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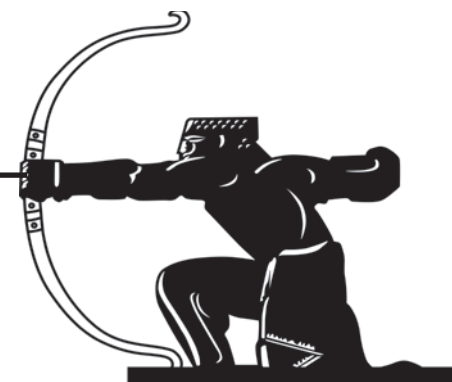
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The Archer

Local News is our Aim



June 2020 No. 314

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Sew grateful: Cassie, Zack and Vrajilal hard at work, and their finished bags being delivered to the Spring Lane care home in Fortis Green

Neighbours form a network from needles and thread

By Roshi Woodroffe Northover

Making laundry bags for NHS workers has brought together neighbours who have lived side by side but never met. Nearly 40 volunteers are now involved across East Finchley and Muswell Hill, supplying hospitals and care homes in the area.

Among them are 11-year-old Cassie, who has just started sewing, and Vrajilal, a retired tailor who learnt his trade to support his family many years ago in Bombay aged 13. Older people in self-isolation and A-level students whose exams have been cancelled have also joined in.

Other neighbours who cannot sew have cut out material or delivered the completed bags. Jessica, one of the organisers, said: "It has been great to feel there is something we can do, however small, to support underpaid care workers."

Bags of help

It all started in the middle of April when Durham Road resident Claire, a senior nurse currently supporting nurse management across North London, mentioned to her neighbour that laundry bags were needed. The bags would enable nursing

staff to take their dirty scrubs home and put them straight in the machine without infecting their families.

Within a few days a dozen volunteers from Durham Road and Huntingdon Road were sewing. Two months later with the help of friends across East Finchley and Muswell Hill, over 1,200 bags have been made for nurses at North Middlesex and Whittington hospitals and care homes across Barnet and Haringey.

Care homes have been particularly grateful as they have received many fewer donations and less public support than the better known hospitals. For these care home workers the bags are not just practical, knowing that the community is thinking of them is also a great morale boost. For information on how to get involved, email eastfinchleynhslaundrybags@gmail.com

Local shopping will save our high street

By Nick Allan

The ongoing challenge for local traders presented by the coronavirus is widespread and severe, reports N2United, the business network for East Finchley. Dozens of restaurants, dry cleaners, charity shops, hairdressers and health practitioners have been forced to close their doors and are now having to work out how they might be able to get back to business as normal.

The shops and businesses in N2 that have been able to keep trading through the lockdown, including most of our food stores and supermarkets as well as the Post Office, plus our hard-pressed pharmacies and some cafés, have been working extremely hard to serve us all.

However, for many local businesses large and small, the biggest challenge is still ahead as many look forward to how they can open their doors to customers again, if indeed they can. 'As we went to press, pubs, retailers, dentists and opticians were being told they needed

stringent health measures in place.

Hope for the future

Many East Finchley traders have been encouraged by comments from customers who have turned to shops close to home during the lockdown and tell them they've been pleased to find they stocked their favourite items and a range of new discoveries.

Habits do seem to be changing. A regular trip to or delivery from stores nearby is becoming a welcome alternative to shopping at larger supermarkets

outside our community.

N2United says there is no doubt that the continued support of local customers will be vital if we all want to see East Finchley's unique mix of independent businesses survive the pandemic and our local economy restart.

The group hopes the changes to our shopping habits will become permanent. That would make all the difference to traders, helping them avoid closure and averting the associated negative impact on our neighbourhood if they were to disappear.

Clampdown on mass gatherings

By Janet Maitland

Police took out extra powers over the Bank Holiday weekend of 22-24 May to deal with anti-social behaviour by young people gathering in large groups in East Finchley.

On the nights of 20 and 21 May, groups of 40 or more young people gathered on a communal area on the Grange Estate, a green space on New Oak Road and in the small park alongside Park Road. Residents living on Park Road complained on social media about noise, intimidating behaviour to passers-by and piles of discarded nitrous oxide containers.

Temporary dispersal orders allow police to tell someone to leave an area and not return for 48 hours.

The weekend was quiet, with no recurrence of the anti-social behaviour and the order was lifted at 4pm on Sunday 24 May.

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

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

Copy deadlines – **July:** 12 June **August:** 10 July
September: 14 August

Bid for advertising on edge of nature reserve

An advertising company is seeking permission to install a free-standing digital hoarding alongside the North Circular Road on the edge of the Glebelands Nature Reserve.

JCDcaux has submitted the proposal to erect the 6.5m x 3.5m LED sign, mounted on a single 6m metal support, on the grass verge close to where traffic joins the eastbound North Circular from the slip road next to the Vue Cinema.

Four years ago, an applica-

tion to mount an illuminated advertising sign above the North Circular on the A1000 bridge was turned down.

The proposed site for the hoarding is designated Metropolitan Open land. JCDcaux argues in its application that it does not fall within a conservation area and would not spoil the Glebelands reserve and open space beyond the tree line.

However, this view is not shared by objectors. One who got in touch with *The Archer* said a sign illuminated 24 hours a day with a back light bright enough to withstand sunlight would harm the habitants of a nature reserve.

There have also been questions over the risk of the sign distracting drivers at a point where traffic is merging from the slip road into cars often travelling at high speed on the North Circular.

The application was submitted in February with an expiry date of 29 May. No decision date has been given.

Pick up The Archer for free

Thank you to all the shops around East Finchley who have kindly stocked *The Archer* for people to pick up while our regular deliverers are temporarily confined to barracks.

Free copies can be picked up in the High Road at Amici Delicatessen, A Scott & Son, Budgens, East Finchley Supermarket, Ella Food and Wine (formerly Onur), New Local Café, Pacey's, Premier Express and Sainsbury's Local; at Long Lane Supermarket and Apiavi Store in Long Lane, and at Sparks in East End Road.

Can you help us deliver?

The Archer currently needs volunteers to deliver papers to Great North Road, Aylmer Road, Creighton Avenue, Long Lane and Prospect Ring.

Papers are brought to your house each month and these rounds typically take 30-40 minutes. Please contact us by email at news@the-archer.co.uk or by phone on 0800 612 0748. Thank you.

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Haringey Council	020 8489 0000
Recycling & refuse	020 88857700
Benefits	020 8489 2800

Leisure

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East Finchley Library	020 8359 3815
Everyman, Muswell Hill	0872 436 9060
Garden Suburb Library	020 8458 3301
Muswell Hill Library	020 8489 8773
Phoenix Cinema	020 8444 6789
Vue, North Finchley	0345 3084620

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Heathrow Airport	0844 3351801
National Express	0871 781 8181
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EF Advice Service	0300 4568365
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National Debt Line	0808 156 7718
NSPCC	0808 8005000
Rape Crisis helpline	0808 802 9999
Refuge Crisis Helpline	0808 2000 247
Relate Helpline	0300 100 1234
RSPCA	0300 1234 999
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Barnet MENCAP	020 8203 6688
Cancer Support	020 8202 2211
Carers' Line	0808 808 7777
Drinkline	0800 917 8282

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Health Info Service	0800 665544
MIND	020 8343 5700
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King or Kings?

