

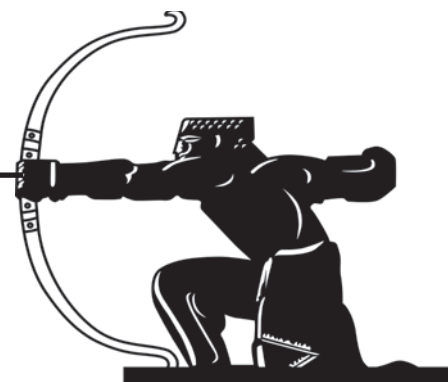


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The Archer

Local News is our Aim



December 2020 No. 320

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Changes for bus and cycle lanes

By John Lawrence

Barnet Council is planning changes to the new bus and cycle lane layouts that were installed in East Finchley in October following a flood of complaints about their impact on traffic congestion and parking.

Huge queues have built up frequently on the northbound approach to the High Road and Fortis Green junction after vehicles other than buses and bicycles were restricted to one lane, and in both directions on the A1000 bridge over the North Circular where there are also lane reductions.

Barnet Council told The Archer that its officers were looking at adjustments to the 'experimental' road layout in these areas. "Minor alterations may also be made to the design on the approaches to these junctions, to further reduce congestion," said a spokesman. However, the scheme is here

to stay, certainly for the next 18 months. "We are conducting a long-term review and monitoring of the impact of the temporary bus and cycle lanes including uptake, traffic flow, commute times and air pollution along the routes. It will take some time to collect and review the data. We expect to decide on their future during the 18-month experimental period," said the spokesman. Some have welcomed the new lanes for giving cyclists safer spaces while others have pointed out that the lanes are not continuous, forcing cyclists to move in and out of the traffic flow.

Continued on page 4.



Season's greetings: Everyone on The Archer team wishes a happy festive season to all our readers, deliverers and advertisers. We thank you for your tremendous support throughout this difficult year and it is our heartfelt hope that 2021 will bring brighter times for us all. Enjoy celebrating with family and friends if you can and please remember to share some Christmas joy with anyone who may be spending the season on their own. Our Christmas card has been designed by Mike Coles.

Films make way for food at Phoenix

By Ruth Anders

The food share project being run by a group of local chefs and volunteers from East Finchley Neighbourhood Support group (The Archer, November 2020) is taking off after the Phoenix Cinema stepped in to become a distribution point for families in need.

Chef Giuseppe Sollo, co-chef Viola Slodzinska and nutritionist Vincenzo Napoleano are leading the team seeking to help families who may go hungry, particularly if children are not receiving school meals over the holiday period.

The link-up with the Phoenix came after a recent online meeting of business and community network N2United where Alison Roberts of East Finchley Neighbourhood Support group appealed for empty High Road premises from which to supply meals.



Sharing chef: Giuseppe Sollo

The Phoenix lost no time in getting the ball rolling and, from 15 December, it will operate as


a pick-up point for the meals and food packages being cooked up by the culinary team. Local schools will promote the service and families in N2 will benefit.

Giuseppe said: "We're very grateful to the Phoenix! Our food will be nutritious and tasty, and we want recipient families to take part in shaping the menus, telling us what they like and how we can improve."

You can make donations to support this project by going to www.gofundme.com and searching for 'East Finchley Neighbourhood Support'.



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The Archer

PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE

www.the-archer.co.uk Email: news@the-archer.co.uk

[f](#) [t](#) [@](#) [TheArcherN2](#)

Voicemail (messages only) 0800 612 0748 for editorial and general enquiries or 0800 612 4027 for Advertising enquiries only

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Copy Editor John Lawrence	Sub Editors Ann Bronkhorst Jeff Robson Lucy Moorman	Distribution Toni Morgan Jane & David Marsh
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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 – **January:** 11 December; **February:** 15 January; **March:** 12 February

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Benefits	0800 882200	Cruse Bereavement Care	0808 8081677	National Blood Centre	0845 7 711 7711
Haringey Council	020 8489 0000	EF Advice Service	0300 4568365		
Recycling & refuse	020 88857700	Lone Parent Centre	020 3828 4834	Crime	
Benefits	020 8489 2800	Missing Persons Helpline	116 000	Emergency	999
		National Debt Line	0808 156 7718	Police non-emergency	101
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East Finchley Library	020 8359 3815	Refuge Crisis Helpline	0808 2000 247		
Everyman, Muswell Hill	0872 436 9060	Relate Helpline	0300 100 1234	Hospitals	
Garden Suburb Library	020 8458 3301	RSPCA	0300 1234 999	NHS	111
Muswell Hill Library	020 8489 8773	Samaritans	116 123	Barnet General	08451 114000
Phoenix Cinema	020 8444 6789	SENDIASS Barnet	020 8359 7637	Edgware General	020 8952 2381
Vue, North Finchley	0345 3084620	SENDIASS Haringey	020 3667 5233	Finchley Memorial	020 8349 7500
				Oak Lane Clinic	020 8346 9343
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TfL	0343 222 1234	Carers' Line	0808 808 7777	Independent Age	0800 319 6789
Thameslink	0345 026 4700	Drinkline	0800 917 8282	Age UK	0800 169 2081

Dry cleaners offer special service for NHS staff

By Diana Cormack

Since the beginning of November, Pristine Dry Cleaning run by Hemi and Krishna Pattani has been offering NHS staff free dry cleaning for their service uniforms. This generous offer applies not only to locals and Krishna told *The Archer* that ambulances have stopped outside his shop to drop off paramedic garments.

He will even collect and deliver such clothing locally with special bags to put it in and wearing full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This laundry is kept in a segregated area to prevent cross-contamination and is cleaned using hospital grade detergents.

Long-term offer

When asked for how long the offer would last, Krishna answered "at least 12 months". He is very keen for people to let their families, friends and



colleagues know about it and feels the work is not infringing on his time because he is free once the garments are in the machine.

Expression of gratitude

Krishna expressed his admiration for the NHS and explained that it is gratitude for the treatment they have given his mother, who is in her nineties, which has inspired his kind offer. Should you want to make use of it, visit the shop at 9 Viceroy Parade, N2, or call 020 8883 0427.

The lights go on in Lincoln Road

By Hilary Townley

Residents of one street in East Finchley have pulled a collective cracker and are determined to prove that there's nothing like a twinkly Christmas. Yes, people in Lincoln Road are rising to the festive challenge, dusting down the decorations and plugging in the lights.

They aim to send a defiantly decorative message to blow away the winter blues by decorating all their front gardens or windows with sparkling lighting. It should make quite a spectacle if they manage to link up all the way along both sides of the road.



Hilary Townley's lights on Lincoln Road

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

17 Baronsmere Road, N2

Single-storey rear infill extension, following demolition of existing rear extension. Roof extension, involving rear dormer with Juliet balcony to main roof and outrigger, and two front rooflights. Replacement of front and rear windows. New front boundary gate. New cycle and refuse storage.

20 Beresford Road, N2

Roof extension, including one front rooflight and one side/rear dormer with Juliet balcony.

99 Brim Hill, N2

Double glazed steel windows to replace original windows. Replacement of original doors.

201 Creighton Avenue, N2

Rear outbuilding.

First Floor Flat, 42 Fortis Green, N2

Retention of roof terrace with boundary enclosures, and proposed addition of fixed planters.

