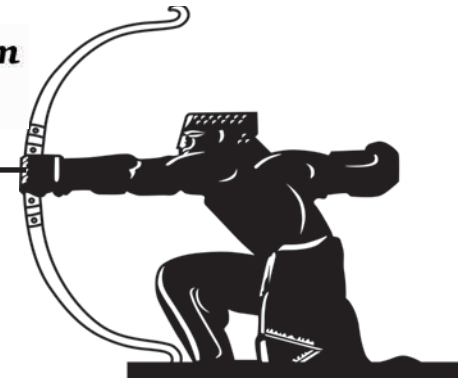


The Archer



A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Tesco to open store in empty High Road site

By John Lawrence

Tesco has announced that it will be opening one of its Express stores in East Finchley, raising fears among independent traders that they will be pushed out of business. Work is already underway on converting the empty premises at 208-210 High Road formerly occupied by the Zapp home delivery grocery service and before that by HSS building equipment hire.

Tesco has applied for planning permission to install air-conditioning units, a CO2 gas cooler, new doors and a timber fence, along with illuminated signs on the frontage (see Planning Applications on page 2).

Tesco told us: "We're excited to be planning a new store in Finchley which we hope to open in the coming months and we will keep the local community updated with our plans as we get closer to opening." But when *The Archer* spoke to the owner of Ella Food Centre, just 30m away on the corner of Creighton Avenue, he was unaware of Tesco moving in close to the business he took over just three years ago.

Hasa said he would raise his objections with Barnet Council but acknowledged that it was probably too late to stop the company taking over a premises that had already been used for food retail purposes.

"I'm surprised and didn't know anything about this," said Hasa. "Trade has been up and down since the pandemic and it has been hard for small traders like us. Having Tesco on our doorstep won't make it any easier. I hope our loyal customers will keep coming to us."

More footfall but parking restrictions

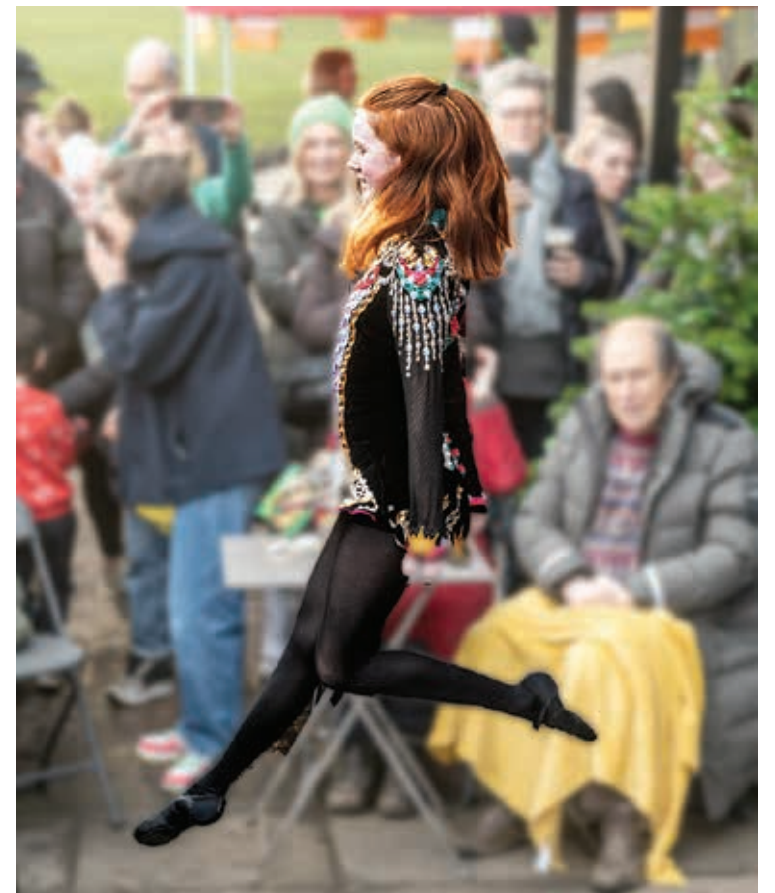
Hasa tried to look on the bright side by saying the arrival of a Tesco Express might increase footfall in his part of the High Road and maybe bring more people into Ella Food Centre too.