By John Dearing
You would be forgiven for thinking that, whilst walking up the street that runs north-west from Church Lane to Elmfield Road, you have gone from one street to another. The sign at one end says "King Street" but at the other it says "Kings Street" (no apostrophe). Residents presumably have to choose which street they live in!

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

83 Durham Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension with five roof lights. Roof extension with dormer windows, French doors and Juliet balcony. Three front roof lights.

Opposite The Five Bells, 165-7 East End Road, N2

20m monopole with 12 antenna apertures, equipment cabinet and ancillary development.

253 East End Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension; depth 5m, eaves height 2.8m, maximum height 3m.

8 Elmfield Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension with rear dormer windows and two front roof lights.

44 Fortis Green, N2

Single-storey rear extension; depth 5.5m, eaves height 3.2m, maximum height 3.2m.

Haringey Council

111 Fortis Green, N2

Mansard roof extension to provide one three-bedroom apartment. Internal reconfiguration to provide two additional units. Adjustment to fenestration and access. Windows and balconies to front, rear and side.

Moped thieves caught

By Janet Maitland

Police chased a group of teenagers through the side streets and back gardens of East Finchley after they were spotted stealing mopeds. Two of them were captured and arrested.

Officers attended the High Road, N2, at about 10.30pm on Monday 4 May following reports of young people stealing mopeds from outside Domino's Pizza.

As soon as police arrived, the teenagers fled to the streets on either side of the High Road. One group was pursued by police down Beresford and Kitchener Roads, along Market Place and into Deanery Close.

The other teenagers scrambled through the back gardens of Leicester and Huntingdon Roads while a police helicopter

hovered overhead, its spotlight sweeping the ground to light up the scene.

Residents who heard the commotion took to social media to post what they could see from their windows, one reporting that there were "multiple police cars outside our flats taking pictures of two Domino's bikes".

Two of the teenagers were arrested for the theft of a motor vehicle and possession of an offensive weapon. One of the two was also arrested for possession of a class B drug. Police enquiries continue.

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Crime rates drop during lockdown

By Janet Maitland

Crime rates in East Finchley in March and April were the lowest for a year. The average monthly figure between May 2019 and April 2020 was five reported crimes per 1,000 people. In March there were just over four crimes for every 1,000 and a little more than three in April.

Our rates were also lower than the borough as a whole, where crime rates fell to just over seven per 1,000 in March and slightly more than five in April. We asked Jan Lovell from the Safer Neighbourhood Team how the virus was affecting policing.

She told us: "The dynamic nature of policing has been multiplied by unprecedented and unknown challenges. I would like to say that the vast majority of East Finchley people have been great in adhering to the government guidelines over the lockdown period and their

continued awareness and co-operation as this eases will be harder but just as important."

Police generally have reported huge falls in crime during the lockdown. In London as a whole, knife crime has fallen by over 50%, with stab wounds among those under 25 slumping by 69%.

At the same time, police have been able to hunt down wanted suspects who have often shielded at home addresses. "Some of them aren't so bright and they're in rather obvious places," said Cressida Dick, the Met Police commissioner.

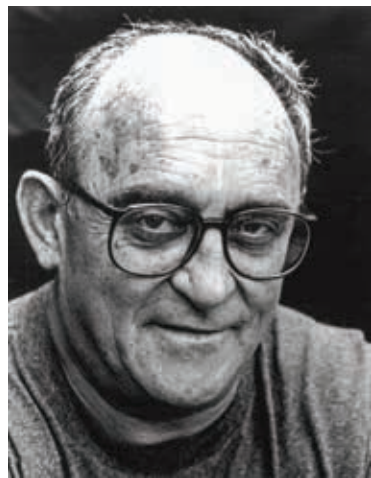
'Life is wonderful':

Denis Goldberg,

April 1933 – April 2020

By Ann Bronkhorst

Denis Goldberg, who lived for about 15 years in Huntingdon Road, East Finchley, after being released from jail in South Africa, died from lung cancer on 29 April at his home near Cape Town, soon after his 87th birthday. A life-long communist, he was a warm, humorous man who made many friends.



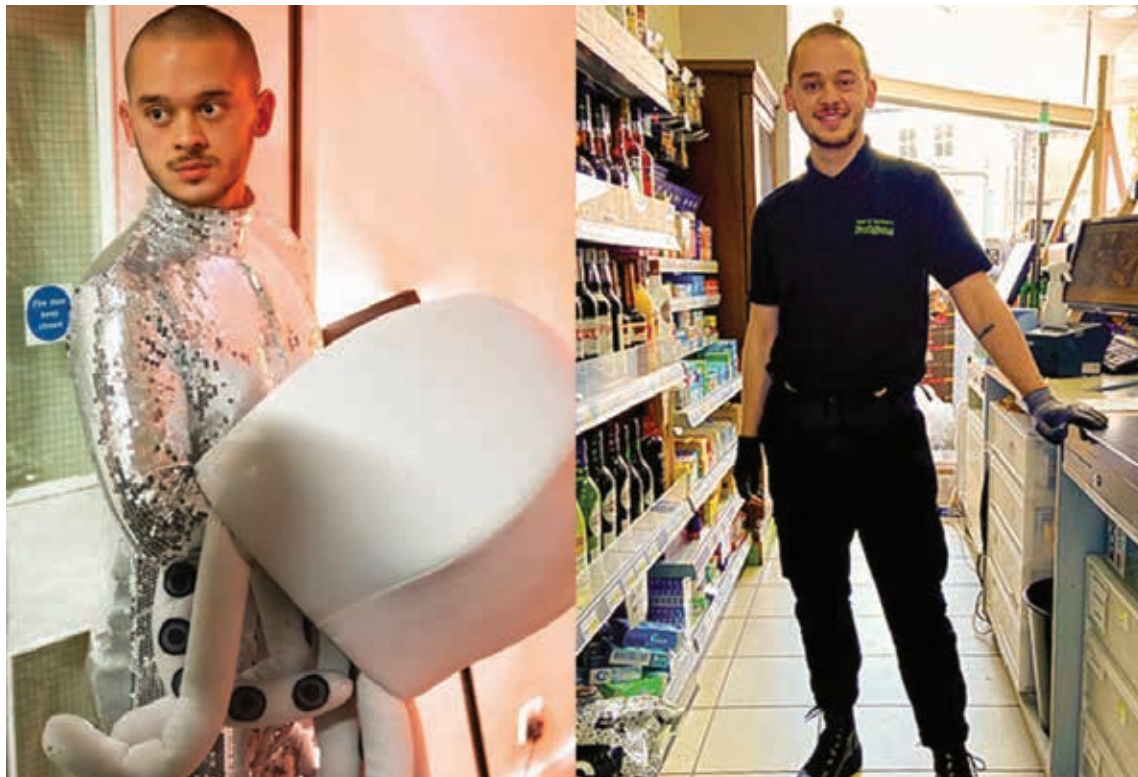
apartheid causes and building international connections for the African National Congress.