9 Gurney Drive, N2

Extension and conversion of existing garage to form habitable space, including raising roof height. New side window and French doors to rear.

12 - 18 High Road, N2

Submission for required planning conditions, involving levels, external materials, refuse/recycling store, wheelchair access, enclosure, hard and soft landscaping, drainage strategy, cycle and storage

facilities, privacy screens and balustrades, access and access roads, parking layout.

52 Leicester Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension.

37 Lyttelton Road, N2

Bespoke wooden gate and pergola.

27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37 New Trinity Road, N2

Change of use of each property from single family dwelling (Class C3) to four bedroom house in multiple occupation (HMO) (Class

C4) for 4 people.

9 Park Hall Road, N2

Roof extension, involving L-shape rear dormer window, two front rooflights and three new rear window openings.

Flat 12, St Pancras Court, High Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

21 Sylvester Road, N2

Single-storey side extension. Roof extension, involving two rear dormer windows and three front rooflights.

Haringey Council

9 Beech Drive, N2

Part single, part two-storey, full-width rear extension. Rear roof dormer extension. Part single, part two-storey side extension, forward of existing side garage. Front, rear and side roof lights. Replacement and alterations to windows.

196 Creighton Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension: depth 5.10m, maximum height 3m, eaves height 3m.

Park meeting open to all

The next Friends of Cherry Tree Wood AGM will be held via Zoom at 7pm-8pm on Tuesday 12 January, 2021. The meeting is open to everyone, whether you wish to get involved or simply come along and hear what is going on in the wood. If you wish to attend please email the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood for further details at friendsofcherrytreewood@gmail.com

East Finchley Baptist Church

Please join us for our Christmas services

Sunday 20 December

Family Carol Service 10.30 am

Carols by Candlelight 6.00 pm

Friday 25 December

Christmas Morning Service 10.30 am

For more information please contact the Church Office

Email: office@eastfinchleybc.org.uk

www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk



Police appeal after attack on schoolgirl

Police are appealing for information following the attempted rape of a 15-year-old schoolgirl in East Finchley. Officers would also like to trace a passer-by who disturbed the attack and led the victim to safety.

At around 5.30pm on Wednesday 7 October a 15-year-old girl was walking home from school. As she approached an alleyway off The Causeway, N2, she noticed

slim build and wearing sports trousers. He was carrying a blue bag and may have been on his way to or from a gym.

The suspects are described as black males, aged in

the mid-to-late teens and wearing black school trousers. The first suspect is of slim build, with black plaits in his hair, approx. 5ft 11ins tall and wearing a navy blue



Scene of the attack. The Causeway

three males who were smoking. The males followed her before grabbing her and holding her against a wall. One of the males sexually assaulted her and then pulled his trousers down. At this point, the attackers were disturbed by a man and they ran off down the alleyway.

Passer-by saught

The man walked the girl to East Finchley station where he saw her onto a bus. Police need to speak to him as he could hold vital information to help identify those involved. He is described as a white man, aged approximately 40, of

Nike coat. The second is of slim build, with black wavy hair, approx. 5ft 7ins tall and wearing a black Nike coat. The third is of chubby build, with dark curly hair, approx. 5ft 7ins tall and wearing a black Nike coat.

PC Mary Fenton of the North West Safeguarding Team said: "I would like to reassure the community that these types of incidents are extremely rare and my team and I are working on all lines of enquiry to identify those responsible."

"In this incident, thankfully a passer-by intervened, stopping the attack, and I would ask him to come forward and speak to police. He could hold crucial information that could assist us."

Anyone that can assist police in this investigation is asked to call 101 or tweet @MetCC and quote CAD6007/9Oct. Alternatively, contact the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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A splash of colour: Posters by N2United and East Finchley Open Artists brighten up the outside of The Phoenix Cinema. Photo: Alison Roberts

Spotlight on unique local traders

By Diana Cormack.

'Everyone invited, everyone united' reflects the aim of N2United which, over the past four years, has developed into an inclusive group providing a voice for all East Finchley organisations, groups, shops and businesses.

As always and particularly during these pandemic times, promoting the latter has been a leading aim, giving support not only to traders visible on main roads but also to those tucked away on our side streets or working from home.

With Christmas rapidly approaching, N2United has launched a campaign intended to stimulate trade by publicising a range of unique products and services. Visit N2united.co.uk/

N2unique or #N2Unique to find locally sourced gifts which may well suit your seasonal present buying needs.

Shop local, shop N2Unique

N2United will continue to showcase the unique aspect of East Finchley traders and businesses, keeping the community informed and interested in what is available for them within their own area.

At a recent N2United meeting, representatives from the

Phoenix Cinema appealed to members to fill the empty poster space outside the cinema. East Finchley Open Artists were only too happy to oblige, producing a selection of prints, pictured above, from their "High Road" exhibition, depicting familiar local scenes and faces, to complement N2United's #N2unique campaign. You might recognise some of the traders, photographed by The Archer's very own Mike Coles.

How this furry trio had us hooked

By Ian Clarke

Last year, The Archer printed an interview with Abi McEwan, the RSPCA Finchley branch animal welfare officer, appealing for foster families for rescued cats and kittens.

The idea was for locals, who wouldn't usually have time to look after cats, to help out. We'd never had a cat, but after some suitability checks, Ferdi arrived for six weeks, completely transforming Christmas. Unsurprisingly as a cute, curious kitten he was quickly adopted and moved to his 'fur-ever' home, but we were left hooked.

Next came terrified Tara, rescued from her bin-scavenging life, who took weeks to emerge from under the sofa. Slowly she gained confidence and when lockdown came we couldn't bear to be parted so Tara formally adopted us! Nine months later, she still hides on bin day but has taken over our lives in such a positive way that it's hard to imagine being without her.

Most recently Smudge, an adorable underfed feral kitten, came for a few weeks of cuddles and feeding up before embarking on his new life. Tara didn't like sharing her humans at first, but she coped.



Three times lucky: Ferdi, Tara and Smudge have all been fostered.

Local cats need help

The RSPCA is often short of space, with many cats needing temporary homes to provide love and care before adoption. I've also volunteered as a driver, providing feline taxi services between fantastic foster families and the cattery, vet and animal hospital. It's very rewarding.

Perhaps you could help too, by volunteering as a fosterer or driver, or donating to the

Finchley Branch Amazon wish list. It's tough for charities right now, especially with the High Road shop closed during lockdown. The RSPCA do such a great job but there are many more local cats who need help. Ferdi, Tara and Smudge would say thank you if they could.

Contact Abi McEwan at awo@rspcafinchley.org.uk and find the RSPCA Finchley wishlist at www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/2M87MFNBOP498.



Cycle and bus lanes:



The cyclists' view

From the Barnet Cyclists group

Many cyclists and would-be cyclists have complained that main roads in Barnet feel unsafe and they are reluctant to use them. Since the 1980s, Barnet Cyclists have campaigned for the council to provide a safer environment for cyclists, pedestrians and children.

Despite some valiant attempts, and much consultation, almost all have come to nothing. The new cycle lane scheme in East Finchley is modest, but at least it is a start.

It is bound to be opposed by some people, but there are tremendous advantages for all, in encouraging those who can cycle to do so safely. The experience of lockdown showed us all what it was like when there was a reduction in road traffic. The environment was quieter, less polluted and more pleasant.

We have all come to appreciate being in the open air and have had

to learn to reduce the distances we travel. Many of us have had to think about our lifestyle and how we can get more exercise and live more sustainably.