However, another trader who asked not to be named, questioned whether it was the right location for a potentially busy store as parking on the High Road was extremely limited, with double yellow lines immediately outside and restricted bays opposite, which are often occupied.

Until now the centres of East Finchley and Muswell Hill have been a black hole for Tesco Express stores. It has its larger supermarkets in Finchley Central and Colney Hatch of course but its nearest small stores are in Highgate and North Finchley.



New store: Tesco is moving into the former Zapp premises, right.



High kicking: One of the Irish dancers outside the Cherry Tree Café. Photo Mike Coles.

Irish dancing in the park

Performers from the Celtic Hearts Irish Dance group, along with servings of Irish stew and soda bread, all brought a true taste of Ireland to the Cherry Tree Café in Cherry Tree Wood on St Patrick's Day last month.

A large crowd was there on Friday 17 March to enjoy the entertainment and maybe a little tippie of Guinness or Irish coffee at the start of a weekend of events celebrating the best food and drink in East Finchley. More photos and reports on page 6&7.

Bill backs playground off screen

Renowned actor Bill Nighy will be at the Phoenix Cinema this month for a special screening of his latest film to support the regeneration of the Market Place Playground in East Finchley.

Nighy will be in conversation with fellow actor Carolyn Pickles before a showing of *Living*, which was released to much acclaim last year.

Appropriately, the film tells the story of a London County Council bureaucrat in 1953 who works tirelessly with a group of women to have a World War II bomb site redeveloped into a children's playground.

Proceeds from the event on Friday 28 April will go to the Friends of Market Place who are working to transform the neglected Market Place Playground in East Finchley into a



In conversation: Bill Nighy

green, playable landscape and community hub, as reported in previous editions of *The Archer*.

So far the group of parents and local residents have raised £276,000 through grants and awards and are now within sight of their final target of £350,000 to get the work under way.

Doors will open at 7pm with a welcome reception followed by the Bill Nighy interview at 8pm and the screening of *Living* at 8.30pm. Tickets cost £25 per person. To book visit phoenixcinema.co.uk. To find out more about the playground project and to donate visit friendsofmarketplace.org.uk

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Thank you to The East Finchley Constitutional Club for providing us with a meeting place.

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Central Avenue



The High Road

Not started: How the two new Grange blocks in Central Avenue and on the High Road will look

No signs yet of construction on Grange or petrol station site

By Janet Maitland

Despite expectations that construction would start in the spring, it is still not known when building work will start on the long-awaited two blocks of new homes on the Grange estate in East Finchley. The same can be said for the proposed housing development on the former Esso petrol station site on the corner of the High Road and Church Lane.

The plots are owned by different people, so although a major issue for neighbouring residents is likely to be the impact of construction traffic on already congested narrow streets, particularly if busy delivery times coincide, coordination of the two sets of work will be difficult.

Grange new homes

On the Grange estate one block of eight flats on Central Avenue and another next to the High Road will together take about a year to build. Barnet Homes, who manage the Grange, hoped to get going in the spring, but have only recently appointed the construction company Stacks London.

At an event in 'late spring' local residents will be able to ask questions about how Stacks London will manage the construction. "They will be working to ensure that work progresses with the least amount of disruption to residents as possible," said a Barnet Homes spokesperson.

Clean tubs only, please

Everyone involved with the N2 Food Project, which distributes free meals for people in need from the steps of the Phoenix Cinema every Tuesday morning, has thanked all the kind donors who bring along plastic tubs for re-use, but have asked that only clean tubs are donated.

The food containers can be left any time at Amy's hardware store in the High Road and at the Phoenix. They should be the standard takeaway size, 17.5cm x 11.5cm, come with their lids and be washed and clean.

