretary gave a detailed response to their request, criticising the way the council implemented some of its changes over the last two years, but ultimately concluding that the council was not failing in its legal obligations "to provide an efficient and comprehensive library service".

Disappointed members of Save Barnet Libraries (SBL) said they now had no choice but to watch closely the independent review of library provision that Barnet Council is planning to commission soon. The group's Emily Burnham said: "The paltry fact-finding exercise carried out by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport is immediately noticeable. Clearly the Minister is happy to rely on whatever the council has told him, while ignoring alternative and substantial evidence provided by library users, teachers and schools."

Barnet Council's own figures show that six out of fourteen libraries in the borough have suffered falls in visitors of between 41% and 59%, says SBL. It says the system of electronic entry by PIN number is excluding young people.



Pick a card: Muriel Bouvier with her handy maths revision system. Photo Mike Coles

Muriel takes the misery out of maths

By Ruth Anders

How many people look forward to maths lessons? Not many I'd guess, but hypnotherapist and maths tutor Muriel Bouvier is changing all that, combining both skills to help her students approach maths GCSE in a happier way.

With an engaging manner and winning smile, Muriel encourages her students to realise that some maths problems can be "disappointingly easy", adding that "a teenager's brain is completely unfinished, and a false sense of ineptitude can easily take root in a young mind. So much is down to a student's confidence, and mistakes are an essential part of the learning process."

Before leaving her native France to study for a PhD in neuroscience at UCL, Muriel taught maths as a teenager to earn pocket money. She now coaches students to build their confidence and offer different methods to solve problems.

Keep calm and self-test

Muriel, who lives in Shakespeare Gardens, N2, has

designed a set of 216 double sided cards that provide students with a means of testing themselves through revision, using colour coding to provide answers.

By using the cards, which are suitable for Years 9 to 11, students quickly ascertain the areas needing their further attention. She also uses coloured pens as neuro-linguistic programming tools to help dispel the panic many feel when they enter the exam room.

"When students go into panic mode", says Muriel, "they have no access to what they've learned. Finding speedy ways to calm down is critical."

Win a set of Muriel's cards

Knowledge of the cards can

be used to tackle a wide range of questions, like the one below for younger readers of *The Archer* to solve. The sender of the first correct answer will receive a free set of cards, value £20.

I have four rectangular pieces of paper of length 25cm each. I stick the four pieces together using the 1.5cm sticky ends (both ends), to make a circular loop.

What is the radius of the loop (assuming the loop is a perfect circle)? Give your answer to two decimal places and show your working. Remember the unit.

Email your answer to info@BetterAtMaths.com by Wednesday 15 May. The winner will be picked at random from all correct entries and the answer will appear in the June edition of *The Archer*.

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YOUNG ARCHER

Adolf the tortoise rises - for his 100th summer?

By Carey Miller

Spring is here again and providing the usual stress for me and my family. Adolf, our beloved but very tricky tortoise may, or may not, wake up. This happens every year.

Adolf out-dates us all. In 1941, during the Second World War, he (or is it she?) was found shell-shocked in a crater in the garden next door to where we live now in Woodside Avenue, to the south of Cherry Tree Wood. This was as a result of a parachute mine being dropped there.

As far as we know, no one died (including the tortoise) but the house and garden were destroyed and not rebuilt until

on several occasions.

He lost part of his shell after foolishly trying to hibernate in a bonfire, been found encased in a block of frozen earth during a harsh winter, and has escaped and run away on several occasions. Adolf always got found and brought back home again to Woodside Avenue, and has been adored by our eight grandchildren even though one of them managed to drop him.

As he must be approaching



Survivor: Adolf the tortoise has come out of hibernation and is contemplating a dandelion lunch. Photo Mike Coles

some years later. The family who lived in our house then took Adolf in and looked after him until they retired.

Knowing nothing of this we bought the house and moved into it with our family. We were introduced to Adolf, and agreed to adopt him. Since then and 40 years on, he has cheated death

about 90 years old and could be approaching 100, we now put him in a special box in our garage to hibernate in. We always worry if he is alive and ready to come out and return to the garden where he enjoys his favourite food of green beans and dandelions. Every year we keep our fingers crossed!



Out in the woods: Children enjoying some learning in the fresh air. Photo waowcio.org

Where the wild things are

By Ann Bronkhorst

You follow a path that curves round the edge of a little orchard, its fruit trees in blossom. Nearby there's a pond alive with tadpoles and newts. Ahead, a small wood holds a hidden clearing which, when you reach it, seems like every child's dream den.