The Government and Barnet Council, to their credit, have responded by fast forwarding some green initiatives including encouraging cycling in Barnet. It will be great to see people of all ages enjoying these new facilities. Why not encourage the introduction of more schemes by responding positively to Barnet Council and help them to make Barnet a better place to live.



The traders' view

As told to The Archer and business network N2United

As we reported last month, the removal of all parking spaces on the southbound side of the High Road has already had a negative impact on the local shops and businesses, especially at a time when they are experiencing extremely difficult trading conditions due to the pandemic.

One shopkeeper told us: "We recognise the value of getting people more active by promoting cycling but it also affects other sections of the community."

Now a few weeks into the scheme, the full effects are being felt by residents and shop owners trying to take deliveries on the High Road where a designated loading bay has been removed. Traders say they need to be able rely on deliveries of stock and supplies so this seems to them another problem born out of a seeming lack of planning or co-ordination.

The general feeling of many

shops and restaurants is that the introduction of the bus and cycle lanes and removal of parking spaces has made them almost inaccessible to everyone except for those in the immediate vicinity. Those from outside N2 who might be tempted to shop, eat or drink in East Finchley won't do so if they can't park.

In general, traders don't oppose a safe cycle route in the area but they seriously question the execution of the current scheme. The intermittent nature of the cycle lanes make them seem pointless, but at huge cost.

Changes ahead for 'experimental' bus and cycle lanes

Continued from front page

Many shopkeepers and restaurant owners are dismayed at the removal of parking spaces along the High Road, which they say deters shoppers and diners at an already-difficult time for trade during the pandemic.

When The Archer asked how these traders could be helped, the council told us: "We will work closely with businesses

based along the routes and are taking measures to prevent their trade in the long-term from being affected. We also expect the scheme will also open up new commercial opportunities for shops and traders." It did not specify the measures or the opportunities.

The council spokesman added that the traffic congestion was a short-term issue for

commuters and the borough was looking at long-term sustainable ways to keep people moving.

Feedback is being welcomed and the East Finchley scheme will be monitored for an 18-month period. To submit your comments to Barnet Council, email traffic.consultations@barnet.gov.uk or write to Traffic and Development, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale NW9 4EW. Include the reference: A1000 phase 1.



Hot stuff: Ramadan Guzelas behind the counter

Twenty years behind the fryers at Poseidon

There have been some developments since we printed our last story about Poseidon fish restaurant in November's edition. The high street favourite does not have new ownership as previously printed and is in fact staying in the hands of the family who have owned it since 2015.

We are pleased to say chef Ramadan Guzelas, who has been behind the fryers at Poseidon for more than 20 years, continues to look after all the customers on the takeaway side and the team has plenty of positive plans to see it through the pandemic. The owners hope to be able to re-open the eat-in restaurant area as soon as government regulations allow.

Ramadan, who has a formidable reputation for making his own tartare sauce, said: "We're so grateful that we still have lots of regular customers supporting us and we can continue to supply our customers' needs during the pandemic. People like to know they're getting the same quality each time they come in." Whilst

fish is brought in fresh daily from Billingsgate Market, and with a tweak of the takeaway menu to add more variety, the restaurant will be introducing new and exciting fresh pies, to cater for both meat lovers and vegans/vegetarians. Roast chicken has also been added to the menu, with Ramadan's own secret recipe.

For those with allergies or special dietary requirements the restaurant offers a gluten-free batter, or matzo meal. The restaurant has also seen a growing demand for takeaway grilled fish and salads, allowing for a healthier takeaway option.

Poseidon's new phone number for orders is 0203 638 9171.

Join the team at Grange Big Local

Local community project Grange Big Local is on the lookout for new board members to help shape their agenda for the next few years. They've been given a lottery grant of £1million to make a positive difference to the local area and want fellow residents to help decide where that money goes.

You don't need any qualifications or specific experience, just enthusiasm and a drive to make East Finchley an even better place for everyone to live. Anyone is welcome to join, but they would especially love to hear from young people, ethnic minority communities, or those with financial or legal backgrounds.

If you're interested or want to hear more, get in touch with them at info@grangebiglocal.org or call on 020 3857 9492 ext 0237.

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Primary school learns lessons from the pandemic

By Ruth Anders

A primary school head teacher has told how her staff have met the tough challenge of protecting children's education and welfare during a year of turmoil and lockdown.

Only in post since September 2019, Ziz Chater, the school's inspirational head teacher, told *The Archer* that after partial closure in March, the school remained open for children considered vulnerable and children of key workers. The usual cohort of 700 students diminished to just 60 a day.

Ziz said: "Our staff have been amazing despite worries at home. Many were teaching at school alongside setting things up for their own kids to learn at home. Teachers got the hang of the Google Classroom remote learning program very quickly, and utilised that throughout lockdown."

theme. We also contacted all the children on a regular basis so that they still felt part of the school community."

Now the children are all back at school, though limited to their own class bubble. The school has planned a Catch-Up strategy for children who need specific interventions, and three full time teachers are devoted to it.

Martin Primary's Forest School attached to the playing field has proved immensely popular and has given children the chance to work together away from the classroom. It's an impressive area full of opportunities for classmates



Tough year: Martin School Head Teacher Ziz Chater

Contact and catch-up

At the beginning of June, the children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 were welcomed back and the school reopened for all in September.

Students' mental health and happiness have been the school's highest priorities. "Without structure and vital social interaction, some really suffered," said Ziz. "In June we ran a Hope Week with lots of online activities around that

to initiate their own projects, build camps and even work in the 'Mud Kitchen'.

Happiness pays forward

Despite another lockdown in November and uncertainty possibly going on into the New Year, the whole school is ready for any challenge. Ziz said: "It can't be measured, but happy children mean happy homes, which in turn lead to a happy community as a whole."

Nursery children celebrate Black History Month

During October children at the Monkey Puzzle Nursery in East Finchley celebrated Black History Month by learning to count in different African dialects such as Somali and Igabo.

The youngest were kept busy making carnival style headbands, as well as having a go at some African drumming. Pre-schoolers looked at stories such as *Handa's Surprise* and explored all the exotic fruits featured in the book that grow in Afro-Caribbean countries. They also learnt about icons such as Josephine Baker, a famous entertainer and civil rights activist.



A musical life: Sara Medina. Photo Mike Coles

Born under a lucky star

By Daphne Chamberlain

Sara Medina, local pianist and piano teacher, believes she was born under a lucky star. It must have been shining over Harrow, though the family moved to East Finchley when she was a child, just before the Second World War.

When her great-niece asked to know about her life, the spring lockdown seemed an ideal time to tell her. Assisted by her friend Frances George, who managed the production, she wrote a short autobiography.

It's very readable, and benefits from something started by her father. He kept a scrapbook recording her life in music, which she carried on. So we can see reproductions of photos, reviews, programmes, and even a list of studio instructions she must have picked up during an early television appearance.

Sara may have been lucky, but she was also very determined. "I knew I would never be a great pianist, but I would achieve as much as I was capable of", she says.

Aged seven, she won a challenge cup in the North London Musical Festival. This was the start of many years

involvement with the Festival, where she eventually became a prominent committee member and head of the piano section.

At the Royal College of Music, she won a competition to play in front of Princess Elizabeth, the future Queen. At 15, she also started teaching. Her first pupil came when the family's postman, who had heard her practising, rang the doorbell to ask if she would teach his daughter. They are still in touch.

