



Parents call for measures to make busy road safer

By John Lawrence

A group of parents is campaigning for traffic calming measures and a safer crossing on Long Lane, N2, which they say has become increasingly dangerous for pedestrians to use.

The group says there are many elderly people and families with small children who find the road difficult to cross safely. There is no designated crossing point for more than half a mile on Long Lane between Church Lane, N2, and Squires Lane, N3.

Midway crossing needed

Jules Porter, who has started a petition, says it is a busy route into and out of East Finchley with many blind corners and poor sight lines for drivers and pedestrians alike.

“When I’m with my six-year-old son and daughter, who’s three, and maybe the buggy and our dog, there is no safe place to cross,” she said. “Friends with older children say they are scared for them crossing on their own too.”

Her petition calls for a crossing midway down the N2 stretch of Long Lane, along with signage and other calming measures to encourage motorists to slow down.

“There are some long narrow stretches with cars parked

either side and drivers can go too fast,” said Jules. “I feel we have to do something. It’s no use waiting until someone is injured or killed.” The group’s online petition was running until 3 October and it has already gained enough signatures to ensure it is discussed by Barnet Council.

Other speed control calls

It joins a number of other calls from residents around East Finchley for traffic-calming measures. Last year, a petition was mounted to introduce a 20mph limit to the county roads. Road humps and a 20mph limit are in place in Church Lane, and there were demands for a lower speed limit along East End Road following the tragic death of three-year-old Sonny Parmar in May 2019. East Finchley’s councillors report that Barnet Council is willing to consider introducing 20mph limits in roads close to schools but that a blanket limit for the whole ward or borough is likely to be some way off.

A little more conversation

Following our review of Sherlock Holmes at Stephens House and Gardens in our last edition, another local outdoor performance was staged in early September, this time at Lauderdale House in Highgate. Janet Maitland was there to review it.

Polite Conversation is a comedy about the impact of the pandemic on people’s usual polite behaviour. I got into the spirit of things on arrival by asking why I couldn’t sit on a bench when a nice young woman was trying to show me to my booked square of damp grass. Fortunately my companion pushed me onto her blanket, used to my Covid outbursts.

Like the characters in the play, the audience had only recently escaped from house arrest, and laughed uproariously as Emma frantically prepared for her first socially distanced barbecue. Just before the guests arrive she’s interrupted by a bombshell revelation from her husband. As their dispute gets acrimonious, the guests get just a quick dab of hand sanitiser and a bit of bread, then are told to walk round the garden. They keep popping back, only to be dismissed back into the gathering clouds of midges. Things are said that will later be regretted. Everyone drinks too much. It’s very funny and it was lovely to laugh.

“We’ve welcomed many people for their first night out since lockdown and it’s been wonderful to see them relax,” said Katharine Ives, Director of Lauderdale House.

The play, written by Andrew



We don’t talk anymore: Lauderdale House actors, left to right, Paul Westwood, Danielle Scott, Jessica Boyde, Vincent Miller. Photo Rebekah Harvey.

Crook, was originally performed as a short. “It was heartbreaking that there was no prospect of theatre for several months so when we heard outdoor performances were possible, we asked the scriptwriter to extend it and approached Lauderdale House,” said Rebekah Harvey, the producer.

I asked director Elif Knight what advice she would give would-be directors of outdoor theatre. She said they should be prepared for anything. “Come rain or shine you have to have contingency measures in place.”

For information about other events at Lauderdale House go to www.lauderdalehouse.org.uk

Bowie on the bill before he was famous

This fascinating poster from 1964 reveals that one of David Bowie’s first gigs when he was starting out on the path to international stardom was in the High Road, East Finchley.

Known then as Davie or sometimes Davy Jones and aged only 17, he and his band the King Bees were advertised to play the Jewish Youth Club, now the Finchley Youth Centre, on Sunday 26 July.

The group, who performed fairly standard Rolling Stones-style R&B, had just released their first and only single called *Liza Jane* and had got themselves noticed on the TV shows *Juke Box Jury* and *Ready Steady Go!*

It must have been an intimate gig in East Finchley because even now the venue does not have a large performance space. For much of the 1960s Brian Epstein, manager of The Beatles, was vice-president of the club and would make annual visits to meet its young members.



On stage: The group is more widely known as Davie Jones and the King Bees. Photo Halloweenjack84 on YouTube.



On the bill: David Bowie and his band are listed as Davy Jones and the The Kingbees when they play East Finchley.

Soon after the concert, Bowie left the King Bees and went on to his next band The Manish Boys. Five years later, with his new stage name, he released his hit solo single *Space Oddity* and in 1972 transformed himself into Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars.

After that he was an international superstar and played concerts to thousands of devoted fans. But it was the humble beginnings of a Sunday night in East Finchley that helped to get him started.

RICKY SAVAGE ...

“The voice of social irresponsibility”

Last of the garagistas

As Ferrari ‘celebrated’ a continuing season of failure at the Italian Grand Prix, far sadder was having to say happy retirement to Frank Williams, the last of the garagistas.

Back in the 1950s, companies like Alfa-Romeo, Lancia, Mercedes and Ferrari dominated. They designed and built everything on the car apart from the tyres. They were, in Enzo Ferrari’s view, proper manufacturers and, oh boy, did he hate what came next.

It had started in the late 1940s with 500cc Formula 3. These simple, affordable cars had a mid-mounted motorcycle engine and no one did it better than the British. Cooper were a father-and-son team with a garage who just built the chassis and body and bought the rest. They sold them to anyone and everyone, dominating the formula and providing a starting point for the likes of Stirling Moss.

When they built a proper Formula 1 car in 1958 it was a repeat performance. They sold their cars to other teams, Moss drove one for Rob Walker’s team. And they won. Australian Jack Brabham won back-to-back championships in 1959 and 1960. And dear old Enzo scoffed and contemptuously called them the ‘garagistas’.

After that there was only one way forward. Lotus did exactly the same thing, never building an engine but buying them. By the early 1970s only Ferrari built everything. In 40 years from 1959 to 1999 the only times a garagista didn’t win were when BRM managed it in 1962 and the five times a Ferrari driver took the title.

And the last garagista was Frank Williams. Although the rest have gone or, like McLaren, gone corporate, Williams continued as they were, the same man at the helm, the same name above the door. A mixture of innovation, hard work and a little luck saw them take seven drivers’ titles for people like Mansell, Prost and Hill, along with nine constructors’ titles between 1980 and 1997.

And now it’s over. Frank Williams has sold the team to an American investment company and retired. Formula 1 is a corporate concern and new teams have to pay £200 million joiners’ fees to enter. Never again will a bunch of blokes in a shed be able to challenge the likes of Ferrari. And that is a shame.

Holy Trinity Parish Church 67 Church Lane, N2 0TH

Our church building is now open for worship.
Sundays: Holy Communion @ 9.30 am
We continue to meet online for prayer and mutual support:
Morning Prayer: Monday to Friday, at 9.00 am
Bible Readings and Prayers: Sunday at 11.00 am
If you would like to join in prayer or send us prayer requests, please contact us via our website:
www.holytrinityeastfinchley.org.uk

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