



Just passing: Natalie Harrad at East Finchley station and the record of her 23-mile walking route

Teacher travels top to bottom of tube line on foot

By Karen Williamson

Primary school teacher Natalie Harrad walked all 32 stops of the Northern line at the end of August to raise money for local charity Age UK Barnet where she volunteers as a befriender.

She took this impressive challenge in memory of Joan, who she visited for weekly chats for two years before Joan sadly died last August. "Joan's death hit me hard," says Natalie, "so I wanted to raise money in her memory to support the charity that brought us together."

Natalie walked above ground for 23 miles, or 50,000 steps, from High Barnet to Morden, raising over £1,800.

During the pandemic Age UK Barnet has been helping vulnerable older residents in East Finchley, and across the borough, with food parcels, hot meals, food shopping and picking up prescriptions plus friendly chats over the phone.

If you or anyone you know may need support contact Age UK Barnet on 020 8203 5040 or emailinfo@ageukbarnet.org.uk.



Quite a mouthful: Wilma with one of her finds

Wilma's branching out

By Jane Marsh

Many people have used lockdown as a time to try a new hobby or take on a new challenge, and Wilma the Puggle is no exception. When walking in Cherry Tree Wood with her owners, Ray and Esther Rinkoff, Wilma has taken to picking up the largest piece of wood she can find to carry home.

She's built up quite a collection of branches in Ray and Esther's garden and has become a bit of a celebrity in the woods. Esther says that everyone stops to admire her prowess and recently a little boy said "Look, that doggy is carrying a tree". Keep up the good work Wilma!

Four hundred miles of exploring where we live

By Daphne Chamberlain

While our own Mike Coles was doing his virtual walk to Marseilles (*The Archer*, September 2020), another well-known local figure and his wife were racking up well over 400 miles of local exploration.

John Hajdu has been Chair of the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association (MHFGA) for the last 20 years, while Maureen has chaired the Foulkes Foundation, a charitable trust supporting doctors doing research for 35 years. Recently they celebrated their 48th wedding anniversary.

Goodbye pool, hello pathway

Both are actually keen swimmers, usually visiting the pool at least twice a week. Lockdown, however, put a temporary stop to that so they took to the road and grass instead. They walked for at least three miles every day from March until mid-August and have now counted around 150 walks in total.

John told us: "We have walked many times all over Muswell Hill, Crouch End, Hendon, Barnet, Hampstead

and Highgate, and beyond. We have discovered hidden paths, followed the local brooks and alleyways, and of course visited every green space, such as Hampstead Heath, Parliament Hill Fields, Waterlow Park, Highgate Wood, Queens Wood... among many others.

"We have walked in rain, but we've been very lucky as there have been just a few rainy days. And yes, we both feel fit as a result of the walks."

They particularly enjoyed discovering new places. As John said: "It's so interesting to walk up a road new to us, just to find out where it leads, and to find little alleys and back ways. You can only do that on foot. It should be very interesting to find out from your readers what they have been doing during the lockdown period and since. I am sure you'll get some amazing answers."



Made for walking: Maureen and John Hajdu. Photo Mike Coles

Simple delights of going for a coddiwomple

By Daphne Chamberlain

Has this time of lockdowns encouraged you to coddiwomple? We know that's what some of you have been doing. A couple of years ago, I discovered that I have often done it.

Coddiwomple (apparently English slang) means 'to travel in a purposeful manner towards a vague destination'. If you look it up, you'll find several websites, but the one I like is in adventurediary.com.

The blogger there says: "This is one part of travelling I love, when you have no expectations of where you're going, what is going to happen... You have your purpose, but you have no expectations of what you will find."

Doesn't that describe the pleasure of following unex-

pected alleys and pathways, and simply walking up a road to find out where it goes? John and Maureen Hajdu did just that in the article in this edition.

In the past, my local coddiwomplings have discovered a lake surrounded by suburban streets, a park tucked away behind a busy shopping centre which I had visited for years, and a small village green. Whenever I moved to a new workplace, I spent most of my first few lunch breaks exploring the area.

It's surprising what coddiwompling can bring to light.

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