At the same age, she joined her mother in the BBC Choral Society (now called the BBC Symphony Chorus). She was a member for over 50 years. She says: "I realise there were four things that dominated most of my life; playing, teaching, the North London Music Festival and the BBC Symphony Chorus."

Her musical life took in numerous concerts and recitals,

radio and television performances, the opening of the 1948 Olympic Games at Wembley, many last nights of the Proms, the Festival Hall, the Barbican, the Albert Hall, and European tours.

"Now here I am, looking back over a long life, knowing that I took the right road, that I had a career I enjoyed (and still do), am thankful for a lovely family and good friends, and the blessing of 50 years of a very happy marriage," she says.

Sara's book is dedicated to the memory of her beloved husband, Jo Joughin. Proceeds and donations will go to the Alzheimer's Society (www.alzheimers.org.uk). Please contact Sara on 020 8883 2082 or at S.Joughin@icloud.com.



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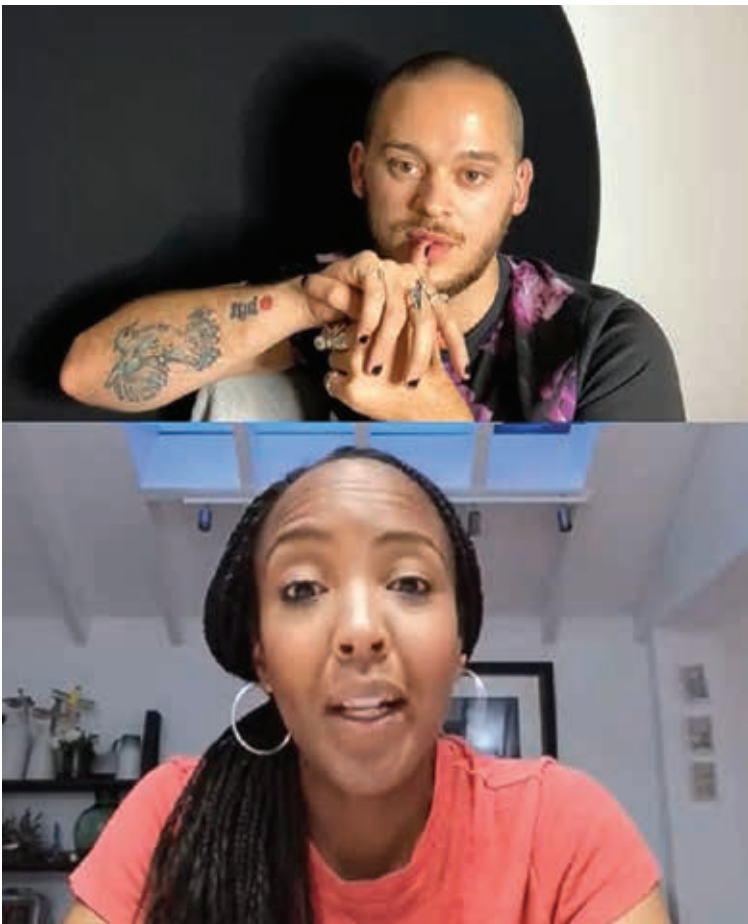
The spirit of Christmas past... and future!

Those were the days! Carol singers mingle with mulled wine drinkers as the East Finchley Christmas tree is lit up outside Budgens in the High Road 12 months ago and the London Metropolitan Brass Band belts out some festive favourites to the happy crowd at the East Finchley Winter Festival in 2014. Happy memories indeed of our community coming together in these photos by Mike Coles. They look like another world, another time, with not a protective mask in sight. We all know this year won't be quite the same but these joyful gatherings WILL return. Until they do, stay safe and well.

Jac turns on the chat

By David Melsome

Choreographer Jac Coxall is still honing his skills despite not being able to appear on stage much this year. The young dancer has turned presenter by hosting a weekly chat show with his celebrity mates. Jac, who we featured early in the year when he switched his career to serving behind the tills in Budgens in East Finchley, is on Instagram every Friday at 8pm talking to someone famous.



Nighttime natter: Jac Coxall chats online to TV presenter Angellica Bell.

His guests have included *EastEnders* favourite Charlie Brooks, Atomic Kitten's Natasha Hamilton, children's TV presenter Angellica Bell, *Gangs of London* actor Aled Ap Stefan, and Kimberly Wyatt, from the Pussycat Dolls.

Jac said: "My aim is to show people a side that the media doesn't always show, the ups and downs of the industry, how people got into the industry and advice that they'd give to people wanting to venture into it."

"No week is the same. I let the chat flow and go off how the guest is answering the questions. It's amazing how they really open up and bare all. Each guest has been completely authentic showing their true self."

As well as being a way of connecting during the pandemic, Jac hopes his one-man chat show will help him develop his presenting skills. Watch episodes of *Lockdown After Dark* on Instagram @jacjaccox

Spicing up the local shelves

By Ellie Franklin

"I take a bottle of tabasco to the pizza restaurant in my handbag, embarrassingly for my husband," says Dominique Woolf. It's a sign of the passion for sauces that's led her to set up her own food business.

Dominique has Thai roots and it was her aunts who ignited her love for food, which she went on to explore at Leith's School of Food and Wine in west London.

After experimenting with other products, she decided to create her own sauces as they're crucial to how she eats. The Woolf's Kitchen launched in June with three unique sauces: Tamarind Ketchup, Hot + Sour, and Jalapeño + Lime, all to be found on shelves in East Finchley and Muswell Hill.

Competition finalist

Just four months after launching, Dominique made it to the final three of Enterprise Nation's 'Female Start-Up of the Year' competition. She says positive things are happening as a result and she now has a range of nut products launching this month. Asked about the future of her business she said: "It's tough owning a restaurant at the best of times but nothing's off the cards."

Lockdown setbacks

Dominique, who is based in Crouch End, experienced a series of setbacks throughout lockdown including a lack of childcare for her three young children, an inability to sample products due to social distancing restrictions, and an initial launch date which would have seen the wrong branding put out on shelves.

The market has also changed due to Covid-19 as shoppers are spending less time browsing, meaning new products may be missed.



Tasty creations: Dominique Woolf with her new range of sauces.

Advice for new brands

Dominique has had to learn quickly and is happy to share her advice with other start-ups. "Firstly, research your market and become an absolute expert in it. Network like crazy. LinkedIn is my networking tool, alongside Facebook with local community groups," she says.

"Test the market if you can. There's also an element of just going for it. Procrastination

kills many more businesses before they've even started. And finally, start local. People support local businesses, which can give you the courage and motivation to expand upon that support."

The Woolf's Kitchen sauces can be found in Budgens in East Finchley as well as shops in Muswell Hill and Crouch End. Details at: thewoolfskitchen.com/saucy-shop

Cracking Christmas jokes

Save money on Christmas crackers by shouting 'Bang!' and telling one of these terrible jokes.

What's the difference between the ordinary alphabet and the Christmas alphabet?

The Christmas alphabet has no L.

Which Christmas carol do parents prefer?

Silent Night.

Why does Father Christmas have three

gardens?

So he can hoe, hoe, hoe.

What do you call people who are afraid of Father Christmas?

Claus-trophobic.

What song do monkeys sing at Christmas?

Jungle Bells.

Which of Santa's reindeer has bad manners?

Rude-olph.