Perhaps you recognise this place? In the grounds of Martin School, close to East Finchley allotments, this once neglected strip of woodland has become the setting for open-air learning and fun.

For several years an organisation called Wild About Our Woods has been based at the school, developing a Forest School programme. Here, too, their woodland holiday clubs for local children have been running last summer, last October and this Easter, with backing from Grange Big Local and the John Lyons charity.

A special place

After one of the Easter holiday sessions, Janine Young from Wild About Our Woods showed

me round the site. Striking features are the huge parachute stretched above the meeting area, the safely-designed central fire pit, and the logs for seating. There are signs of the children's activities: rope ladders, some delicious fresh pineapple in lime syrup they'd cooked, but the site doesn't look a mess. It's clear that the impact on nature is minimal and the gains enormous.

Many London children are distanced from the natural world and even from being outdoors. Janine, a calm friendly woman with children of her own, has noticed how some are nervous at first and reluctant to get 'dirty'. Accepting the weather, handling natural materials, noticing and

learning about plants and creatures and sharing food together bring rich benefits.

Forest School

More schools are running or enabling clubs of this kind, often managing to do so 'in house' as part of the curriculum after special training for the teachers. There's quite a variety of provision, however, as the term Forest School is sometimes loosely applied.

For information about the Forest School movement, its philosophy and development, visit www.forestschoollassociation.org and for Janine Young's work in North London go to www.waowcio.org and www.wildaboutourwoods.yahoo.com.

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Parent power raises £132,000 for library

The Archer Academy will start building its new library in July after award-winning local children's author Anne-Marie Conway presented headteacher Lucy Harrison with a cheque for £4,400.

Anne-Marie handed over the proceeds from sales of her latest book, *Unicorn Girl*, at the school's end-of-term assembly on Friday 5 April, which marked the end of the school's annual LitFest week.

The donation brings the amount raised for the academy's 'Make Beaumont Brilliant' campaign to £132,000, within reach of its final target of £150,000 and already enough to start breaking ground while students are away for the summer. Construction on the site of the upper school in Beaumont Close, next to East Finchley tube station, should be completed by autumn this year.

Miss Harrison said: "I have been genuinely moved by the level of parental support this project has secured. To everyone who has contributed



Library fundraiser: Author Anne-Marie Conway presents her cheque to Archer Academy students and headteacher Lucy Harrison.

to this fundraising project, in whatever way, I am incredibly grateful and of course it means so much to me and the school that Anne-Marie has made such a generous donation."

Anne-Marie said: "I'm enormously proud that *Unicorn Girl* has raised so much money." *Unicorn Girl* is her seventh book. It is aimed at 9-12 year

olds and tells the story of Ariella, who discovers a unicorn at the bottom of her garden, just as she is facing personal issues such as school bullying and the illness of her baby brother.

Donations to the Archer Academy's 'Make Beaumont Brilliant' library and resource fund are still welcome at <https://tinyurl.com/archermbb>.



Gardeners get ready to open up secret spaces

By David Melsome

Gardeners across north London are preparing to open their precious spaces to the public this spring and summer to raise funds for charities supported by the National Gardens Scheme.

The season starts on Sunday 2 June when Ruth Kersley opens her garden at 66 Abbots Gardens, N2, from 2pm to 5.30pm, featuring home-made teas and her own works in glass and mosaic. Entry is £4, children free. Next comes Susan Bennett and Earl Hyde opening their garden at 5 St Regis Close, Alexandra Park Road, N10 on Sunday 16 June from 2pm to 6pm, featuring their oriental tea house, carp pond and a plant sale. Again entry is £4, children free. Susan and Earl moved into

their terraced house in 1966 and have opened their garden to visitors since 1996. "The more we enjoyed it, the more we wanted to share it," said Susan. "The benefits gardening has contributed to our well-being are manifest. It is officially acknowledged that even being in a garden enhances one's health."

The National Gardens Scheme has raised millions in support of caring and medical charities including Macmillan and Marie Curie nurses.



Teas up: Marie Curie nurse Kathleen Walsh and TV gardener Charlie Dimmock support the National Garden Scheme.

Friend to the community

John Hajdu, chairman of the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association for the last 17 years, has received a commendation for his work with the Metropolitan Police.