After Esme's death in 2000 and then his daughter's death, Goldberg returned to South Africa. For him, as for many political exiles, returning to a changed South Africa was hugely important but not without problems. He spoke out against corruption, particularly under Jacob Zuma, but remained loyal to the ANC and optimistic about the country's young people and its future.

Several obituaries quoted Goldberg's famous and typical reply to his mother at his trial in 1963. She couldn't hear the sentence and asked: "What did the judge say?" to which her son replied: "Life, and life is wonderful."

Read more about Denis Goldberg on page 4 of our May 1997 edition in our online archives at www.the-archer.co.uk

Goldberg was the youngest of the 'Rivonia' trialists, the most famous of whom was Nelson Mandela. As the only white man among them he was not sent to Robben Island but served 22 years in the whites-only Pretoria Central Prison. After his release in 1985 Goldberg joined his wife Esme and their two children here, working to support anti-



Check this out: Jac as Disco Squid for Harry Hill's Clubnite, and in his store uniform behind the tills at Budgens.

Jac trades in TV thrills for happy life on the tills

By John Lawrence

Shortly before lockdown began, professional dancer Jac Coxall was getting ready to make his return in a spangly silver costume as Disco Squid on comedian Harry Hill's late-night Channel 4 hit *Clubnite*. Then overnight all his bookings disappeared.

Jac, 26, had no prospect of getting any income for months so he had to switch careers fast. He called Budgens in the High Road, N2, asking if any jobs were available and within

days he was stacking shelves. Now he says working at the supermarket is one of the best jobs he's ever done.

"I enjoy chatting to people and I can do that when I'm on the

tills," he said. "On dancing jobs, it was always very intense and competitive and everyone only talked about the work. Here, you can have real conversations with genuinely friendly people and they ask you how your day is going."

Jac, who lives off Fortis Green, starred as one of two dancers in the video for Zayn Malik's *Dusk Till Dawn*, and has appeared on *Britain's Got Talent* and *The X Factor*. He also co-presents online dancing courses for 12 to 18-year-olds.

Reset button

His change of direction has been a shock to the system, but a good one. "You never think of Plan B because while work is coming in you're in a bubble," he said. "Then everything in TV and theatre stops and there is nothing. If the world stays like this, people won't be dancing any time soon. "For me it's been like pushing a 'reset' button and it's made me feel like East Finchley is my home again. I always used to be rushing around and working at weekends and I never saw much of the place. I've got to know customers and I'm getting to know the area on long walks.



Sue Sutherley and Paul Silverthorne play for the NHS.

Photo Tanya Freedman

Thursday evening thank you takes on a classical air

Joining the exuberant noise of residents in Lincoln Road, N2, clapping and banging pans in appreciation of NHS frontline staff on Thursday evenings, were the gentle strains of a viola and cello duo.

Mini concert

Professional musicians Sue Sutherley and Paul Silverthorne have been giving mini-concerts in their front garden as their own way of saying thank you and to entertain their neighbours. Over two weeks in May they performed one of the *Hungarian Dances* by Brahms and Schubert's *Ave Maria*, which they have arranged specially for their two instruments.

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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 fishmonger's 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'.

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Radio stations born out of isolation



Broadcasting to the nation: Pat Leacock

By Pat Leacock, East Finchley musician and DJ

Radio station *hot97uk* has been created by me, with entrepreneur DJ Rikky and my brother DJ Leedos, to bring people together through our absolute passion for music and unwavering love of community spirit.

A month ago, we decided to pool our vast knowledge and expertise in entertainment to create the station to focus on what our potential listeners wanted and to do our bit to support others. This was at the same time as the worldwide lockdown started so meeting in person was not going to happen. After hundreds of WhatsApp calls and watching countless YouTube videos, *hot97uk* was created.

We play 80s and 90s pop, funk, soul and disco favourites, R'n'B and reggae music. Our regular listeners from all over the world are the most fantastic, enthusiastic, energetic people. The dedications they send us to read out for friends, families and loved ones help to continue the community spirit we so wanted to spread from the start.

Pat's 'Cheering Up The Nation' radio show is on every Saturday from 8pm to 10pm. Find it at: hot97uk.radio12345.com, and email hot97uk@gmail.com. The station's website is: hot97uk.com



Mez Raja in his radio studio.

Defiant message from the Phoenix

By David Gritten

Signage over the entrance to the Phoenix Cinema usually tells passers-by what films are currently playing. But the much-loved movie house has been forced to close since the outbreak of the Covid-19 epidemic, and its sign now features a defiant warning: "Dear virus: You will NOT kill cinemas."

The message is signed 'MUBI', the name of a film distribution and streaming company, which has launched a campaign to save independent and small cinemas from permanent closure.

The same message can be seen at other London cinemas, including the Rio in Dalston, the Genesis in Bethnal Green and Catford Mews just off the South Circular.

In conjunction with the British Film Institute, Mubi started the ball rolling with a £10,000 donation to the campaign, which aims to raise £100,000 to keep threatened picture houses in business.

Efe Cakarel, Mubi's founder and CEO, says: "We have



Defiant message from Phoenix as it waits for right time to re-open

been working closely with UK festivals and cinemas for years and have been deeply saddened seeing the impact of the closures. We want to support them in any way we can during this incredibly difficult

time, because we can't imagine a world without them."

You can help the Phoenix pull through by becoming a member and making a donation on the cinema's website at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk

By Ruth Anders

Lockdown has uncovered many hidden talents among our friends and neighbours. Take Mez Raja, a lawyer by profession and now a DJ with his own radio station.

Huntingdon Road, N2, already had an active WhatsApp group but Mez, a resident for nine years, has brought everyone even closer together with the launch of Huntingdon Road Radio.

From a tiny studio on the top floor of his house, Mez runs regular programmes featuring music requests and interviews with residents. He also acts as engineer and producer for his children, who present programmes for their friends.

It all began with two socially-distanced karaoke sessions at the beginning of lockdown but, fearing disturbance to neighbouring roads, Mez decided to launch something less intrusive, and Huntingdon Road Radio was born.

Mez sends start times via the WhatsApp group. With the skill and easy manner of a pro, interviews have included chats about the virtual Chelsea Flower Show and the future of

the Phoenix Cinema. Musical requests have featured a variety of artists from Vera Lynn and The Beatles to George Michael and The Kinks.

Mez, whose wife is a paediatric consultant at the Royal Free Hospital, works for the Financial Conduct Authority. Free time is in short supply. Citing the local sewing group making laundry bags for scrubs and caterers providing food to frontline workers, Mez says: "The overriding impression I have of this difficult period is people's generosity...and the sense of public services at last being really highly valued." He added: "East Finchley is such a great community. There are big waves of people doing nice things for each other."

When Mez was younger he used to play in bands; fortunately, he kept a lot of his equipment. If his success continues, demand for his services won't stop with the end of lockdown.

A Local Handyman

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Essential advice and information

All information and advice is correct at the time of going to press. If there is anything you think we should be sharing with the community across East Finchley, please get in touch. You can email us: news@the-archer.co.uk; telephone for free and leave a message on 0800 612 0748 or write to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE.

