



Long-serving: Gary Wheeler, left, and staff member Rob say goodbye to Midhurst Butchers. Photo Mike Coles

Family-run butchers closes after more than 40 years

By Ruth Anders

It is always sad to see a high street shop close, but when it is one with the popularity and outstanding reputation of Midhurst Butchers, it is especially disheartening. The family-run business in Fortis Green pulled in its jaunty candy-striped awning for the last time last month after almost five decades serving customers from East Finchley, Muswell Hill and a wide area around.

Their message to customers reads: "Dave, Gary and staff at Midhurst Butchers Limited are sorry to be closing after so many years of trading and serving the local community and surrounding areas. We would like to thank all of our customers, past and present, especially those and their families which we have served for over 40 years."

Local resident Jenny Lumley, among others, admitted that she was in mourning. Jenny said: "I am sure many people will join me in expressing great sadness in learning of the closure... I have been a loyal customer for over 40 years and have rarely

bought supermarket meat. The quality of Midhurst's meats enhanced by the cheeriness of service made shopping there such a pleasurable experience."

Time to move on

Gary Wheeler, son of owner Dave Wheeler, told *The Archer*: "This has been coming for some time. There are a number of complex reasons, not least that the shop's lease is coming up for renewal and the outlay needed to invest in a revitalised business just isn't realistic for us."

Midhurst Butchers operated as a family business and Gary worked there for 30 years. He, like Rob and the rest of the Midhurst crew, is very forlorn about

the closure, but acknowledges that it is time to move on. "There are so many reasons behind this decision," added Gary, "not least the move by some towards a more vegetable-focused diet."

Local shops need our support

So a trot up the road for Midhurst's delicious homemade sausages, a lamb shoulder and a friendly chat are now a thing of the past. Covid restrictions and general changes in shopping habits have led to the demise of this friendly trader, reminding us of the importance of paying special attention to supporting our local high street shops. *Letters, page 11*

Open morning for North London U3A

Have you had enough of zooming? Do you enjoy the experiences of meeting new people, learning new things or developing existing passions?

Members of North London U3A are getting back to doing all these things in reality rather than virtually, with many of the wide variety of interest groups resuming meeting in person, having continued to meet online during the various lockdowns.

And they will be showcasing what's on offer at an Open Morning on Monday 13 September, where many of the 50-plus group coordinators will be setting up stalls and chatting to visitors.

The North London U3A groups usually meet in Finchley, Highgate, Muswell Hill and surrounding areas, weekly, fortnightly or monthly. New members are very welcome to join the existing interest groups – which range from discussion groups on art and politics, to practical classes including wine appreciation and textile art – or to start new groups of their own.

Groups organiser Henrietta Cohen said, "We really welcome anyone local who is retired or semi-retired, and who would like to keep learning and meeting people. And we're always keen to support people who would like to start a new group on a topic or activity that interests them, as that's how we keep things varied."

For your diary

The Open Morning is on 13 September from 10am to 11.30am at St Paul's Church Hall, Long Lane, London, N3 2PU. The venue can be reached by 143 or 382 bus or a 10-minute walk from Finchley Central, and there is free on-street parking.

To find out more, contact North London U3A's membership secretary at membership@nlu3a.org.uk, or go to www.nlu3a.org.uk for an up-to-date list of interest groups and other information



Hoisted aloft: The lorry crane lifts Fanny Petch's doors over her rooftop from the road.

Child hit by car

By Janet Maitland

A child was rushed to a major trauma centre after being hit by a car on Fortis Green on the afternoon of Wednesday 4 August.

The London Ambulance Service said it was called at 2.42pm to reports of a traffic collision involving a pedestrian. "We sent an ambulance crew, an advanced paramedic, a medic in a car and an incident response officer to the scene," said a spokesperson. "We treated a child for head and leg injuries and took them to a major trauma centre."

Major trauma centres care for patients with serious and often multiple injuries. The road was closed for several hours and buses diverted.

Doorway in the sky

County roads resident Fanny Petch got more than she bargained for recently when she decided to replace her patio doors. On arrival the new door frame would not fit through to the back of her house, and attempts to deliver via neighbours' houses also proved impossible.

In the end the only solution was to take the frame over the top of Fanny's house by crane, which generated a lot of excitement among her neighbours and blocked the road for a short time.

The frame sailed over her roof with ease, narrowly avoiding her TV aerial, and is now finally in situ. A fitting tribute to the crane driver's skill!

Black Gull Bookshop
Sunday 12th September

Join us for a drink and a browse
from 6.30 - 8.30 pm when
local author **HC Denham** will be on hand
to sign her book **Almost Human**

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