Long service: John Hajdu receives his award from Borough Commander Helen Millichap.

Supt Nigel Brookes described his "tremendous support for the Metropolitan Police and the community in Haringey", which includes leading the Fortis Green Ward Panel for ten years and being the first non-police chair of the Independent Advisory Group to the Borough Commander. Mr Hajdu, whose career was in the hotel industry, has also served

as a magistrate. He received his commendation from the present Haringey Borough Commander Helen Millichap.

Welcome to Probus!

Convivial Probus Lunch Club with talks for semi- or fully-retired PROfessional & BUSiness men and women on third Wednesday each month at Stephens House East End Road N3. Next meeting 15 May **Dr Georgina Meakin**, Centre for the Forensic Sciences at UCL, discusses the use of DNA sampling in forensic casework in criminal and familial investigations.

Reduced sub for new members. Contact Eric (8449 0566).



Recording artists: Brian and Deanna at the mixing desk in BonaFideStudio. Photo Mike Coles

A quiet place to make a big noise

By John Lawrence

Underneath the arches in Muswell Hill a family-run recording studio is quietly nurturing the pop, rock and classical stars of the future. And, despite the fickle nature of the music industry, this month it celebrates its 20th birthday. BonaFideStudio started life in Shoreditch in 1999 where some of the biggest names in the charts came through its doors; the likes of The Prodigy, Kings of Leon, Tinie Tempah and One Direction.

Seven years ago, founders Deanna and Brian Bogdanovic decided to move their studio to two units underneath the Parkland Walk in St James's Lane, N10, to be closer to the community where they still live and to connect with up-and-coming local talent. Their fully-equipped recording studio and rehearsal spaces are now used by East Finchley Festival favourites Sound of the Suburb, Muswell Hill band Swan Kings and Crouch End rockers Unholy Joe, and many other groups and orchestras of

all musical styles.

Helping young bands evolve

Deanna told *The Archer*: "This whole part of north London is blessed with creative people. The pace of life is different here to what it used to be in Shoreditch. It's more relaxed and we enjoy getting involved creatively. What's kept us on our toes for 20 years is the flow of artists who come in and want to try new things."

"That's one of the best parts of running the studio, helping these bands to make the best of

themselves. We had four lads in the other day, about 16-years-old, and they were so eager to learn and absorb everything. After years in the industry, it's easy to get cynical and calculating in what you do, but their absolute love for music was so pure that it was a joy to see."

BonaFideStudio has many irons in the musical fire. Deanna and Brian provide sound engineering workshops and music tuition, and the studio is involved with sound production for shows at Alexandra Palace and for West End musicals.

Community choir shows what it can do

By Diana Cormack

Families and friends gathered in the music room at the Archer Academy in East Finchley on Tuesday 26 March to listen to first concert of the year from The Archer Community Choir.

Choir members consisting of parents and teachers from the secondary school and local residents treated their audience to a performance of the songs learnt this term. Among the favourites were *A Little Respect*, *Take Me Home Country Roads* and *Happy Together*, all accompanied by teacher Alice Humphrey on the piano. Drinks, nibbles and chat were enjoyed afterwards and some stalwarts carried the celebrations on to the pub.

The choir meets on Tuesdays from 7pm to 9pm at the academy's lower school site in Stanley Road, N2. The new term runs from 30 April to 9

July with a half term break on 28 May. For further details

email archercommunitychoir@gmail.com.

Seventy years for art society

Members, friends and local art societies gathered at St Mary's Hall in Finchley Central on Monday 8 April to enjoy an evening of art, wine and food celebrating the 70th anniversary of Finchley Art Society.

The society runs painting

groups, along with workshops, outings and an annual exhibition.

To mark its 70th year there are several special events planned including an exhibition at arts depot in North Finchley throughout May. Find out more at www.finchleyartsociety.org.uk.

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- **1-2-1 boxing and Pilates** training with Martin Carroll at home or private studio, call 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.
- **Tennis group lessons** for adult beginners and intermediates, weekends, Park Road, N8. Contact Maz on tennisgift@gmail.com.
- **This Mum Runs**: Free social runs in East Finchley and Muswell Hill, Sunday 8am and Wednesday 7.30pm. Contact trishy.dixon@gmail.com.
- **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: archercommunitychoir1@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.
- **Jazz Club** at the Bohemia, North Finchley. Call 020 7998 6217 or 07957 347411 for more information
- **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** friendsofcherrytreewood.home.blog 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.