We've had enough, say residents of Prospect Ring

By Janet Maitland

Residents living in the two tower blocks in Prospect Ring are growing increasingly angry at the sheer volume of building work being done right outside and inside their homes.

"What used to be a nice, quiet place to live has become a noisy, dirty, hell-hole," said leaseholder Dermott Donnelly. "Many Prospect Ring residents have had enough, including me," said leaseholder Maureen Antoinette. "If someone legal out there hears our cry it would be amazing."

Barnet Homes began building another tower block between the existing blocks two years ago and it is still unfinished. A few months into the new build, the two neighbouring blocks were shrouded in scaffolding while the roofs and lifts were repaired.

invited us to a show flat, where all the sprinkler pipework has been boxed in, the residents have not changed their minds, not least because they have not been invited to see the flat themselves.

They are being disturbed, however, by the noise of the system being installed, which takes five days per flat and will be completed in April 2021. "It is absolutely horrendous," said Mr Donnelly. "You can't hear the radio, the TV or even read."

"If only the council had spent the same effort consulting with residents as it has with making sure that the press are

provided with a point of view," said another leaseholder.

One resident, who is "still an objector at heart", has agreed to the works as he and his partner decided that "at our advanced ages we would just accept it in our wider interest".

More disruption due

Just before we went to press, residents heard yet more scaffolding is coming. Cadent plan a 14-week replacement of the gas risers

over the winter. "The work only affects 22 homes," said a spokesperson for Barnet Homes. "The scaffolding will be up for eight weeks and no properties' windows will be directly obstructed. We appreciate these works may cause disruption, but they are being carried out to ensure residents' continued safety."

The sprinkler saga

Soon after, following a fire risk assessment, Barnet Homes announced a plan to install sprinklers and smoke alarms in every flat, which many residents thought was unnecessary, unsightly and intrusive.

Despite seeing photographs taken by *The Archer* in November when Barnet Homes



Work in progress on the new sprinkler system being installed at Prospect Ring. Photo Mike Coles

Recipe: mincemeat ice cream

This grown-up ice cream is a seasonal treat but is tasty at any time of year. You can adjust the ingredients according to your taste and the number and size of portions required.

Ingredients:

1 1/2 pints/850 ml of best vanilla ice cream
1 lb/ 500 g mincemeat
2 tablespoons of rum or alcohol of your choice.

Method:

Mix together the mincemeat and rum.
Thaw the ice cream.
Beat the mincemeat mixture into the thawed ice-cream.
Re-freeze until needed.



Birds of a feather: Writer Louisa Green and illustrator Dee Mclean with Wallace and Mrs Newbie and their family on the water at Hampstead. Photo Caroline Egen

The love story that's taken wing

By Hilary Townley

If there was ever a story to lift the spirits in these troubled times it's the lockdown love story of two swans on Hampstead Heath. Making national news earlier in the year, their extraordinary story has now inspired a book.

There's Something About Wallace is co-written by Dee Mclean, a well-known local illustrator, and Louisa Green, an East Finchley resident and a scientist working at the Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead.

It tells the true story of how widowed Mute swan Mrs Newbie, resident of Hampstead Heath, unexpectedly found love during a brief stay at the Swan Sanctuary in Shepperton, south-west London.

Wallace was a single swan and the minute they met it was clear that they were destined for each other. An unusual snap decision by the sanctuary brought them both back to the Heath, where love flourished and you can now see Wallace and Mrs Newbie happily nurturing their growing brood on



Love at first sight: Wallace and Mrs Newbie share their affection. Photo Louisa Green.

the Highgate Number 1 Pond, south of the men's bathing pond.

Global response

The book has only just been published and the reaction has

been explosive. A BBC News online article about it became the second most viewed story after the US election on the weekend that saw Joe Biden take the presidency.

Initially the writers hoped the book would raise enough money to buy a rescue kayak but they reached their goal in only a few days and have extended their print run to cover the overwhelming demand.

Radio interviews, more newspaper features and interest in this charming and informative book is growing around the world. Schools are thrilled by the book; its positive message full of love is a counterpoint to everything children have had to cope with over the last few months. For more information visit www.deemclean.co.uk.

Festive spirit in historic setting

Stephens House and Gardens in East End Road, N3, is hosting three events this month to get the Christmas spirit flowing.

On Saturday 12 December, visitors can take a walk through the gardens lit up with winter lights and warm up afterwards with mulled wine, hot chocolate or something else from the café. The event runs from 5.30pm to 7.30pm and tickets cost £4.50 per person. Booking is essential at www.tickettailor.com/events/stephenshouseandgardens/425278 (ignore hyphens).

Then on Sunday 13 December and Sunday 20 December there will be Christmas Lunch in the historic setting of Stephens House, all decorated for

the festive season. Lunch runs from 12noon to 3pm and again booking is essential by calling 020 8346 7812, option 1. Find the menu online at www.stephenshouseandgardens.com/events

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YOUNG ARCHER



Pile 'em high: Students bring their food donations along on the Community Day.

Buckets of packets and tins pour in

Students and staff at the Archer Academy in East Finchley supported two good causes at their recent Community Day. The school collected donations for Finchley Foodbank, which gives vital food packages to individuals and families in need, and also raised funds for the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust, which helps young people and campaigns against inequality. Cathy Halstead, a Governor at the Academy, said: "Staff and students were delighted to make a hefty contribution to both causes."

Christmas code breaker

Solve these clues and then use the first letter from each answer to find the hidden message. Answers are below.

1. This has spiky leaves and red berries.
2. They sang to the shepherds.
3. Presents are wrapped in this.
4. The tree where a partridge was.
5. The old name for Christmas time.
6. Special hymns for this time of year.
7. Something to wear from a cracker.
8. This reindeer had a shiny nose.
9. There was no room here for Mary and Joseph.
10. This goes inside the turkey
11. Queen Victoria's husband brought this German Christmas custom to Britain.
12. We kiss under this.
13. Open this calendar daily in December.
14. Hang this up to hold your presents.

Christmas code breaker answers:
1. Holly, 2. Angels, 3. Paper, 4. Pear, 5. Yule tide, 6. Carols, 7. Hat, 8. Rudolph, 9. Inn, 10. Stuffing, 11. Tree, 12. Mistletoe, 13. Advent, 14. Stocking. Hidden message: Happy Christmas.

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Mice and men find a way to live together at Buckingham Palace

By Diana Cormack

Eighty-seven year old William Barrell left this country over 60 years ago but recently wrote a children's book featuring the Queen's home. He describes *The Mice Invade Buckingham Palace* as 'a story of how mice, who were chased out of their ancestral parkland when Buckingham Palace was erected, plan an invasion to reclaim their ancestral land, sneaking back in a few at a time and disrupting the household, even the kitchen cat. An agreement is finally worked out and the mice are granted by the Queen a section of the royal gardens. The agreement is signed by the Queen, the Prime Minister and Prince William.'

William Barrell sent Queen Elizabeth a copy to read to her great grandchildren and was delighted to receive a thank-you letter which he proudly displayed on East Finchley Community Facebook. Money raised from book sales will go towards educating his grandchildren Oliver 10 and Ruby 12. One provided the names and the other drawings of the mice.

Local boy goes west

The idea for the story dates back to World War 2 when William was evacuated to Scotland at the age of ten and came across Robbie Burns' poem 'Ode to a Mouse'.

