



Busier than ever: Fishmonger Peter Barnett of A Scott & Sons. Photo Mike Coles

Fishmongers are managing to stay in the swim

By Diana Cormack

A Scott & Son Fishmongers at 94 High Road has been run by Peter Barnett and his assistant Paul Jones for almost ten years. During that decade they have kept up the reputation of the 70-year-old business, rated as one of the best in the region by *Time Out* two years ago. *The Archer* wondered what changes the coronavirus situation has made to their trading?

Peter said that they are much busier, with regular customers being joined by shoppers who have never been there before. No particular shopping pattern has emerged but it seems that those who have not shopped in a fishmongers' before do notice benefits compared with their supermarket experience.

Early riser

So where does Peter buy his fish from? "I get up at 2.40am to go to Billingsgate," he told *The Archer*. "First I visit the shop, then get to the fish market at 4am." He said that things are much quieter there now since the loss of trade from hotels,

restaurants and pubs. Some fish sellers have closed whilst others are open for only a couple of days a week. As well as sea-caught fresh fish, Peter purchases farmed fish too.

Most popular with customers are salmon (Peter's favourite), cod, sea bass and sea bream. Sometimes Peter is asked about cooking them. "You can't really go wrong with fish," he says. "If it's a novice cook I tell them to look online. There are plenty of helpful recipes there and you can always just pop it in the microwave or put prawns and suchlike on the barbecue."

Peter's patch

Over the years Peter has been a regular supporter of local school and community events and is a founder of the local business network N2United. He is on first-name terms with many of his customers and says it is a pleasure to serve the friendly people of East Finchley.

Arts Festival is latest casualty of the virus

By Daphne Chamberlain

Geoffrey Hanson, instigator and artistic director of the annual East Finchley Arts Festival, has very reluctantly announced that it will not take place this year because of Covid-19. Since 1997 the Festival has been celebrating music, art, the spoken word, drama, film and opera, with participants including local groups as well as internationally known artists.

Preparations were well under way for this year's event in the autumn. However, as we are all aware, nobody knows if or when there will be a second wave of the pandemic, or what lockdown measures are likely to be in place.

Geoffrey said: "Even if restrictions are partially lifted, it is foreseen that people will be slow to gather for fear of a resurgence of the virus. The gap will give us time to reconsider things, and plan for next year. This is all very disappointing, but I fear inevitable."

Other festivals cancelled

Organisers of the East Finchley Festival in Cherry Tree Wood announced last month that they have cancelled its scheduled date at the end of this month and the annual Proms at St Jude's music and literary festival in Hampstead Garden Suburb has moved to an online version.

Anyone wanting updates about future plans for the East Finchley Arts Festival can

send their email address to: eastfinarts@btinternet.com.

Stabbing at Ally Pally

By Janet Maitland

A teenage boy was rushed to hospital after being stabbed in Alexandra Palace park on Wednesday 27 May. Police were called to reports of two groups of youths fighting shortly before 4pm, when the park was busy with people enjoying the sunshine.

London Ambulance Service arrived quickly and an air ambulance managed to land in the park. The victim's injuries were described as not life-threatening. If you have any information, call 101 quoting reference number CAD5463/27 May or contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555111 if you want to remain anonymous.

Plea for frontline help made me scrub up my sewing skills

By George Outen

When lockdown hit I, like I suspect many other home sewing enthusiasts, reached for the sewing machine to make inroads into my fabric stash. After knocking out some floral spring linen trousers, I heard reports of NHS equipment shortages.

This included shortages of scrubs, the baggy cotton trousers and tunic tops you see worn in hospitals. Thinking I could turn my hand to making some I researched further and joined the North London team of ScrubHub, a community based network of volunteers sewing scrubs for NHS workers.

Job satisfaction

It was quite daunting to receive my first job allocation for four pairs of scrubs to be made in three days. Aware of the importance of a professional finish to ensure they are built to withstand frontline duties and multiple washes, I set to work.

It is always tricky sewing an unfamiliar pattern at speed (just watch the *Sewing Bee* on TV!) but I soon built up a rhythm of batch working. After an intensive period in front of



the machine and iron, I was delighted with the results.

It is very satisfying to be able to support the incredible efforts being made by our frontline carers. One unexpected bonus is that I have made a new friend as my previously unknown neighbour here in East Finchley is also a member of the team and I look forward to catching up with them over more leisurely dressmaking pursuits once we return to normality.

Join the team

The North London ScrubHub team has over 100 home sewers in addition to pattern cutters and those distributing finished garments to the doctors and nurses who have placed orders. You don't need sewing skills to help support the work, each set of scrubs costs about £20 and there is a donation page on www.gofundme.com. Just search for 'North London ScrubHub'.

Child/Adolescent counsellor Hannah Grossmith-Dwek BACP

I am an experienced, accredited counsellor offering support for young people and their families. Based in East Finchley

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