Get your walking shoes on for the Suburb's Proms

Tickets for Hampstead Garden Suburb's summer music and literary festival Proms at St Jude's are now on sale in support of welfare and advice charity Toynbee Hall and the North London Hospice.



Heritage walk: A tour guide leads a group through the Suburb. Photo David White.

Running from 22 to 30 June, the music Festival will comprise five free lunchtime concerts, events specially for children and nine evening concerts, including Nevill Holt Opera performing *Così Fan Tutte*, world-renowned vocal group The King's Singers, and Fascinating Aida member Liza Pulman singing Barbra Streisand.



Author and commentator: Alan Rusbridger. Photo Greg James

and treasure hunt on Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 June. The walks will cover a range of interesting topics including the local architecture, past residents, history and landscape.

On Saturday 29 June, there will be late-night stand-up comedy with Athena Kugblenu, Zahra Barri and Jim Daly. See the full festival line up and buy at www.promsatstjudes.org.uk.

The LitFest on Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 June will comprise eight conversations with top authors, including political commentator Steve Richards, local constitutional expert Vernon Bogdanor, psychoanalyst and former cricketer Mike Brearley, and former editor-in-chief of *The Guardian*, Alan Rusbridger.

Nine guided walks will take place, mainly in the Hampstead Garden Suburb and Golders Green area. There will also be a self-guided walk



Put 'em up: Comedian Josh Howie will speak at Eden Primary.

Pick a fruit from the tree of knowledge

One of our primary schools runs an annual event where friends and neighbours can teach and learn from each other, sharing ideas, knowledge and skills in talks and practical workshops.

Speakers at the Eden Primary Tree of Knowledge are a mixture of parents and local residents, and they cover a wide variety of subjects from current affairs, culture and politics.

Over four Wednesday evenings this June the programme includes a talk on Nazi war criminals in the UK, an orchestra conducting workshop, how to put comedy into public speaking with Josh Howie, an illustrated history of the London Underground with David Leboff, Brexit with Lord Andrew Adonis and a screening of the documentary *We Are British Jews* followed by a Q&A with its maker Lucie Kon.

Other events include Lawrence Bloom, the secretary general of the Be Earth Foundation, talking about the environment and global sustainability, award-winning metal artist Adi

Toch talking about her work, and East Finchley author Adam Blain on his book about living with a brain tumour, *Grin and Pear It*.

There will be two children-focused sessions about anxieties at primary school and supporting kids in the modern world, plus mindfulness for busy people, a decluttering workshop and cake decorating.

Tree of Knowledge events take place on Wednesdays 5, 12, 19 and 26 June from 8pm to 10pm at Eden Primary in Creighton Avenue, N10. Tickets at £7.50 a session, including refreshments, are available in advance only by searching 'Tree of Knowledge' at www.edenprimary.org.uk. All events are for adults only. Money raised will provide equipment for the school.



Metal vessels: The work of Adi Toch

What's On...

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

Saturday 11 May

• **Finchley Chamber Choir presents An American Evening** at Trinity Church, Nether Street, North Finchley, N12 7NN, 7.30pm; including Copland, Thompson, Ives, Tippett and Whitacre. Tickets: £15, £13 concessions, £6 under-18s, available on door, or in advance at www.fcchoir.co.uk.

Sunday 12 May

• **The Stone of Free Speech**, a green spaces walk from Finchley to Parliament Hill; meet outside East Finchley tube station at 11.45am for 12 noon start; total distance 4.3 miles with lunch stop; £4 per person; further details from Mike Gee on 020 8346 5503 or email mikegee1968@gmail.com

Sunday 12 May

Free music concert at East Finchley Methodist Church, High Road, N2, opposite

Creighton Avenue, 7.30pm; *Music for a While*, Ayumi Toyama (piano), Junko Ishigaki (violin), Ryusuke Koarashi (guitar) and Viola da Cunha (mezzo soprano) perform works by Beethoven, Purcell, Satie and Stravinsky. Free entry with a collection in aid of Noah's Ark Children's Hospice. This venue is fully accessible.

Saturday 18 May

• **Finchley Symphony Orchestra** under guest conductor Tom Hammond present a concert of classical greats at Trinity Church, Nether Street, N12 7NN, 7.30pm, including Brahms' popular 'St Anthony' variations and Beethoven's Symphony No.8. Save £2 a ticket by advance booking at www.finchleysymphony.org/concerts.