William experienced the traumas of the Second World War when he lived in the High



Royal tails: William's book

Road and went to Manorside School. Leaving school at 14, he later served two years in the

RAF, then in 1954 emigrated to the USA. Here he eventually found his niche when at 24 he began learning to paint, becoming a successful artist (www.billbarrell.com)

For all the family

William wrote the book to show his grandchildren how an idea can come to be. He says: "This is not just a children's book. Adults who read it to their children may be a little enlightened too. It has social issues."

Published this autumn by Barnes and Noble, the book has been reviewed in many newspapers and translated into several languages. It could be a good one to read after the Queen's speech this Christmas.



Live and in person: Pauline Quirke Academy students in class before lockdown hit.

The show must go online

By Ellie Franklin

In common with most schools, The Pauline Quirke Academy has had an unpredictable year. The performing arts school for young people reopened in September after being shut for six months and was then forced to close again when lockdown returned last month.

However, their determination to keep the show on the road is strong, so staff and students alike have adapted to delivering and taking classes online.

The Academy, originally founded by the *Birds of a Feather* actress Pauline Quirke in 2007, runs classes in comedy and drama, musical theatre, and film and television classes for young people aged six to 18.

Unsettling times

Principal Floella Bird said the impact of lockdown on its work had been considerable. "Since Covid-19 we have lost half our students and have had to change venue location," she said. PQA moved to the Archer Academy in Eagans Close, N2, and was closed from 14 March to 19 September. After briefly

reopening, it closed again for lockdown 2.0.

Before the pandemic hit, PQA were working towards putting on a production of *Legally Blonde The Musical* but then had to postpone it until next year. Aims to become more community-involved have also been put on hold temporarily, as performances booked for both the Muswell Hill and East Barnet Festivals couldn't take place.

Performing arts workshops

However, staff and students were quick to adapt, bringing tuition online and running what they call PQA LIVE. Big names from all over the country have given online workshops to members. Industry professionals from

West End shows such as *Sister Act*, *Hamilton*, and *The Book of Mormon* have delivered classes ranging from dance to make-up tutorials, and Pauline Quirke herself has done story-time for the younger Poppets group.

Floella says: "The performing arts industry has suffered heavily. For young people and children performing arts is really important for confidence and it's really good for mental health. I think children need that break from school and from normal life. It gives them a safe environment to be who they want to be and express themselves in both a safe and a creative way."

For more details contact Floella at floella.bird@pqacademy.com or visit www.pqacademy.com



Ana and Oliver Wood training for their marathon. Photo Mike Coles

Running for real in a virtual marathon

By Diana Cormack

Runners panting their way along pavements and through parkland have increased somewhat since the start of the coronavirus. Often these are people determined to get fit during this time, whilst others have a more specific purpose in mind.

East Finchley couple Ana and Oliver Wood fall into this category, having used time during the lockdown to train for the Virtual New York City Marathon. Their run took place on 30 October, not in The Big Apple of course but on a circuit of streets around their home in Fortis Green Avenue.

Setting off very early in the morning in order to avoid other pavement users in Annington, Lauradale and Lynmouth Roads, they completed the run in a time of 3h:45mins:42secs.

In two other virtual marathons they raised over £1,000 for cancer research, but they were not running for charity in the New York virtual. However, some neighbours who got to know about the run did post donations through their door.

Being a yoga and Pilates teacher, Ana is pretty fit, as is Oliver. Training will continue, for both are planning to do the 50k Ultra Thames Path Challenge in May 2021, hopefully this time running on location alongside the River Thames.

Festival raises £1 million for charity

Proms at St Jude's, the annual Hampstead Garden Suburb music and literary festival run by volunteers, has now raised over £1 million for charity since its foundation in 1993.

The charity, which normally puts on summer concerts in the Church of St Jude-on-the-Hill and literary events in The Henrietta Barnett School, ran an online festival this year, raising £30,000 and taking the festival's cumulative giving to more than £1 million.

"Back in 1993 I'm sure none of us guessed that we might ever reach such a staggering figure," said Proms founder Susie Gregson MBE. "What a wonderful journey of collaborative community effort it has been for the past 28 years. It's humbling to have been able to create the magic of the festival, have heaps of fun and change lives in the process."

The two main beneficiaries have been Toynbee Hall, supporting disadvantaged young people in East London, and the North London Hospice. Both Toynbee Hall and Hampstead Garden Suburb were founded

over 100 years ago by Dame Henrietta Barnett.



Staggering: Susie Gregson. Photo David White

Bringing science and medicine together for nearly 50 years

By Daphne Chamberlain

The last time Maureen Hajdu appeared in an Archer photograph, she was holding the boots in which, with her husband, John, she has walked hundreds of miles around North London (The Archer, October 2020). This time, she is holding a photo of her late father, Dr Ernest Foulkes, whose Foundation has been bringing science and medicine together since 1972.

It offers Fellowships to people who hold a PhD or equivalent degree, and who intend to take up medical research. This pays for their personal maintenance for up to three years of their medical training.

Investing in people

Maureen told us: "Our interest in them continues after their medical studies end. We keep in touch and know what they are doing. It's important that each Fellow knows the Foundation has confidence and trust in them. We invest in people, not projects, and our network is second to none."

As the branches of research cover a wide area, this means that there is knowledge available to many associated fields. "It is teamwork", Maureen says. "Acorns of knowledge can produce oaks."

Nearly 300 Fellowships have been awarded since 1975. Amongst other noteworthy achievements (honours, awards, prizes), at present over 40 professors, originally sponsored by the Foundation, are working in the UK, North America, Australia, Africa, the Far East and Israel.

Battle against Covid

Being specialists in every field of research, a number of Fellows, whether current, retired or on the brink of retirement, have helped in the fight against the virus. Their work on the front line and in the research laboratory has produced significant results.

Maureen says: "The Foundation is a family affair. The whole family is very proud of it." She herself has been a Trustee from the beginning, and is now the Chair and Registrar.

Many people in Muswell Hill and East Finchley will also know her as an active local volunteer. She has worked for 24 years for the North London Hospice, and 15 years with the Metropolitan Police, for which she received an award.

To find out more about the Foulkes Foundation, or to apply for a Fellowship, visit www.Foulkes-foundation.



Maureen Hajdu with the portrait of her father. Photo Mike Coles

RICKY SAVAGE ... "The voice of social irresponsibility"

Simply the best?

They say there are lies, damned lies and statistics. Well, statistics are numbers and numbers never lie. And that means that Lewis Hamilton must be the greatest Formula One driver of all time because the statistics say so. But is it really as simple as that?

Ever since someone came up with the idea of fitting an engine to a cart and racing it against the bloke-next-door's motorised shed, people have been arguing about who's best on the track. Once car magazines appeared there was no stopping them.

Every period has its star, but what makes a true great is something else, a sense that they can do what others can't, that they are the leader. Back in the 1950s it was Juan Manuel Fangio, who won five world championships, dominated the decade and is still rated the greatest by many. It didn't matter what he was driving because he usually won.

