



Award for local science teacher

By Daphne Chamberlain

There will be a gift from the Queen at Amalia Michaels' 90th birthday party in her son's house next month. Deputy Lieutenant of Haringey Peter Baker will present her with the British Empire Medal for services to education.

Originally, it was to be presented at Westminster Abbey, but here eight-year-old grandson, her sole guest, would have had to sit alone in the audience. So, to general surprise and delight, the "very friendly" organiser made this arrangement.

An N2 Haringey resident, Amalia has lived in her Fortis Green home for 31 years, and before that in Creighton Avenue.

Science and much more

After graduating in science at Girton, where she was one of only four women specialising in physics, she taught in several London schools. Local ones were both Tollington schools (older readers will remember the Finchley one), and Hornsey School for Girls, where she was Head of Science.

Now Vice-Chair of learning organisation U3A in London (the Belsize Park branch), she is listed as Science Coordinator, newsletters and bulletins writer and, intriguingly, Timetabler. She laughs: "That occupies most of my time." U3A members generally meet in their homes but Amalia's branch meets in the old Hampstead Town Hall. "That means allocating 150 interest groups space and time in eight rooms."

Lockdown teamwork

When the pandemic locked down the old Town Hall, Amalia recalls, "A team of us quickly got together to make plans. We found we had a Zoom queen among us."



Honoured: Amalia Michaels

She tells *The Archer*: "We now have 100 Zoom groups. Most of our 2,000 members are over 65, but are also silver surfers, some living abroad. Less than 150 are without computers, tablets or smartphones, and we have 'phone buddies' and newsletters to keep in touch with them."

They are trying to work out a joint system for both actual and electronic meetings as life returns to normal. Amalia says: "We can now contact so many more people, and reconnect with people who have moved away. They say it feels as though they never left."

Recommendations for an honour for Amalia were started before the pandemic, and lockdowns only emphasise the value of her work. But she says that she is just a privileged part of a dedicated team.

Footnote: Three years ago, Amalia gave what has been described as a "terrific talk" to U3A about James Clerk Maxwell, the Scottish physicist on whose shoulders Einstein said he stood. He is one of her heroes. Do look him up.

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Fitting tribute: The striking new stonework outside Finchley Memorial Hospital bears the names of the servicemen who died in the two world wars. Photo Mike Coles.

Forget me not: a memorial to the fallen of Finchley

By Paul Huggins

Until this year Finchley never had a public war memorial. Therefore, a large number of residents who had given their lives in the two world wars, had no grave, or memorial where families could pay their respects.

Many London districts erected public war memorials. Finchley built a memorial hospital instead. As a result, there were over 775 names from the Great War, and 554 names from the Second World War, which did not appear on a public war memorial anywhere. A 1925 memorial in Ballards Lane to those who died in the First World War has no names inscribed.

This year a stunning new memorial, with all the missing names engraved in gold leaf on dark grey polished granite, has been erected in the grounds of Finchley Memorial Hospital in

Granville Road, North Finchley.

The driving force behind the creation of the memorial since 2010 has been Catherine Love-day, whose father died in action at sea during the Second World War. She always wondered why her father's name, along with other Finchley war dead, did not appear on any local public war memorial, and determined that the situation should be remedied.

To research the missing names, Catherine turned initially to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, then visited churches, schools, memorial halls, residential homes, and anywhere in the area where memorial boards had been installed.

She spent many hours and

days searching parish records, published books of names, and both obituary and birth columns of the local press. It was then a case of establishing the actual residential status of the name involved, as not all were entitled to be recorded on a Finchley public war memorial. The First World War names were the most difficult for Catherine to find.

The memorial is due to be dedicated by the Bishop of London on Sunday 26 September and he will be assisted by representatives of other faiths.

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Open evening at secondary

Secondary school Christ's College Finchley is hosting an open evening to give prospective students and their families a chance to look around and meet staff. The co-educational school, off East End Road, N2, will be open on Tuesday 21 September from 6pm to 8.30pm. For more details, visit www.ccfplus.com or call 020 8349 3581.

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