Sunday 19 May

• **Jazz** at the Bohemia, 7.30pm; Lauren

Bush, vocals, Gunther Kurmayr, piano, Matt Miles, bass, plus guest vocalists Peter Matthews, Ailsa Chamley and Lisa Feldman. The Bohemia, 762-764 High Road, N12 9QH.

Monday 20 May

• **1960s Film Club** presents *The Servant*, the highly acclaimed dramatic film written by Harold Pinter, directed by Joseph Losey and starring Dirk Bogarde, James Fox, Sarah Miles and Wendy Craig; 7.15pm at Friern Barnet Community Library, Friern Barnet Road, N11 3DS. Admission on night by £3 donation.

Saturday 25 May

Muswell Hill Indoor car boot sale, 10am-1pm, Hornsey Parish Church Hall, Cranley Gardens, N10 3AH; admission 50p, refreshments available. More information from 020 8368 8180 or 07708152354.

Sunday 26 May

• **Ramblers Association** walk along the course of the River Moselle ending at Lordship Rec, total 4 miles. Meet at Queen's Wood Café, N10 3JP, for 11am start. Bring a packed lunch. More details from leaders Chris Barker and Joyce Rosser (020 8347 7684 or 07951 905 493).

Until Friday 31 May

• **Finchley Art Society 70th anniversary** exhibition; selection of paintings by the society's artists on first-floor gallery wall of artsdepot, North Finchley. Free entry.

Sunday 2 June

• **Private garden open** in aid of National Gardens Scheme; 66 Abbots Gardens, N2, 2pm-5.30pm, admission £4, children free. Home-made teas available. Featuring owner Ruth Kersley's glass and mosaics.



Letters



Busy junction: Pedestrians need help crossing The Bishops Avenue

Another accident waiting to happen

Dear Editor,

Following on from the letter in the April edition "We need another crossing" written as a result of the very sad death of a woman crossing the High Road, I agree that there should be further zebra crossings along the High Road to make it safer but I must also raise the question of the junction of The Bishops Avenue and the Great North Road, which is another accident waiting to happen.

We residents in the flats on the Great North Road have been writing to Barnet Council for well over a year now pleading for something to be done at this junction and I am sure we are not the only ones. Barnet Council say they are "obtaining traffic data" and "investigating the options of providing traffic signals"... still! I don't know what is taking so long. One only has to stand at this busy junction (for pedestrians and vehicles) to try to cross The Bishops Avenue and it is easy to see how horrendously dangerous it is to do so as there is traffic coming from three directions at all times. It seems obvious that a three-way traffic signal incorporating a safe pedestrian crossing is the answer.

Do we have to wait until, God forbid, there is another fatality for Barnet Council to act? Please, Barnet, sort this out now.

Yours faithfully
Kate Barnett,
Great North Road, N2.

Dangerous crossing

Dear Editor,

Will it take the death of another pedestrian (The Archer, April 2019) before the council installs a similar and much-needed pedestrian refuge on The Bishops Avenue close to the junction with the Great North Road?

People take their lives in their hands every time they try to cross The Bishops Avenue to get to and from East Finchley station or the shops in the High Road. They have to contend with vehicles coming along The Bishops Avenue as well as those turning either left or right into it from the Great North Road. It is especially difficult for the elderly, the infirm and people with young children to cross safely.

I have seen several near misses at this busy junction in recent years and would ask that our local councillors put pressure on Barnet Council to install a central refuge there as soon as possible. It would be a quick and relatively inexpensive solution to a serious problem. Letters I have sent to the

council on the subject have met with a negative response.

Yours faithfully,
Stephen Barry
Great North Road, N2.

Editor's note: The Archer contacted Barnet Council to ask how their traffic survey and plans to address calls for a safer passage across The Bishops Avenue (first reported in The Archer in February 2018) were progressing. This was their response: "We are monitoring traffic in this area to determine the best way to improve safety at the junction of Bishops Avenue and High Road. One option being considered is the introduction of a new controlled crossing with traffic signals."

"Transport for London have been engaged to investigate the feasibility of this. Haringey Council will be included in discussions, and residents and businesses will be consulted before any final decision is made."