When he retired Stirling Moss became the man most feared, and he never won the world championship, so what does that say about statistics? Next was Jim Clark who was so quick he took your breath away. Ok, so he only won 25 Grands Prix and two championships, but in 1965 there were 10 races with your six best results to count. Clark won six of the first seven and he missed the other one because he was away winning the Indy 500. And why only two championship wins? Back then motor racing was dangerous and he was killed before he had the chance to win any more. Each era has its man. For much of the 1970s it was Niki Lauda, in the 1980s and early 1990s it was a toss-up between Ayrton Senna and Alain Prost. In the 2000s it was Michael Schumacher. With each one the numbers increased. More races in a season mean more wins. Safer cars mean fewer deaths. Although I wonder what target Lewis would have been chasing if Senna hadn't been killed in 1994.

And Lewis? He is the man of his age, more than just a driver, an icon for all the right reasons and the quickest driver out there. Anyone who complains that anyone could win in the Mercedes is missing the point. The best drivers usually end up in the best cars. Fangio, Clark, Lauda, Senna etc all did, and Lewis Hamilton is no different. Statistics have nothing to do with it; he is one of the greats.

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Packaging-free: Maxine Klein takes a doorstep refill delivery from Daniel Helman.

A week living without plastics... well, I tried

By Maxine Klein

At the last meeting of the NO2PLASTICS group I rashly said I would try to live plastic-free for a week. Spoiler alert: I failed. And as the week went by I felt more and more angry and frustrated at the amount of plastic that comes into our lives without our permission.

For example, the plant I ordered online arrived wrapped in so many layers of plastic that I could practically fill the bin, and the seedlings came in a hard-plastic container with a lid. After that, I went to the garden centre and bought my bulbs loose but subject to availability.

There is more: nail glue came in a box covered in plastic with another hard plastic box inside. A spare part for the dishwasher had so much plastic packaging that the parcel was about 20 times larger than the spare part (which was the wrong one anyway).

When I visited someone in a care home I was covered in plastic from head to foot and the person I was visiting was asleep and wouldn't wake up! So frustrating on many levels!

Food purchase

This was easier. I bought fresh fruit and vegetables locally, mostly at Tony's, taking my own bags with me. Only salad and grapes came in plastic bags so I did without. I couldn't buy yoghurt as the carton has a plastic top and I suspect the cardboard has some kind of plastic preservative. I asked the fishmonger to put my fish in my own bag, which he did.

I could live without some

things, but hummus (in a plastic pot) is one of my staple foods, so I tried making my own. The recipe called for dried, not tinned, chickpeas but they come in plastic packaging. So I went to Planet Organic in Muswell Hill which sells them loose.

Another way

Then N2REFILL sent news that Daniel Helman would be selling refills of pastas, dried fruit, chocolate, rice, cereals and nuts outside East Finchley Methodist Church that Saturday. Just what I needed. I took along a pile of old plastic containers, stocked up and was given some delicious dried apricots by his daughter and a complementary box of herbal teas. Perfect to tide me through Sober October. Not quite the same as a glass of wine but....

N2REFILL are offering a new refill-at-your-door service. I completed a simple online order form and Daniel came to my house for an easy, convenient and safe way to help reduce plastic during this pandemic. The products are all organic and very tasty and you can refill as much as you need in your containers or the brown recyclable bags they offer. If you're interested, email REFILL to N2REFILL@gmail.com

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Gift shop pops up for a sustainable seasonal sale

By Lizzie Tomlin

Artist Alex Wheeler is turning his studio off Huntingdon Road, N2, into an art gift shop in time for Christmas. He tries to make his work as up-cycled and eco-friendly as possible and runs a certified carbon-positive business.



Treats in store: Alex Wheeler's studio

Eye-catching items created by Alex, as well as by other artists and small manufacturers, will be available. The event will be managed in a Covid-safe way and, if customers prefer, they can choose items from the website and collect them from the studio instead.

Before the pandemic, Alex worked as a designer and theatre artist, designing music videos and costumes for numerous artists like Paul Weller and Kate Nash, as well as designing sets for theatre tours.

His gift shop runs at Huntingdon Works, at the High Road end of Huntingdon Road, on 5-6 December, 12-13 December and 19-20 December. There will be art, gifts, accessories and stocking fillers for sale. Updates and full details of the sale can be found at: www.wheelermadeit.com

Stand-up comedy at the Bald Faced Stag

Latest London coronavirus rules allowing, Mark Maier's Comedy Night will take place at the Bald Faced Stag, High Road, N2, on Sunday 13 December (not as printed in our last edition). Tickets are available by searching for Bald Faced Comedy on www.wegotickets.com. If you want to be added to the email list for comedy shows exclusively, please email markmaier@icloud.com.



Gift: A banner by Alex

Your right to make decisions about your care

By Daphne Chamberlain

Covid-19 pandemic has triggered issues about not resuscitating an elderly, ill or vulnerable person. There have been disturbing reports of such instructions being put on medical files without consultation; and also of the vulnerable being pressured to sign consent forms without proper discussion.

Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) is an instruction that, should the heart stop or the patient stop breathing, resuscitation should not be attempted. Following a legal decision in 2014, and under current NHS guidelines, patients must be consulted beforehand as to whether they agree to this. If they are not capable of making this decision, next of kin/legal guardian, family or carers should be consulted.

The charity Age UK has stated: "Whether or not to sign a DNA-CPR form is an individual's decision, and they have a right to make that decision without feeling pressurised."

We have also heard of some older people being called on the phone out of the blue by their GP surgeries, being asked if they would agree to DNR, and/or ambulance paramedics not attempting cardio-pulmonary resuscitation if they are having

a heart attack.

The majority of patients and practitioners have thankfully not been involved in these very distressing incidents, but it has become clear that we need better advance communication.

Advance Decisions and Statements

Anyone can draw up an Advance Decision, registering their wish to refuse medical treatment, even if life is at risk as a result. It must be in writing, signed and witnessed. It is legally binding, but will only be used if the patient can't make or communicate a decision at the time.

It should be discussed with a healthcare professional who knows your medical history. Your GP and medical team must know, so they can include it in your notes. Written copies should be given to your loved

ones and carers.

It should be reviewed regularly, and can be changed at any time. Changes must be communicated, dated and signed. It's best to seek legal advice about setting up an Advance Decision.

You can also make an Advance Statement, which is not legally binding. This gives your preferences about how and where you would like to be cared for.

Helpful reading matter

Guides called 'Thinking About End of Life' and 'Advanced Decisions and Living Wills' can be downloaded from www.ageuk.org.uk. Printed copies can be ordered by calling 0800 678 1602, 8am – 6pm, 365 days of the year. Support and specialist advice are available on the same phone line.



Picking up a new thread

By Lizzie Tomlin

Costumier Celia Grenville has set up her own online embroidery shop, selling everything from Christmas tree decorations to home décor, and even personalised napkins.

When her work was put on hold with the start of lockdown in March, Celia says that she “needed something to do to keep my spirits high”.

She began by drawing on her experience of working in fashion houses, London theatres and TV and film to make 36 sets of protective scrubs for Barnet Gen-



Sew festive: Celia Grenville at work. Photo Mike Coles

eral Hospital, in addition to fund-raising over £500.

Next, she began making clothes out of recycled fabric,

and started to stitch surprise embroidery projects as gifts for her theatre colleagues, to help “spread a little joy”.

From there, she began to embroider more and more for herself and, as many people who have turned to creative outlets during the pandemic have discovered, it turned out to be a sort of calming therapy, as well as helping her stay mentally healthy.

What began as a lockdown-hobby has blossomed into a small business. Celia says it is a wonderful thing that there has been a recent movement to support small and local businesses, which she supports 100%.