Useful contacts

N2United

Up-to-date advice and links to useful local resources are available online at n2united.co.uk/covid19.

Senior citizens help and advice

Age UK Barnet 020 8203 5040 or info@ageukbarnet.org.uk

Hospitals

NHS 111

Barnet General 020 8216 4000
Edgware General 020 8952 2381
Finchley Memorial 020 8349 7500

Royal Free 020 7794 0500

Whittington 020 7272 3070

Please note: paediatric A&E is only available at Royal Free and Whittington hospitals.

Help groups

Volunteer groups

East Finchley has its own Covid 19 Volunteer Response Group, with about 500 volunteers ready to help people in need.

They are able to assist with shopping, picking up prescriptions from pharmacies, dog walking and phone or calls to people who are lonely.

You can contact them on 0843 886 5900, email efcovid@gmail.com or join www.facebook.com/groups/EastFinchleyCOVID19.

There is also help available via mutualaid.co.uk, where you can search for your nearest volunteer groups.

Help for dog owners

Dog owners who are unable to get out for health reasons are being given a helping hand by the charity Underdog International. They will be matched with a local volunteer who can help with walking their dog, taking them to the vet or even caring for them for extended periods in their own homes.

All Underdog volunteers are vetted and have received guidance and training. If you are in need of help, call 020 8050 4292 or email hello@theunderdog.org or register at www.theunderdog.org and that includes potential volunteers who have experience with dogs. The scheme is operating in north London.

Front garden love for frontline staff

Hundreds of people have used their front gardens or windows to display messages of thanks and support for frontline workers in the NHS. Simple drawings, painted stones and elaborate wooden signs have added to the regular Thursday evening applause that many are still giving. Thanks to Archer photographer Mike Coles for our montage.



Window dressing: Rainbow images adorn the Muswell Hill food bank.

Colours of the rainbow

By Suzy Rosenthal

Rainbow posters created for London's giant Nightingale Hospital are now brightening up the windows of Muswell Hill food bank.

Volunteer Sally Kosky had the idea to use the children's artwork to help lift the spirits of volunteers and those picking up emergency food supplies. Thousands of children sent in drawings and paintings to decorate the Nightingale when it was being built at the Excel Centre in east London but the hospital couldn't hang them up for health and safety reasons.

Sally came up with the idea after she saw a news item about an independent college in south London putting some of the paintings in their windows where staff and patients at St Thomas' Hospital immediately opposite could see them. She got in touch with the college and they passed some on.

More artwork coming

Victor Mason, manager of the food bank in Pembroke Road, N10, said: "Our volunteers also say how uplifting the children's drawings are. Many of them miss being able to sit and chat to our clients while they're waiting for their food to be packed so this is helping cheer everyone up."

The food bank, which serves around 300 families a month, has now put out a request on Facebook and Twitter asking children in the area to donate more of their lockdown artwork. This will be displayed inside the church hall ready for when the foodbank can return to serving hot drinks and home-made cake to clients waiting for their food to be packed.

Alzheimer's assistance

The Alzheimer's Society provides free information, support and advice to people with dementia, their families and carers. During the coronavirus pandemic support can be given over the phone, via email and in writing. Contact local organisers to make a referral on barnet@alzheimers.org.uk or leave a voicemail on 0203 725 3001 and they will get back to you.

Walk went ahead in its own way

The North London Hospice was unable to hold its annual Big Fun Walk from East Finchley at the start of May but supporters still took to the streets with a week of walks in their own time and raised almost £4,500.

Hospice staff thanked everyone who had taken part or donated and said it was an amazing example of people staying active while staying home. There is still some hope that the Big Fun Walk itself can be held later in the year, subject to government guidance and council licences along the eight-mile route through London's parks to Westminster.

Suicide support service opens

A new service specifically designed to support people aged 18 years and over affected by suicide has started work in Barnet and Haringey. Run by the charity Rethink Mental Illness, a helpline will offer emotional support, practical information and signpost callers to other services that can offer support.

Open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 6pm-8pm and on Sunday from 6pm-9pm, the freephone number is 08088 02 00 80 (calls do not appear on itemised bills). Texts to 07860 058 793 will be responded to in the same hours and there is a webchat at www.rethink.org/ncl-suicide.

Bake from your lockdown larder

Here's a simple baking recipe using ingredients you're likely to have in your store cupboard and fridge. You can be creative with it, and it's ideal for beginners.

Rubble buns

These are very versatile and can be flattened into cookies, left in dollops (original style) or made as a long sausage shape to be sliced biscotti-style.

Ingredients (for 16 buns):

250g butter
315g rolled oats
2 heaped tbsps self-raising or plain flour

2 eggs beaten
125g any brown sugar (preferably soft)
Big pinch of salt

Optional rubble (choose up to 6 of the following):

Small handful of chopped chocolate
Grated zest of an orange and/or lime/lemon (unwaxed)
Small handful of chopped dates or dried fruit
1 tbsps mixed seeds (linseed, sunflower,

pumpkin)
Handful of toasted coconut flakes
Handful of toasted flaked almonds
1 tsp powdered cinnamon
1 tsp cardamom

Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas mark 4. Soften the butter and beat with the sugar. Mix together all the other ingredients, and then fold into butter and sugar mixture. Make sure everything is thoroughly combined. Spoon on to baking tray lined with greased baking paper; use one soup spoon to scoop up a dollop of mixture, and a second soup spoon to add a little extra, round off the top and plop on to tray. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes. The buns should be crisp on the outside and softish on the inside.



Stay on the alert for coronavirus con tricks

By Janet Maitland and Daphne Chamberlain

The National Cyber Security Centre has reported a wave of scams that exploit the fear of Covid-19. Cyber criminals may offer to test you for the virus, sell you a mask, give you information about people who are infected, claim they have a cure or ask for coronavirus charity donations. You should be wary of all such offers on the phone, by email or on websites.

"Covid cyber crime is in essence the same as other scams and the advice is the same," said Jan Lovell, of the Safer Neighbourhood Team. "Genuine organisations would not contact you and ask you to give them personal details in an email, online or on the phone. The majority of scam emails can be spotted because they don't mention your name, and will ask you to click on a link for more information, which you should never do."

Not-so-kind offers

Age UK is also warning that people are calling at doors saying they are carrying out coronavirus testing in homes on behalf of the NHS or local GPs, which is not true. A variation on this scam is the 'kindness hoax', when a caller pretends to be offering help.

The charity warns never to accept these offers from strangers and never to let anyone into your home: instead, call the police. Many genuine groups and individuals are helping out, and their details and how

to contact them are listed publicly, including on the Essential Advice and Information page in this newspaper.

The Age UK Barnet website offers extensive advice and information, including guidance on how to set up technology to keep in touch with friends and family. See www.ageuk.org.uk/barnet, or call 020 8203 5040. Barnet Council has an urgent support helpline at 0808 281 3210 or COVID19support@barnet.gov.uk.



Writing debut: Vicki Bradley with her first novel

Story built on lies is a very good read

By Daphne Chamberlain

Local writer Vicki Bradley had her first book published last month. *Before I Say I Do* is a psychological thriller, told from the viewpoints of two young women. One is a bride whose prospective husband disappears on their wedding day, and the other is a detective investigating the case. I couldn't put it down!