Co-organiser Emma Frampton, of the Bin There Donate That project, said reusing plastic tubs in this way was a huge benefit to the community and the environment.

Meanwhile, developers Leopold Properties plan to build 20 flats in two blocks on what is now a wasteland fronting the High Road between Church Lane and Leopold Road, taking about two years. They gained planning permission in 2019 but last April submitted a plan to the council to vary the design, including the layouts of units, and to slightly raise the height of one of the blocks. The submission had still not been approved when *The Archer* went to press, although we understand the legal work is underway.

Building work was meant to

start by the end of last November, whether the submission had been approved or not, in order to avoid cancellation of the original planning permission which was conditional on work starting by that time.

Some preparatory work was done on the site in November, although nothing appears to have happened since. We were informed by a Barnet Council spokesperson that all that is needed is the "digging of a trench or the like". After that it's "down to developers as to the speed at which the development is completed".

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

26 Brim Hill, N2

Rear limestone patio to replace timber decking, including associated alterations to landscaping. Replacement of existing awning.

9 Durham Road, N2

Removal and replacement of two rear doors with bifold door. Three roof lights to existing extension. New sun tunnel to front roof.

7 Elm Gardens, N2

Part single, part two-storey side and rear extension, including conversion of garage into habitable room. Window to replace garage door.

Five Bells, 165-167 East End Road, N2

15m high monopole with wrap-around cabinet to replace existing 12.2m high monopole. Removal of Pogona cabinet. Installation of one Bowler cabinet and One RBS6130 cabinet.

99 Hertford Road, N2

Single-storey side extension to rear outrigger.

61-63 High Road, N2

Conversion of rear part of ground-floor shop and first-floor C3 unit into three self-contained flats with associated alterations and amenity space. Includes ground-floor rear extension, and roof extension to two-storey flat roof to create a new pitched roof and side facing rooflights.

66-68 High Road, N2

Part single, part two-storey rear

extension with one rooflight. Roof extension involving rear dormer window and one front rooflight.

208-210 High Road, N2

Three aircon units. One C02 gas cooler. Two new doors and timber fence with access door. Four non illuminated box fascias, two internally illuminated box fascias, one projecting sign, three internally applied vinyls and one store directory. Applicant name: Tesco Stores Ltd.

54 and 55 Homefield Gardens, N2

Change of use of first-floor from residential use to offices.

54 Leicester Road, N2

Part single, part two-storey side and rear extension, including conversion of garage into habitable room. Window to replace garage door.

76 Lincoln Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension, following demolition of existing extension.

1-3 Lyttelton Road, N2

Changes to shop front and side fenestration.

56 Manor Park Road, N2

Rear outbuilding.

16 Trinity Road, N2

Part single, part two-storey rear extension.

18 Trinity Road, N2

Single-storey side infill extension, following removal of existing extension.

Walkers step up

After our article in last month's edition on the new weekly East Finchley Wellbeing Walks, organiser Louis Victor reports that walker numbers are already increasing.

The gentle one-hour social walks take place at 10am every Wednesday, starting at the High Road entrance to Cherry Tree Wood, opposite East Finchley station, and are free to join. Get more information from efwellbeingwalk@gmail.com

Please help us deliver

We are looking for volunteers who can help deliver *The Archer* to our readers on the Strawberry Vale and Grange estates in East Finchley.

Can you spare 45 minutes each month to help our other deliverers in these areas? Newspapers are brought directly to you and can be delivered at a time that suits you. Please get in touch if you can help. Email news@the-archer.co.uk or leave a message on our free phone line at 0800 612 0748. Thank you.