Celia updates her Etsy account and website frequently and is happy to offer bespoke and personalised creations if contacted. Find out more at www.embroiderybycelia.co.uk and www.etsy.com/uk/shop/embroiderybycelia

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.

Let's go shopping ... sustainably

By Greta Brambilla

Now that most of us are spending more time at home, I feel like it is a prime time to reflect on what we could be doing to improve, whether for the community, the environment or our wellbeing. Due to the peak of online shopping that is happening at the moment, clothing is a particular area of consideration for us all.

While we can agree it is easy to get cheap, swift deliveries from popular brands without paying too much attention to the small print, we are often disappointed with what arrives and the excess packaging that it arrives in. Not to mention this type of mass shopping can be very damaging in so many ways.

Making the switch to sustainable fashion, however, can turn this around with an internationally beneficial impact. It only takes a few simple steps to shop consciously.

First, I would advise using local charity shops to their fullest. They're convenient, for a good cause and often full of hidden gems. Boutique by Shelter, in Muswell Hill, is a particular branch that I would recommend as they tend to offer high-end pieces for reasonable prices and are kept organised for easy browsing like regular clothes shops.

Online there are certain sellers like People Tree that are both style and sustainability focused, offering clothes that are made in recycled or biodegradable materials or durable, luxurious fabrics. Even if the price tag means you cannot buy as much, think of these pieces as mini investments. Not only will they look and feel better but also last longer as well as preventing the usual wardrobe clutter.

Make every garment count rather than simply filling up space. Additionally, in trying to find new pieces, it is really important to consider the materials as much as the aesthetic. Look for all things natural, like wool (especially merino), bamboo, linen and cotton which are noticeably breathable against the skin. Try to avoid synthetics where possible such as acrylic and polyester; not only are they bad for overheating but also contribute to ocean pollution due to their use of plastic fibres.

You might also already have items that you love at home but with little issues like holes or rips, too big or too small. Rather than turning to cheap, poorly made alternatives and fast fashion replacements, don't forget there is always the possibility for repairing or revamping. Whatever your shopping habits or budgets are, make sure to give the sustainable approach a go to make a difference to both you and the planet.



Letters

Abuse of shop staff

Dear Editor,

I realise we're all living through difficult times, but in recent weeks I've been alarmed to overhear customers of shops on the High Road voicing bad-tempered or rude complaints to staff.

On several occasions I've heard people grumbling loudly about having had to queue outside a store before being served, even though this measure is completely sensible and well within current health guidelines.

The genial staff at Tony's Continental, who are responsible for its friendly, often light-hearted atmosphere, have recently had to put up with several such examples of boorish behaviour. I have also witnessed similar incidents at Budgens and Sainsbury's. And recently at the High Road Post Office, a young manager politely asked a woman to don her face mask, as per regulations, only to be greeted by a torrent of dreadful abuse from her as she stormed out.

This is terribly unfair on N2 shop workers, the vast majority of whom are hard-working and genuinely helpful. The conditions they have to impose on shoppers are aimed at keeping people as safe as possible.

Let's remind ourselves: more than 50,000 people in Britain have died from this terrible virus. We're in the worst crisis since World War II. Surely it's not too much to ask shoppers to exercise patience and restraint, and maintain some perspective.

The High Road is usually a delightful place to shop, largely due to friendly, hard-working staff who are so helpful to customers. Let's get behind them and be supportive when they're confronted by such behaviour.

**Philippa Humphreys,
Address supplied.**

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

Shops under pressure

Dear Editor,

Our small independent High Road shops are being hit by so many restrictions and charges levied by local councils and TFL that the owner of at least one of them has told me he is seriously considering closing.

They've all been badly affected by the limitations imposed as a result of the pandemic, and now increased and expanded costs relating to waste disposal, unloading and parking for customers and staff area threatening to make their businesses unviable.

And that's without the difficulties inflicted on them by the introduction of the new cycle and bus lanes. I fear our local high street is seriously at risk.

**Isobel Grant
Huntingdon Road, N2.**

Silence on the libraries

Dear Editor,

I'm wondering if there is a devilish scheme to get rid of public libraries by just not mentioning them. I assumed this second lockdown would be like the first, when all libraries were closed. I scanned all lists of who was doing what, but found no mention of them anywhere. Then a thought occurred: with schools and universities open, had 'non-essential' become 'essential'? Still no mention anywhere.

I checked with friends in other boroughs, personally and online, and as far as we know in many authorities not even library staff knew what was happening until the day before.

The decision seems to have been left to each local authority, with some closing all branches and some operating 'select and collect' at the main branches. Barnet is selecting and collecting, and offering computer use. They did have prior messages on its website and phone, but just saying that that was happening 'now', which was confusing when the lockdown hadn't even started (no mention of the lockdown as such.)

Finally, when lockdown had started, I found my first mention of libraries on the Covid-19 app on my phone. All very mysterious, and extra baffling when libraries' online services are doing so well.

**Vicky Stevenson.
Address supplied.**

Backwards walker

Dear Editor,

A couple of days after the clocks went back I got up just after dawn by mistake, drew the curtains and saw that my street was on fire. A split second later I realised it wasn't full of smoke, but a thick autumnal mist. Then a man walking backwards appeared, not even glancing behind him as he paced quickly up the street.

He was slap bang in the middle of the road and was slim, about 30 and wearing a suit, which was how I knew he wasn't someone exercising. Perhaps he's trying to replace the local man who walked backwards for years who died recently? Has anyone else seen him in East Finchley?

**Lindsay Gabriel,
Address supplied.**

All Saints' Church, Durham Road, East Finchley Church of England

At the time of going to press, public worship is currently suspended at All Saints' but you are welcome to join us for our live-streamed services via our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/allsaintsef/>

**Sunday mass at 10.00 a.m.
Weekday masses and times when the church is open for private payer are as advertised on the website.**

Details of Christmas Services will be published on our website and on Facebook as soon as they are available.

Prayer requests are gladly accepted.

**For more information, contact the Vicar, Fr Ian Chandler, on 020 8883 9315
Email: vicar.saintsabounding@gmail.com or check out our website:
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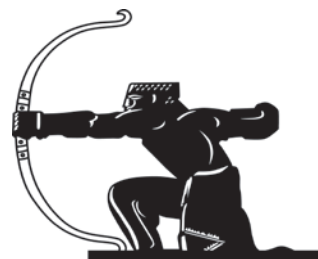
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Where in the world?

Can you find the answers to our fiendish holiday quiz? There are big (ok, modest) cash prizes to be won for anyone who can name all 12 locations in our photos. They're not easy but we can give you one big clue... they're all in East Finchley. Keep your eyes peeled when you are out and about and see if you can spot the spots.

The competition is open to readers of all ages. The first all-correct entry to be pulled from the hat will win £30, and there are second and third prizes of £20 and £10. If no one gets all 12, the prizes are still up for grabs so send us your entries however many you can name. Good luck!

How to enter

Email your answers to news@the-archer.co.uk marking your email 'Holiday Quiz', or post them to **Holiday Quiz, The Archer, PO Box 3699, N2 2DE**, remembering to include your contact details. The closing date to receive all entries is **Tuesday 12 January 2021**. Winners will be chosen at random from all email and postal entries. Answers will appear in our February 2021 edition.

Do you love N2?

Now you can show it with a new range of designs and merchandise from the team behind East Finchley Festival, available from their website, www.eastfinchleyfestival.org



TheArcheronline

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