Vicki herself is a detective constable of 14 years' experience, currently on a 12-month career break. But the book took four years to write, before winning the Write Here, Right Now competition run by publishers Simon & Schuster, Darley Anderson Literary Agency and the Bradford Literature Festival. Her degree in English Literature is backed up by a City University Crime Writing MA and the support of fellow crime writers.

Truth and lies

"Writing is a kind of therapy for me," she told *The Archer*. "It relieves the stress of seeing so many bad things. In the police you meet people at the worst time of their lives. You develop an intuition as to whether someone is telling the truth. Sex offenders are the best liars in the world, because their whole life is a lie."

Lying is a key part of the book's plot. In fact, the main theme is the gradual revealing

of lies, and what this does to the different characters. We also get a glimpse into police procedure, tensions and problems.

Vicki has worked in rough areas, where violence and drug-taking are all too common. There are horrifying events in the book, but they are told with truth and are not gratuitous.

She has only recently moved to East Finchley, and is loving getting to know the area, appreciating its history, sense of community and feeling of safety. One of her favourite spots is Coldfall Wood, where she has actually done some writing. When I admitted I thought it was rather sinister (sorry, Coldfall Wood!), she said with a laugh, "Maybe that's why I like it".

Before I Say I Do is published by Simon & Schuster, ISBN 978-1-4711-8524-3, and is available in Waterstones and Tesco, and from online suppliers.



A chapter each: Reece Shearsmith, left, and Steve Pemberton

Star names have a story to tell

By David Melsome

Actors Steve Pemberton and Reece Shearsmith, who both live locally, will be reading online to Year 6 children who are due to join The Archer Academy in East Finchley next term.

The *Inside No 9* creators and stars will be joined by actors Katherine Parkinson, Ralf Little and Nicole Stephenson in reading a chapter each of classic children's novel *The Phantom Tollbooth*.

The community literacy project has been running for three years now to ease the transition from primary to

secondary school and to give all Year 7 arrivals a collective starting point.

Usually pupils are handed a pack including the book but this year while schools are disrupted the whole project is going online. The Academy will be hosting the readings on its website for the 11-year-olds to enjoy over the summer.

Covid-19 95th

By Daphne Chamberlain
Now is not the time to have a birthday,
Not even if you're 95.
No parties, hugging, kissing.
Remember social distancing.
Thank God you're still alive.

But Eula is a lady of resource.
So she lets the good times roll,
And there's laughter in her garden
As her neighbour shares the birthday cake,
Each standing at the end of a pole.

The weather mocks us

By Lottie Millett
The weather mocks us.
The worry we held -
Will we be able to walk on the beach
Have drinks
Play games
Enjoy the sun?

Pointless worries
And pointless planning

For now we stay inside
And look out
Imagining what we would be doing

Celebrating
Drinking
And dancing
Speeches and good food

I imagine myself twirling round
in the dress that I made
Just for me

Instead
I type this poem
Wishing we were married
Longing to hug my friends and family
Itching to drink and to dance
To eat
And to laugh
To celebrate.

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YOUNG ARCHER



Jumping for the NHS: Arjan on his garden trampoline

Let's bounce

By David Melsome

Arjan Adams, 13, set out to raise money for the NHS by doing 10,000 jumps on the trampoline in his back garden... and he's absolutely smashed his fundraising target.

Arjan, who lives in Trinity Road, N2, took about seven hours over a few days to do all 10,000. He started out with the aim of raising £215 but at the time we went to press he'd gone 500% better and received donations past the £1,000 mark.

The Archer Academy pupil said: "I decided to raise money to help the NHS and also to show that children can make

a positive contribution to the current crisis. Trampolining is one of my favourite physical activities, after playing with my dog Wilbur, so it was a good choice because I could do it at home even during lockdown."

You can help Arjan raise even more money for NHS causes at this link:

<https://justgiving.com/fundraising/arjan-adams>



Table tennis boys in thrilling final

By Diana Cormack

Fortismere School's under-13 table tennis team continued to show their prowess when the four boys competed in the Table Tennis England national schools championships in Hinkley, Leicestershire, in March. They reached the final in their category, performing well all the way through.

Their match against Whitgift School, Croydon, for the T Austin Harrison Cup was described as 'a thriller', with the Muswell Hill school losing

by a very narrow margin of 15-12 on countback after a 4-4 draw. They now rank among the best in the country. Well done, boys!

Get your family's days off to a good start

Thalia Pellegrini, aka the Knackered Mums' Nutritionist, who lives in Manor Park Road, N2, gives tips on how a good breakfast can set the mood for a day at home with the family.

I don't know about you, but my day currently seems to revolve around feeding my family and fending off requests for snacks. A big challenge for families right now is managing everyone's emotional needs.



Good start: A bowl of porridge and fruit sets you up for the day

What we eat can make a big difference to energy levels and mood. Breakfast is a great place to start and it'll fend off

the "Mum, can I have a snack?" requests that seem to start about 20 minutes after you've cleared the cereal bowls. So, what are a few easy options?

Pimp your porridge! Oats are a great base because they're a complex carbohydrate which means they provide a steady release of energy, but they're lacking in protein so while it's a healthy choice, you might find you're hungry an hour or so later. If you can eat nuts (a source of protein), they're a great add-on. Add some peanut butter, throw in some sliced banana and you've upped the nutritional value of your breakfast. Or how about adding some chopped up hazelnuts, grated apple or pear and a pinch of cinnamon?

Eggs! If you eat them, they're quick, economical and a family-fave. A source of protein, scramble, fry or boil; you can have breakfast on the table in under five minutes. Serve with some whole-wheat toast or sourdough and sliced avocado



Nutrition tips: Thalia Pellegrini

or cherry tomatoes.

For snack ideas, head to www.thaliapellegrini.com and sign up for Thalia's free Top Ten Snack Solutions Every Mum Needs To Know (good for dads, too). For more meal suggestions and recipes, follow Thalia on Instagram @thaliapellegrini_nutrition. And if you have any specific questions about children's nutrition, email news@the-archer.co.uk and we will pass them on.

Soap stars clean up dirty cars

By Ella Raphael

Two new friends have started a socially distanced car wash service to raise money for the NHS and for the RSPCA. Orlanna Rose, eight, and Eliza Moss, nine, met in lockdown outside their homes in Lincoln Road, N2.

Orlanna's mum Lara says: "Every day when they finished their school work they would sit on one of their walls and get to know each other." They came up with the fundraising idea one day watching a neighbour clean their car.

The girls said it is a fun way to raise money for NHS workers and for animals struggling now due to a lack of visitors. They wash cars when they aren't busy with school work in a clever quarantine-proof system where they keep apart, often washing one side of the car each and then rotating.

The car wash is in high demand and Eliza's brother Jake has even made a very impressive video advert to spread the word. So far they have raised £72 and have washed around 15 cars.



Super shine: Orlanna and Eliza get busy

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For more information please contact us at:

Email: marius.mirt@htef.org.uk

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Students see their hopes for the future sabotaged

Dozens of university students in East Finchley have seen their education seriously disrupted since March. Here's how their situation looks from the viewpoint of University of Kent student Hamish Hallett.