BE PART OF IT Volunteers wanted

Compiled by Lynn Winton

A crucial element of **Finchley Foodbank** is their volunteering team who are sensitive to the needs of the clients, work from a position of trust and are great team players. Roles range from receiving deliveries and sorting food donations to restocking shelves and staffing Tuesday and Saturday sessions. Requests for help with food supplies are increasing week on week and volunteers are urgently needed. If this could be you, email the team at finchleyfoodbank@gmail.com

Do you enjoy having fun and using your imagination? Can you inspire young people aged between six and 10 years old to focus their energy and reach their full potential? The **North London Air Scout Group** based in Sheldon Avenue, N6, is looking for men and women to work as part of a team of adult volunteers, helping to plan and deliver an exciting programme of indoor and outdoor activities and challenges. Visit www.224northlondonscouts.org.uk/Adults/ or contact scout leader Derek Chambers on 07707 773344.

The **North London Hospice** shop on East Finchley High Road is looking for more volunteers. Whether you want to get work experience, help temporarily between jobs or are looking for a long-term role, please call in to the shop and talk to the manager Anastasiya. Age is no barrier; volunteers aged 14 - 94 are welcome. You will play a vital role in funding the hospice's work and enjoy the camaraderie of a very inclusive team. **Driving Aid to Ukraine** is a new non-profit organisation based in N2 and started by local resident Michael Byrne, who delivers lorries of humanitarian aid across Europe to the Ukrainian conflict zones, via border transfer points. They require all kinds of volunteers: to help build a social media campaign; fundraising and grant writing; organising collections of warm clothes and other vital humanitarian aid items; and people who'd like to drive locally to pick up the collections. A fantastic opportunity whatever your skill sets to bring vital aid to an utterly devastated people and learn about the international aid sector at a grass roots level. Find out more at Drivingaidtoukraine.org or get in touch with Michael on 07791 912389.

If you'd like your organisation to be included in this column please send details to Volunteer@ILoveN2.co.uk Max 80 words please.





Star shows support for charity close to her heart

By Justine Csaky

Lily James, star of new film *What's Love Got to Do with It?*, attended a charity screening in aid of the North London branch of the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA) at the Phoenix Cinema last month.

The star, also known for her roles in *Baby Driver*, *Cinderella* and *Yesterday*, has been involved with the MNDA for many years, having lost her uncle to the disease. She spoke movingly of her family's experience and urged anyone who would like to find out more and support the incredible work of the charity to visit www.justgiving.com and search for 'northlondonmnda'

She told the Phoenix audience: "Your money will go to helping not only the people suffering from motor neurone disease, but supporting their families and loved ones as well. There is no cure for this disease and that needs to change. All of the money raised through MNDA goes directly to helping those affected. It funds research, care and campaigning for people affected by motor neurone disease. Please give as generously as you can."

London and Lahore

The audience thoroughly enjoyed the film, which tells the story of Zoe (James) who decides to film her neighbour's journey from London to Lahore, where he is to marry the woman

of his parents' choice.

Directed by Shekhar Kapur, it was the culmination of a 10-year project for writer and producer Jemima Khan, who spent 10 years living in Pakistan and sees the film as a love letter to both London and Lahore.

The film also stars James's real life best friend Shazad Latif, who initially approached her about working on the project. James also had the honour of working with actor Emma Thompson, who plays her mother in a delightfully comedic performance.

Advice to younger self

During an excellent Q&A after the screening, James spoke of a particularly poignant moment for her during filming, when Zoe tells her nieces a series of empowering fairytales, including a line from her version of the Cinderella story, "I'd rather be breaking glass ceilings than glass slippers".

When James was asked what advice she would give to her younger self, she said: "Slow down, find enjoyment in the highs and the lows of life and realise that all these experiences shape who you are."



Star backing: Lily James, right, with Caroline Macdonald of the MNDA charity in the Phoenix foyer.

Photo Justine Csaky

A clear warning to fly tippers?

By Diana Cormack

We reported last month on the good news that the skip that had blighted part of Brompton Grove, N2, for many months with its overflowing rubbish had been removed.

At the same time, we noted the concern of local residents that the debris that had been left behind from the over-full skip could attract fly tippers, with the suggestion that someone should do something to clear it.

Residents and local councillors continued their pressure on Barnet Council about this, though it was still not clear that it was the council's responsibility, Brompton Grove being an unadopted road.