Trees must be managed

Dear Editor,

Regarding the letter about trees ('Tree tragedy', The Archer, April 2019) I was furious to read this. The tree shown cut down in the photo is by no means an ancient tree. It's only been growing 20 or 30 years since I moved onto the Grange.

Trees planted too near buildings, that grow too big and obscure daylight are a problem all over London, and a huge financial burden for councils.

I'm utterly miserable all summer because I have hardly any daylight in my flat. It is already dingy because of small windows; in addition, a giant tree obscures the light all summer, when trees are in leaf.

For anyone who is old or ill, housebound, this is positively life destroying, causing depression due to lack of daylight, like living in a dungeon.

I am sickened that the tree that was cut down is not the one that is in front of my window. Why, oh why, can they not plant trees that do not grow so big, like fruit trees, which would be of some use to us and give us fruit we could pick?

Yours faithfully,
A Grange resident.
(Name and address supplied).

Bin and gone

Dear Editor,

The recycling bins outside East Finchley station were removed a year or two ago. More recently some fixed black cylinder street bins have also been dismantled (one half-demolished relic is in Fairlawn Avenue near the High Road).

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

As a responsible dog owner who always picks up his detritus, I am unwilling to carry a plastic bag (with excrement) miles seeking a municipal bin. In Twyford Avenue, on the Barnet Council side, there were previously metal oblong shaped receptacles on metal stands for dog waste. They were removed (though the stakes remained).

Significantly, in Hampstead Garden Suburb (a Tory ward) this has not occurred. Could it be that not only cost-cutting but political factors are in play? And, other than canine 'squat ins' outside the town hall in Hendon, are there any other sensible suggestions for getting the bins restored?

Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied.

I'll sort out Brexit for you

Dear Editor,

I believe that the last three years have been frittered away by those who led the campaign to leave the EU and those who believe that their duty is to support this process in the name of democracy.

Now is the time for new leadership. I have a long history of working in British film and TV comedy and for many European television channels. More importantly, I have never been involved with politics. Consequently I am putting myself forward as the ideal candidate to take on the negotiations with the European Union with the intention of finding a way through the present chaos or holding a second referendum.

I have asked our MP Mike Freer if he has the opportunity to please pass on my offer to Mrs May. She will probably realise my suitability for this role if told that I worked on *The Benny Hill Show* many years ago, so consequently understand her negotiating strategy.

As a resident of East Finchley for nearly 30 years I understand the value of the EU to Londoners and the country and hope the community will support me in my efforts to break this deadlock.

Yours faithfully,
Chris Welch,
Durham Road, N2.

Let baby birds live

Dear Editor,

Could I make a request for your cat owning readers to consider nesting wild birds that entrust East Finchley with their new nests this season, please? Many neighbours seem to possess multiple cats, some of which are dedicated stalkers. If cats are kept indoors during daylight hours or if they are kitted out with bell collars so that they can be heard before they pounce, at least that gives the delicate new fledglings a moment or two's breathing space. Thanks for taking care of our communal and shared habitat.

Yours faithfully,
Paul Thompson,
Address supplied.



Team spirit: The N2CC boys.

Anyone for cricket?

North Two Cricket Club (N2CC) is getting in practice for the new season and is putting out an invitation for new players to come along and join the team. The club plays friendlies in and around north London from May to September and the fixtures are usually very sociable. Guests are also welcome to play, with an afternoon's match fee of £10. More information can be found at www.n2cc.co.uk.

Old Finchleians

Old Finchleians Cricket Club is also opening its arms to new members. The club, which has a recently refurbished clubhouse in Southover, Woodside Park, N12, runs two Saturday competitive sides playing in the Hertfordshire league, a Sunday friendly side, and also play occasional mid-week T20 games in and around the local area throughout the playing season from April to October. For more information, call Ben Howard on 07947 497214.

Any reader who feels strongly about any matter is invited to use this "Soapbox" column.

Please note that opinions expressed are those of the writer alone.



Up the junction

By Alex Wheeler

There seems to be a lack of clarity about how to behave when driving through the main crossroads where the High Road meets Fortis Green and East End Road in the centre of East Finchley. Here are some suggestions for those currently lacking the knowledge of how to join in properly.

Within 100 metres of the lights, you should be looking for a way to cut up the other drivers. If you see any sort of gap ahead, just try and drive into it. Your bravery and prowess will be rewarded with a fanfare of hooting and beeping. This is the other drivers expressing their admiration and, let's face it, envy. You are amazing.