Disruption, confusion, and frustration is the description of this past university year. From national strikes in the winter and spring term to universities being forced to shut because of Covid-19, students have been hit by multiple crises.

Paying £9,000 a year in tuition fees, paying rent for university accommodation and paying for overpriced resources, many students are questioning the value of university institutions. They are no longer students; they are consumers.

This was the reality even before the pandemic. However, if students are to be treated as consumers then at least this academic year could be refunded to them. If you don't receive a service or a product the way you usually do, you ask for a refund, right?

For students who graduate this year, this was the most critical time in their university career. For it to be sabotaged entirely is heart-breaking. To make it even worse, the universities have shown no sympathy whatsoever.

During this abnormal time, students have to continue to do assignments, dissertations, and online exams. They have to do all of this within their homes,

with some practical or lab-based degrees being impossible to do at home.

Imagine having to pray that your internet does not fail during a final exam that can make or break your entire degree. On top of that, the lockdown measures have forced students indoors, family members are crowding households, and the media is being cynical. This is a recipe for disaster for someone's mental health.

If universities want to act like businesses, then they should take responsibility for the well-being of their consumers like other businesses are obliged to do.



Role up: National Youth Theatre auditionees Bella and Kian

In the footsteps of James Bond and Doctor Who

Three East Finchley students will be following in the footsteps of James Bond actor Daniel Craig and former *Doctor Who* actors Catherine Tate and Matt Smith after winning places with the National Youth Theatre.

Kian M, Bella G and Mouni C will take part in the theatre company's prestigious summer school following auditions at The Archer Academy. More than 5,000 young people try for a place each year and fewer

than one in 10 are successful.

The academy has proved itself strong in creative and performing arts, regularly winning competitions including first place at the Welwyn Garden Youth Drama Festival and gold in the Barnet Dance Competition multiple times.

Bella and Kian gave their tips for getting through the auditions. Bella, in year 10, said: "Don't overthink things.

Try to be confident and get stuck in straight away. Learn your monologue well so that you don't panic and forget it last moment." Kian, in year 11, said: "If you don't know the people you are auditioning with, use the morning workshop to make yourself comfortable with everyone. This shows the assessors that you are eager to meet new people and have excellent teamwork skills."



Doors are open: The New Local Café team Photo Mike Coles

Café team finds new ways to serve

By John Lawrence

When a restaurant can no longer welcome customers to sit at its tables enjoy the food and drink it serves, it has to change its business model pretty quickly. The team at the New Local Café in the High Road, like other eating places in East Finchley, have done just that.

They have cleared tables and chairs to one side, creating space for customers to come in and order food or pick up meals they've ordered ahead. And they are taking a steady stream of requests coming in via the delivery service Uber Eats. Favourite orders all round are the full English breakfast, kebabs and wraps.

Owner Arif Yrlbirim doesn't pretend it's been easy. They've had to furlough some of their regular servers and chefs and operate with a skeleton staff of three. Orders are down but Arif is really hoping they can keep going until the rules around using eating places safely change for the better.

Space is crucial

Speaking to *The Archer* in

the middle of May he said: "At the moment there's no information about what cafés can do. Customers are still asking us if they can sit in to eat but we have to say we can't let them. It's really good, though, that they still want our food."

"We are doing everything very hygienically and having lots of space for people coming in to pick up meals. So many people have been supporting us and we thank them all. Generally though it's been a lot quieter compared to how it was before. We'd just like everything to get back to normal."

The New Local Café is open from 8am to 4pm every day and welcomes walk-in orders, as well as pre-orders on 020 8444 1332 or Uber Eats.

Walk without going anywhere

While walking guide Diane Burstein waits to be able to resume her tour groups, she has made short films and talks about some popular locations for people to enjoy online.

Among them is a film on social reformer Octavia Hill and the garden dedicated to her on the Strawberry Vale estate in East Finchley, and coming soon is a film about St Pancras and Islington Cemetery, off the High Road, N2.

Diane's talks connected to her regular walking tours feature Highgate village, Hampstead Garden Suburb and Alexandra Palace. Find out more at www.facebook.com/secretlondonwalkingtours.co.uk

RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

A-wop-bop-a loo-bop, A-lop-bam-boom!

They rode in like the four horsemen of the apocalypse: two white trash, two black guys, there to upset and destroy the cosy world of God-fearing, middle-class Middle America. It was 1955 and everything was about to change.

Between them, Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Chuck Berry and Little Richard would remake music and create some of the greatest songs ever committed to vinyl. And one of them would become the first star of the emerging popular music scene. As a 22-year-old gay guy from Macon, Georgia, Little Richard was the king and queen of rock 'n' roll.

Richard Wayne Penniman was one of 12 kids and, according to his mother, more trouble than the rest of them put together. He quit high school at 15 and played R 'n' B with an assortment of bands, at one point appearing in drag.

He picked up ideas, recorded a few songs that did all right and, in September 1955, signed to Specialty Records and recorded *Tutti Frutti* in three takes. Myth says that the song was about gay sex with the words cleaned up by his co-writer Dorothy LaBostrie, although she always said she'd written it clean, and the myth came later.

Who cares? I don't. What matters is the sound; something that punches holes in the wall. It was an instant success and turned the short skinny guy with bouffant hair into something that appealed to the kids and frightened Middle America. A star was born and, trust me, Little Richard knew it.

If that had been all he'd sung, he would still be the first star, but it wasn't. In the following years, he produced some of the greatest rock 'n' roll records of that golden age. *Long Tall Sally*, *Good Golly Miss Molly* and *Keep A-Knocking* all joined *Tutti Frutti* in becoming standards, covered by everyone from The Beatles and the Stones to some wild bunch thrashing out the classics down your local pub.

Sadly it didn't last. By the end of the 1950s, the world-changing moment had passed. Elvis was in the army, Jerry Lee Lewis was disgraced, Chuck was facing prison and Little Richard had quit music for religion. But those few years created rock music and Little Richard, a man who was wearing purple before Prince was invented, had created the rock 'n' roll star.

Richard Wayne Penniman (Little Richard)
3 December 1932 – 9 May 2020



The show must go on

This year's Proms at St Jude's Festival, normally held in Hampstead Garden Suburb, will take place free, online and 'At Home' from 8 to 28 June. All funds raised through donations will go to the North London Hospice and Toynbee Hall. For details, see www.promsatstjudes.org.uk.

'LitFest at Home' features renowned Irish chef and food writer Darina Allen in conversation with Radio Four's Sheila Dillon; Ben Lewis discussing his latest book *The Last Leonardo* with art history lecturer Lucrezia Walker; and the talented authors and sisters Claire and Stephanie Calman in conversation about mothers, teenagers and life.

'Music at Home' will offer a mix of conversation, recorded music and live music. Braimah and Konya Kanneh-Mason will be performing exclusively a programme of Schubert, Bach and Prokofiev. Further musical treats will be announced later on the website.