However, East Finchley Town Team had invited a council officer to inspect the High Road with a view to a deep clean and its chair Kate Brown with fellow member Peter Hale persuaded him to look at Brompton Grove as well.

They suggested that ongoing damage caused by the rubbish to the fence bordering the park could cost more to repair than the removal of said rubbish. Within days the rubbish had been cleared and three notices put up on the perimeter fence warning off would-be fly tippers. Presumably the fence belongs to Barnet Council, but does anyone know who owns Brompton Grove?



Cleared: A warning sign next to the damage to the fence where the skip used to be in Brompton Grove. Photo Mike Coles.

Bodies of mother and daughter discovered in routine check

By Janet Maitland

An investigation is under way into the deaths of a mother and daughter who were found deceased during a routine gas safety check in their East Finchley home last November.

Zarinn Adatia, 84, and her 48-year-old daughter Tasneem lived in a council flat in Prospect Ring managed by Barnet Homes. It is not known when they were last seen alive.

The family made their rent payments regularly and were up to date. They did not have any known vulnerabilities and they were not known to the council's social services.

A resident told *The Archer*, "It was a shock to me as I knew nothing about it until somebody sent me a newspaper clipping. To think that something like that happens on one's doorstep and nobody knows."

Ross Houston, deputy leader

of Barnet Council, confirmed that the council is working with the relevant authorities to "determine the circumstances around this tragedy". He said: "We are deeply shocked and saddened by the distressing circumstances of the passing and discovery of Mrs and Miss Adatia and we extend our sincere condolences to their family and friends."

A police spokesperson informed us that the deaths are being treated as "unexpected" but they have investigated and the circumstances are not believed to be suspicious. They are preparing a file for the coroner.

Indoor sale

The regular Muswell Hill Indoor Car Boot Sale takes place this month on Saturday 29 April from 10am to 1pm in its usual location, Hornsey Parish Church Hall, on the corner of Cranley Gardens and Park Road, N10 3AH.

Bus routes stopping close by are the W7, W3 and 144. Admission is 50p and refreshments are available. For more information, phone 020 8368 8180.

Tennis lessons for girls

A new low-cost tennis coaching programme aimed at local girls is starting soon at The Avenue Tennis Club in East End Road, N2.

Led by head coach Sally Bentley, each player will receive a racquet, balls and six lessons, with the option for further lessons at discounted rates. For more information contact Sally on 07958 758580 or sally@avenuetennisclub.co.uk

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www.japaneseacupunctureclinicfinchley.com
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Long-distance: Hadrian's Wall walker Clare Monaghan with son Sabian, daughter Darcey and dachshund Freddie.



Walkies: Michelle Collins and Peggy in Cherry Tree Wood. Photo Mike Coles

Mum on a mission to get everyone checking their chests

By John Lawrence

An East Finchley mum who was diagnosed with aggressive triple positive breast cancer in 2018 but is now celebrating five years of being cancer-free is taking on a 100km trek to encourage everyone to check their chests.

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago:

April 2013

We marked the 50th anniversary of the RSPCA Small Animal Clinic in Park Road, while reporting concern for its continued existence due to lack of funding. Although operating under the RSPCA name, the clinic was totally independent and reliant on local volunteers and fundraising. Sadly the clinic no longer exists, but the RSPCA does operate a clinic service from within the Two by Two veterinary practice in Long Lane.

15 years ago:

April 2008

There were protests against proposals to close two local post offices, in East End Road and High Road, N12, just north of the North Circular Road. It was feared that these closures would result in even longer queues at the remaining post office in Viceroy Parade, East Finchley, which has also since closed. Our local post office is now located in the UOE office shop.

23 years ago:

April 2000

At long last, and after much campaigning by local residents and *The Archer*, a new pedestrian crossing was installed in Fortis Green between its junctions with Summerlee Avenue and Durham Road. Action was finally taken following the tragic death of a local resident near the site of the new crossing.

