



Fantasy lands: Richard Butterworth with his new book

## How Spike inspired my tribute to a friend

Author Richard Butterworth realised he should write the story of his 30-year friendship with a schoolmate having seen the statue of Spike Milligan in Stephens House and Gardens in East End Road, N3. "My friend had died unexpectedly in his 40s and it hadn't really sunk in," says Richard. "The thing we first found we had in common was our love for anything Spike did and The Goons in particular. We could recite Goon Shows to each other from memory. "One day I jogged past his statue and thought to myself that I should take a selfie with Spike and send it to my friend. Of course I then realised I couldn't, and his loss hit me. So I decided to write our story as a present for his mum, who had outlived him."

### King of the Woods

The writing then took over, but Richard, of Manor Park Road, N2, discovered that because he and his friend had inhabited some rather bizarre imaginary fantasy lands, an objective biography wouldn't do their friendship any justice at all, and it became more a collection of linked fairy stories. "I'm very proud of *King of the Woods*," says Richard, who works as a lecturer at Queen Mary University, London. "In some ways it's very per-

sonal, but I hope it'll interest anyone who's had an intense friendship or found surprising fairies and talking foxes at the bottom of their gardens." One of the recurrent themes is the magic to be found in secondhand bookshops. "So," says Richard, "I'm really delighted that it's on sale in Black Gull Books, East Finchley's very own magical bookshop, which we're so lucky to have." He urges readers to buy it there, although it is also for sale on Amazon.



Hand in hand: Holy Trinity Nursery children enjoy their autumn walk

## Nature walk for nursery

Holy Trinity Nursery children had fun jumping in muddy puddles and going on a nature walk amongst the autumn leaves last month. The mini outing raised £120 for the Save the Children charity.

# A soldier reunited with his mother only after death

By Ruth Anders

Actor Jodie Whittaker is celebrated for her appearances in *Broadchurch* and *Doctor Who*. What was less well known was the moving story of her great uncle Walter and the reason for his being buried in East Finchley Cemetery on East End Road.

Jodie was the subject of the BBC's *Who Do You Think You Are?*, broadcast on Monday 12 October and available on catch-up.

The programme explored the story of John Walter Clements, known as Walter, who was born out of wedlock in 1893 to Jodie's great great grandmother Eliza Clements in Lincolnshire. Eliza married in 1897, had eight more children, and moved with her family to East Finchley, leaving little Walter behind.

### War injuries

Aged 21, at the start of the Great War, Walter escaped his lonely life in Lincolnshire by volunteering to be an orderly at Netley, a vast military hospital in Southampton. After a year of challenging duties moving severely injured men to the Netley wards from the hospital ships and ambulance trains arriving from France, he joined up and was sent across the Channel.

A brutal battle involving Walter's regiment, the 10<sup>th</sup> Hussars, saw him injured and evacuated back to England. He recovered and, although offered the honourable opportunity to stay in Blighty on desk duties, he chose to return to his regiment in France.

Towards the end of the war, Lincolnshire newspaper *The Boston Guardian* reported that Walter was seriously injured



Resting place: The grave of Walter Clements in East Finchley

from a shell wound and hospitalised in Pendleton, Manchester.

Sadly, this time, he failed to recover, dying on 27 April 1918. He was 24.

### Bring him home

Jodie and the programme's research team believed his mother Eliza must have finally connected with her son, probably making the train journey north from the family home in Brackenbury Road, N2, and arranging for his body to be brought to East Finchley. A moving moment in the TV programme saw Jodie finally meeting her great uncle at his Commonwealth War Graves Commission graveside in East Finchley Cemetery.



On the pitch: Young players at Kick Action Academy

## Football skills... and training for life

KickAction Academy is a new community football organisation based in Finchley that runs training sessions for girls and boys aged four to 15.

Sessions are run by fully qualified FA coach Kafele Morgan, who coaches for various clubs including the Arsenal Development girls' squad.

Kafele set up Kick Action Academy as lockdown began to ease back in June with the support of Young Barnet Foundation. It also runs a football team for boys and girls age 16 to 25, with fitness sessions and games for mums and dads.

Kafele is now looking forward to starting his 'Grow Your Own' project to encourage young children to learn about where their food comes

from, sowing the seeds, watering young plants and eating the fruit and veg they have grown.

He said: "New members, regardless of ability are always welcome. We are not just about football, we are about increasing confidence on and off the pitch for both girls and boys, skills that can be used throughout life."

Training days and times are Tuesdays 4pm -5.15pm, Saturdays and Sundays 10am to 11.30am in North Finchley and other locations. For more details, email [Kassfc@outlook.com](mailto:Kassfc@outlook.com) or call 07985 554838.

## School sports plan angers neighbours

A proposal to install floodlights and new sports pitches at Bishop Douglass School in Hamilton Road, N2, has raised objections from many residents living nearby.

The school hopes to lay a new all-weather football pitch and to refurbish its tennis and netball courts and athletics track, making them available for the wider community to hire after school hours and on weekends until as late as 10pm.

Eighty people, many of them residents in nearby roads, have lodged objections to the proposal, saying it will bring added noise, pollution and parking problems to already crowded roads. Four people have written in support of the project, saying East Finchley needs more public sports facilities.

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