Three 'Walks from Home', which you can do alone or with your household, include a treasure



Free performance: Braimah Kanneh-Mason

hunt for children and two local Heritage Walks for adults. In 'Quizzes at Home', Proms presents the *Big London Quiz* for families and a *London Music and Literary Quiz*.

To entertain children in lock down, 'Families at Home' includes a Teeny Prom for children under 5; a live interactive 'junk' orchestra; and a Roald Dahl concert.

Local history expert dies

Local historian John Heathfield died in March from the coronavirus, reports The Finchley Society. John was president of the Friern Barnet and District Local History Society and wrote several books, the last of which was *Whetstone Revealed* in conjunction with David Berguer, the group's chairman.



Live and online: Kanya Kanneh-Mason

Bake at home with recipes from a Master

By Jane Marsh

Regular *Archer* readers may remember our article in January this year about Rinkoff's Bakery, the family business of local residents Ray and Esther Rinkoff. Sadly coronavirus restrictions have forced Esther and Ray to self-isolate from the business.

However, this hasn't stopped Ray exercising his renowned baking skills at home, to supply local family and friends with delicious bread and cakes if they are unable to go out and shop.

Ray has re-organised the family kitchen to accommodate his twice-weekly baking sessions, each one focussing on a particular recipe. These are filmed by Esther and put on their Facebook page 'Walk Talk Bake' to encourage friends and family all over the world to get baking too.

Esther says the response has been amazing, so if you want to try making almond plava, challah or raspberry sour cream cake, Ray's mini master classes are for you.

Less confident cooks might like to try this simple recipe for delicious Shrewsbury biscuits, which Ray and Esther have kindly offered to share with us. Happy lockdown cooking!



Ready to cut: Ray with his biscuit dough

Shrewsbury biscuits

Ingredients:

80 gm caster sugar
120 gm butter
1 egg
180 gm plain flour
20 gm baking powder

Method:

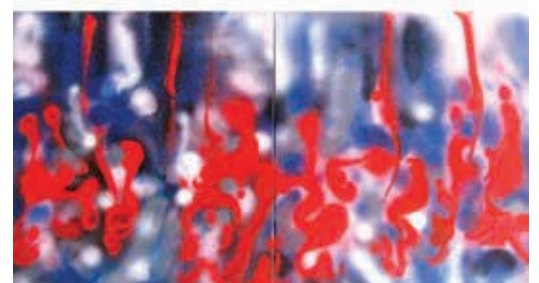
Set oven to 180 degrees/gas mark 4.
Cream together the butter and sugar.
Beat the egg, then add to butter and sugar mix.
Slowly fold in the flour and baking powder (and add a few drops of vanilla essence if you like).
Form mix into a ball of dough and roll out on a floured surface.
Cut with shaped cutters, or use an upturned teacup. Put biscuits on a baking tray and cook for 10-12 minutes until golden brown.



Painter's perspective on the pandemic

Artist Surinder Shani took to his home studio in East End Road, N2, to respond to the coronavirus pandemic with a trio of oil paintings.

Each image represents a different phase of the health crisis, starting with Spreading, then Lockdown, then looking towards an uncertain future with Opening. Surinder said he found the spread of the virus around the world very frightening and his weeks of lockdown very stressful so he wanted to do something constructive to pass the time and come to terms with the situation everyone found themselves in.



Spreading, Lockdown and Opening: Three paintings by Surinder Shani capture the phases of the virus pandemic.

Keep calm workshops and online gigs

At a time when we all need to keep calm more than ever, singer Angie Anuforo has turned the face-to-face 'Better Breathing' and group singing workshops she used to run at artsdepot, North Finchley, into online sessions.

Angie says: "During my workshops, I dedicate more time to the breathing exercises and the relaxation element and this is followed by the singing which is fun. Intentional breathing calms the system and the singing releases feel-good hormones, oxytocin and endorphins. All good for mental health and wellbeing."

Angie also hopes to uplift

people with her online gigs and has released a charity single, a cover version excursion of Vera Lynn's *We'll Meet Again*, in the hope of raising funds for the charity CARE which aims to protect the health of the poorest communities in the world during the virus pandemic. For more information visit her website: www.angie-a.co.uk



Easy breathing: Angie Anuforo



They're all tree-mendous!

By David Melsome

Our article last month wondering if the weeping cherry tree near the junction of East End Road and Church Lane was the most beautiful tree in East Finchley elicited several other nominations.

Christina Wilson sent us a photo of the abundance of pink blossom on the row of trees outside her home in Noblefield Heights on the Great North Road. And Linda Dolata nominated an ancient stump on the slip road to the High Road from the North Circular for its historical value. Thought to be 300-400 years old and one of the pollarded oaks on the former Finchley Common, now occupied by East Finchley, its ivy is said to cover an engraving of a highwayman, which Linda has sketched.

Finally, *Archer* team member Jane Marsh admired the stature and symmetry of the enormous plane tree on the High Road, opposite Bedford Road, saying it was "a joy to behold" but expressing her dismay that its leafy branches were cut off as part of Barnet Council's regular pollarding regime.

"It will be another two or three years before it returns to its former glory, just in time to be denuded again," said Jane.

Thanks from pharmacy team

Dear Editor,

Thank you to the residents of East Finchley, Hampstead Garden Suburb, Highgate and Muswell Hill. It has been a very tough 12 weeks running the pharmacy. We have had an unprecedented workload. On top of that we had staff isolating and shielding, probably no different to other businesses on the High Road.

I would like to thank you all for your patience when accessing all the local businesses, in queuing up in an orderly manner to comply with social distancing. Thank you to all the volunteer groups who have supported the local community in getting food, medicines and other essentials to shielding residents.

Finally I would like to thank my staff who have worked tirelessly and selflessly to provide the best possible care under the circumstances. As the lockdown eases I hope that you will continue to support your local shops so that the High Road can flourish again. Thank you.

**Paresh Shah,
C W Andrew Pharmacy,
32 High Road, N2.**

No time for parking fines

Dear Editor,

On Saturday 4 April an emergency glazier came to my home to repair a broken downstairs window. His van (parked in a quiet side street pay and display

bay with zero traffic) with the company name, designation and logo on either side of the vehicle, also had an official notice on the dashboard stating his duty.

Indeed he was in the van collecting required materials when he was ticketed by a Barnet Council traffic warden. He could not have anticipated how long the job was to take. I offered to pay the fine.

However, I was both saddened and outraged that for financial benefit the council could be deploying staff to penalise and impede vulnerable residents now trying to 'cope' with their precarious situations instead of using (our) resources to support front line staff!

Name and address supplied.

Show some appreciation

Dear Editor,

To the people of East Finchley! In the trying times we are all living through due to the coronavirus, please, please show some appreciation for the danger I put myself in when jumping in to the road to maintain our social distance when sharing the pavement.

I don't want flowers, a thank you card or even any comment; just a smile as acknowledgment for my courtesy in helping to keep us both safe. I'd even settle for a simple tilt of the head or just eye contact!

**Gerard Mackenzie,
Address supplied.**

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

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be printed. Contact details can be withheld on request at publication. We reserve the right to abridge letters for reasons of space.

