



See you in court: Stormont Squash Club is open again.

Squash players back on court

By Tony Hulse

Squash players welcomed Monday 17 May with glee and enthusiasm. This was the first time for 14 months they could go on court with multiple households and play full court singles and doubles squash.

My club, Stormont, which serves the East Finchley community, opened its doors promptly that morning, risk assessment done and safety precautions in place. We saw enthusiasts test their mettle after the long lay-off, not to mention endure a few aching muscles afterwards.

Our coaching team kicked into gear quickly, the response from juniors being particularly gratifying. However, it is clear that some players are still nervous and need convincing that

it is safe to return to the game. We are working to communicate the safety measures in place and to instil confidence in those who may be hesitating.

In addition, we are promoting squash in multiple ways, as are other clubs further afield in Hornsey and North Finchley, using the many ideas in England Squash's Bounceback campaign. In our case, we have introduced extensive and subsidised coaching for adults and juniors, with free rackets and taster sessions for newcomers.

We are also giving squash-only membership at reduced prices until the end of September.

Veterans and newbies welcome

The call is out therefore to former squash players and to newcomers to take advantage of these opportunities at Stormont in Lanchester Road, N6. Squash is a great game and a great way to get fit. It is not just for the sporty: it can be played in lots of ways by all generations. Find out more at www.stormontlsrc.com and see you on court!

I shared my wedding week with Diana

By Diana Cormack

Forty years ago on 29 July 1981 the world watched eagerly as Lady Diana Spencer climbed out of her carriage and walked up the steps of St Paul's Cathedral, desperate to see her much-discussed wedding dress. Some greeted it with delight, others with disdain. Now there is a chance to judge it again at a special exhibition in Kensington Palace.

I too was watching closely that day, but trying to learn about other things. Did she keep her engagement ring on or was her left hand bare for the wedding ring? I had good reason for this because I was getting married that week too. My ring, like Diana's, was sapphire and diamonds, though much smaller! But it was enough to convince our niece that her uncle was marrying Lady Diana, which she told all her nursery classmates.

My father joked that Ian and I should have married in St Paul's as everything was ready in there. Maybe he didn't know that we were following in the footsteps of many famous celebrities through Marylebone Registry Office? Love was in the air and, as we walked with our guests to the reception venue, drivers in Marylebone Road clapped

and cheered and sounded their horns.

I lived in Islington then and a local greetings card manufacturer sent specially designed cards to any residents getting married that week. As well as this unique souvenir we have a framed cartoon by an artist friend which was on display in Liberty's window for months and sold many copies. It depicts Prince Charles and Lady Diana forcing their way through crowds towards the cathedral.

Celebrating soon

Of course sadly they never made it to 40 years. If it wasn't for the present pandemic I doubt we'd have done much to mark our ruby wedding anniversary. However, not having seen family for so long we are planning a happy gathering... lockdown rules allowing.



The cartoon owned by Diana

Letters

Shame of homes demolition

Dear Editor,

Regarding the May article in *The Archer* I was very shocked to hear that council house planners Barnet Homes are threatening to demolish three houses on the Grange Estate in order to create more council housing in an area where the residents and home owners have a good community, using the playing area in Brownsell Road no doubt for games, sport and social occasions and their children attending local schools.

Should Barnet go ahead with this proposal it will badly affect children and adults who have made their social life in this area when most of us of any age want to experience some normality since the Covid virus invaded our lives.

There seems to be one law for councils and central London mayoralities and the recipients of those laws in which the aforesaid people do not live. How do these 'officials' square their consciences?

We've already had enough of the recent so-called temporary road development and suggestions of building flats in Underground Car Parks in our area and the ghastly building works opposite East Finchley Underground blocking out all light from the Station and no doubt from many houses in Ingram Road. Instead you should concentrate on providing disabled access, say an escalator if not a lift or are they prevented from doing this because it is a Listed Building? Please inform us of something positive so that we can remain in a convenient, pleasant, neighbourly area for the rest of our lives.

Jeanne Wray,
Address supplied.

In praise of our parks

Dear Editor,

Once we got that horrible wet May out of the way, our local parks came to life again in sunny June. It was wonderful to see families and individuals out and about in Cherry Tree Wood, enjoying all it has to offer. The tidied-up playground area and the refurbished tennis and basketball courts make the whole place look very smart. All it lacks at the moment is a refreshments hut (that's open).

I would also put in a word of praise for Victoria Park, off Long Lane in Finchley Central, and very handy for those of us living at the top end of East Finchley. This also is a good looking and well-used park. There are always people out exercising and there are plenty of facilities, including tennis courts, two playgrounds and a fully functional café.

Let's keep using these precious green spaces and look after them by picking up litter and dog doo.

Julia Cooper,
Richmond Road, N2.

Step into history

City of London guide Paul Baker is back in business with his repertoire of walks that follow the footsteps of history through Finchley and Barnet.

First on his calendar this summer is a guided walk of Monken Hadley, a Georgian village on the edge of the green belt, on Saturday 10 July. Meet outside The Spires shopping centre in High Barnet High Street at 3pm.

On Saturday 24 July, Paul will be walking the site of the Battle of Barnet, dating back to the Wars of the Roses in 1471. Meet at the junction of the Great North Road and Hadley Green Road, EN5, at 2.30pm. For fuller details, visit www.barnet-walks.co.uk or call Paul on 07506 761294.

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

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