Once at the lights, if you find any of the people you cut up are jealous and angry at your success, this is your chance to wind down your window and, using a very loud voice, tell them to go forth and multiply. Advanced level work can include leaving your vehicle and banging on their roof like a chimp at a safari park.

Of course, if you haven't been lucky enough to find yourself in an altercation, you don't need to feel left out. Why not make a phone call using your vehicle's hands-free kit and turn up the volume so loud that everyone around can hear one half of your confidential work conversation? Don't forget to beep every few minutes so everyone knows you're still fantastic.

As the lights go green, it's your chance to shine. Just drive anywhere you want. Indicators are just to throw people off your trail. Popular moves on the High Road near The Bald Faced Stag include cutting across from the left lane into the right in an attempt to turn into Fortis Green. Or why not use this as a chance to slow down to almost a stop and really get that choir of car horns singing?

I hope that from reading this everyone can see that there are so many ways to enjoy our tricky crossroads in your car. Make sure you really get your day off to a flying start by threatening violence against someone taking their children to school or using language that would melt paint towards someone driving completely normally and safely.

Good luck and I can't wait to hear you all beeping and screaming at the lights soon!

Your news

Send your stories, letters, and photos to the-archer@lineone.net or by post to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE. Find us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram @TheArcherN2. You can view our online archive at www.the-archer.co.uk

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Model village: An aerial view of Hampstead Garden Suburb taken from the Raymond Lowe Collection showing the planned street layout with St Jude's Church in the heart of the community.

Suburb on postcards

The latest collection to arrive online at the Hampstead Garden Suburb Virtual Museum is the extensive *Raymond Lowe Collection* of picture postcards, telling the story of the Suburb's development from its very beginnings and giving views of its buildings and street layout.

The collection also traces the history of one particular extended family of early residents and their neighbours and friends, some of whose descendants still live in north London today. Raymond was an avid collector, who enjoyed searching through boxes at postcard fairs for Suburb scenes over many years. He mounted and annotated them in several large albums, the contents of which have now been painstakingly scanned into the Virtual Museum.

As with the museum's moving *First World War Collection*, Raymond's postcards also depict the repercussions of world events and little local ones as they affected the life and people of Hampstead Garden Suburb from 1907 onwards. You can find them in the 'Collections' section and explore the rest of the museum at www.hgsheritage.org.uk.

Moving play tells story of young men of Bomber Command

By Diana Cormack

When Bob Baldwin read his father's log book covering his years as a wireless operator on Lancaster bomber aircraft in the Second World War, he was inspired to write a play.

With Max Kinnings he has created *Wireless Operator*, which reveals the harsh reality of life in Bomber Command, where the odds of survival were the worst in the armed forces and the average age of death was 23.

Heavy toll

Britain's carpet bombing of German cities has long been criticised, particularly for the huge number of civilian lives lost. However, over 55,000 British aircrew died in the ser-

vice of their country and it took until 2012 for them to be given national recognition when the Bomber Command Memorial



Airman: Playwright Bob Baldwin's father J.J. Baldwin

was unveiled in London.

Families and survivors welcomed the Memorial but some still felt aggrieved that, unlike other war veterans, no campaign medal was awarded in recognition of their services, just the offer of applying for a clasp.

Few of the airmen who came home were willing or able to speak fully about their terrifying experiences but it is now becoming clear that a great many of them suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder for the rest of their lives. Bob's own father, a joiner by trade and a pacifist by instinct, was only 21 when he flew his first mission.

Edinburgh and beyond

Co-producing his moving one-man play and hoping to premiere it at this year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe is actor-producer Hilary Townley, known locally for her stalwart work organising East Finchley's Community and Christmas festivals and the installation of a permanent Christmas tree on the High Road.

Wireless Operator explores the unspoken stories of how hard it was to live or grow up with a Bomber Command survivor's sufferings in the wake of the war. Hilary and the production team are appealing for financial support to help take the play to Edinburgh. Visit www.wirelessoperator.co.uk to make a donation and to find more information.

The play is already raising much interest, including from Rolls-Royce, who produced the Lancaster's distinctive-sounding Merlin engines, and from the International Bomber Command Centre in Lincoln which is very keen to collect more stories from the families of aircrew.



Aiming for Edinburgh: Co-producers Hilary Townley and Stephen Graham. Photo Mike Coles.



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