Pavement pounders

Dear Editor,

I can hear joggers puffing and panting as they approach me as we make our way along the narrow high roads and byways of East Finchley but why oh why do they have to pass so close? They should get in the road if they must wear themselves out running about the place and leave their sweaty breath there.

**Fiona Smartt,
Address supplied.**

Farewell, dear friend

Dear Editor,

Sadly on 30 April 2020, my dear friend Tina Solomon died at the amazing age of 105! Tina had lived in Lichfield Grove, Finchley, for 56 years, and her kindness and assistance to me during difficult times as a single mother left an everlasting place in my heart as she included me and my son as part of her family thereafter.

Despite the current restrictions regarding funerals, I was invited to Tina's funeral, which was quite an honour for me to pay my last respects to my dear friend as she rests in peace.

**Betti Blatman,
Address supplied.**

Mini-moments of stress we are all experiencing

Kathryn Scorza, a hypnotherapist, soul therapist and spiritual healer based in East Finchley, explains how our subconscious reacts to social distancing when we are out for a stroll.

You're walking along and someone coming the other way very obviously crosses the road to avoid you. Do you notice even a pang of tension or discomfort?

We know at a conscious level they're just following the new, necessary rule of social distancing. But at a subconscious level, this is registered as rejection, even a sign of hostility and therefore a threat. Our innate survival Fight/Flight mechanism is being triggered, and putting us, even momentarily, into a state of defensive vigilance. And the other person is probably feeling exactly the same.

We're an intensely social species which needs positive and safe connections to others, even strangers, to feel secure and to

thrive. Apparently hostile rejection signals repeatedly triggered by this now everyday experience are therefore troubling.

Being aware of these two levels of reaction, the first within our control, the second outside our conscious control, can help us soothe those pangs of unease within ourselves.

By saying hello, thank you or just smiling, we can soothe our unease and restore our well-being, because in doing so we're healing that breach and restoring social connection.

There are several things we can do to 'stand down' the Fight/Flight response. First, greet, smile at, or raise a hand to thank fellow pedestrians; secondly, deepen and slow your breathing; thirdly, create simple affirmations that make you feel good, like 'I'm well and safe' or 'I'm OK' and repeat frequently.

*Kathryn has made a 10-minute self-hypnosis recording called *Rising to Challenging Times*, which can be downloaded free from her website: www.kathrynskorza.co.uk. You can also find Kathryn's email address there and she will send it to you.*

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.



Now wash your hands

By L C Ward

A few years ago I walked into my then doctor's surgery for an appointment. As usual, I gave my name for the receptionist to tick off and sat down to wait my turn.

"Could you check in, please?" she asked me. "I thought I just did," I replied. "Oh no, you have to use the check-in screen now," she said, indicating a new machine near the passageway to the lone doctor's surgery. "You just have to key in your details by touching the screen."

"But I don't know who touched it before me," I responded. "This is a doctor's surgery so there could be all sorts of germs lurking on the surface."

Right on cue a mother came in with her young son saying, "You check us in", which he proceeded to do with rather grubby little hands. I looked meaningfully at the receptionist and was told that the cleaner wiped it over every evening.

What with: water, disinfectant? Magazines and children's toys have been removed from doctors' waiting rooms in case they harbour germs. Surely there should be some way of preventing that happening with these screens. "You'll have to ask the doctor about that," countered the receptionist. So I did.

Having explained at length how the surgery was kept scrupulously clean, the doctor looked me straight in the eye, smiled and said: "I expect the screen has a special germ busting surface." Of course, we both knew that wasn't true, so in future I wore a glove or tapped the screen through a sleeve. I have seldom seen a touchscreen accompanied by any sort of safety method and their use is spreading.

Currently we are being told how important it is to wash our hands. Will this be remembered after coronavirus? Hopefully it will and much more care will be taken about what we touch, particularly in a medical setting.

East Finchley Baptist Church

Due to the Covid-19 virus our face to face services and meetings have been suspended until further notice but please go to our website for details of online services and meetings.

For more information please contact the Church Office
Email: office@eastfinchleybc.org.uk
www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk

Your news

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My motorcycle diary: another unexpected homecoming



Seen from the road: Malcolm's photos of sunset in the Atacama Desert, Chile, and the Perito Moreno glacier in Argentina

Having reached Ushuaia and the wind-blown tip of South America I headed north into Patagonia which is split between Chile and Argentina. The weather was cold and wet but the landscape was spectacular, particularly the strikingly beautiful Perito Moreno glacier that descends from its ice field into a great lake, a palette of blue and greenish colours and sounding like a shooting range as it fractures.

Further on I was riding the famous Ruta 40, the bleak and lonely road that cuts across western Argentina and offers

fine views of the Andes and plenty of wildlife. Motorcyclists from around the world were travelling the road and I had many good evenings of conversation and drink.

Chile

I entered Chile at the Los Antiguos border and stayed in chilly cabanas while passing green forests, blue waters and lofty volcanoes. A memorable sight was the wonderful wooden churches in the Chiloé archipelago, commissioned by Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries but built by local carpenters using shipwright joints and

painted in vivid colours.

By now I was on the Pan-American Highway taking me to Santiago. In the 1980s Chile experienced spectacular economic growth and became the richest country in South America; however, the country is now in violent turmoil as young people protest at perceived wealth inequalities and difficulties in getting a good education. Leaving a restaurant one evening I got caught up in a riot and was tear-gassed by police firing gas canisters.

Atacama Desert

Chile is the longest country in the world and it took some time to reach San Pedro and the fearsome Atacama Desert. The desert was surprisingly heterogeneous with rock wasteland, salt flats, wetlands, volcano fields, geysers, wildlife retreats and protected cactus reserves. The purity of air and cloudless skies make it the best place on earth to see the stars and it was unforgettable seeing the Milky Way stretch vertically across the sky like a long arm tattooed with 100 billion stars.

Bolivia

Entering Bolivia the trip began to unravel: local TV announced all the Americas countries were closing their borders due to the coronavirus. Bolivia is the poorest country in South America with basic medical facilities, so I decided to make a dash to La Paz and return home.

It was a difficult journey due to altitude sickness, armed military checkpoints and a country-wide night-time curfew which, coupled with long days in the saddle and long queues for vital fuel, meant not eating for three days. Gustavo, a Bolivian motorcyclist I met on the road, organised an air ticket on the last flight to London and agreed to store my Triumph. A good guy.

Malcolm Dunkeld, of Leslie Road, N2, had to cut short his first attempt to ride round the world by motorbike when he was injured in the Australian outback. Setting off again over a year later to complete the South American leg, he couldn't predict that it would be Covid-19 forcing him home this time.



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Off the shelf: Helen Durden stocks up her community library.

Bring a book, take a book

A community library set up by book lover Helen Durden in her front garden in Creighton Avenue, close to Coldfall Wood, has become a hubbub of local activity and for many a highlight of their daily exercise.

Helen's husband Nicholas built the freestanding cabinet more than a year ago but it has really come into its own during the lockdown, with passers-by bringing books and browsing before leaving with a new title to read at home.

Children's books are among the quickest to go so there is always demand for more of them. Otherwise Helen's library has a range of genres and languages – and the beauty is that the selection is changing all the time.

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