Clare Monaghan is walking the length of Hadrian's Wall in northern England in June to support CoppaFeel. The charity's mission is to stamp out the late detection of breast cancer by urging people to check their boobs and pecs regularly and to give them the confidence to see their GP if something doesn't feel normal.

Clare, whose daughter Darcey is at the Archer Academy and whose son Sabian is at Martin Primary, had to go through a bi-lateral mastectomy and breast reconstruction, six months of chemotherapy, three weeks of daily radiotherapy and on-going hormone therapy.

She said she had several emergency hospital admissions and many dark days during treatment but is forever grate-

ful that her cancer was detected early. This month marks her five-year anniversary of having 'No Evidence of Disease'.

"I am very keen to get the message out that early detection saves lives," said Clare. "I'm keen to challenge myself, I want to make my kids proud and show them they don't need to be scared of cancer. I want to show them I have recovered and that we should now embrace every opportunity and live life to the max, whilst also getting the naps in when needed."

Coppafeel challenge

You can read more about Clare's challenge and help her reach her £2,250 fundraising target by going to www.just-giving.com and searching for 'ClareMonaghanTrek'.

Give your views on next steps for East Finchley Town Team

By Kate Brown

East Finchley Town Team members are inviting everyone to join them to help decide the next activities and future direction of the group.

Since it launched in June 2022 the Town Team has held three events on the High Road, all aimed at promoting our local traders, venues, eateries and community groups. They were a sustainability market last September, an Arts and Music event in January and last month's celebration of food.

Town Team has already got feedback. Some would like to see the successful East Finchley's Got Talent show become an annual or bi-annual event. Some would like to see collaborations between Town Team and the Phoenix Cinema and Finchley Youth Theatre continue.

Others feel strongly that Town Team's main emphasis

should be on trying to improve the physical appearance of the High Road. So what is the best strategy for sustaining our High Road and what do you think are the priorities?

Share ideas for the future

A feedback meeting will take place on Thursday 27 April at the Constitutional Club in The Walks, N2 8DE, close to Oakridge Drive, from 7.30pm. Everyone is welcome to join in. If you are interested, contact eftownteam@gmail.com

East Finchley Town Team was originally a coming together of five existing organisations: East Finchley Community Trust, *The Archer*, East Finchley Open Artists, East Finchley Festival

Michelle gets ready for fun day out

By Lynn Winton

Actor Michelle Collins is hoping lots of us will be joining her on the North London Hospice Big Fun Walk on Sunday 21 May, which sets off from East Finchley and follows a leafy route through some of London's loveliest parks.

The 8.5 mile walk affords breathtaking views of the city at the top of Hampstead Heath and Primrose Hill. It finishes in the heart of Westminster where medals, music, a luxury raffle, and a well-earned brew await walkers at Central Hall.

Michelle, who has lived in the heart of East Finchley since 1996, is busy encouraging her neighbours, friends, fellow dog walkers and *Archer* readers to join the event to support what she sees as a vital resource for compassionate care.

Walking versus running

"The hospice team has helped so many local families that I know over the years, and this is an easy relaxed walk which will make for a lovely

day out," she said. "I've done charity walks before, even one in New York for Stonewall, and unlike a competitive run which isn't that sociable, on a walk one can enjoy such amazing conversations with all different people along the way."

Michelle has not yet decided whether to take Peggy, the younger of the two dogs that she adopted from local charity All Dogs Matter. Sadly Humphrey the elder dog is too frail. "He loves Cherry Tree Wood, but he can barely walk a mile now," said Michelle.

On screen, Michelle can soon be seen starring in feature film *My House* to be released in UK on Amazon Prime.

You can sign up for the Hospice Fun Walk at northlondonhospice.org. For queries telephone 020 8446 2288 or email bigfunwalk@northlondonhospice.co.uk.

Concert for Geoffrey

Just a reminder not to miss the memorial concert for organist and composer Geoffrey Hanson, who funded and directed the East Finchley Arts Festival until his death in 2020. It will be on Saturday 15 April, at 7.30pm, at All Saints' Church, Durham Road, N2, where Geoffrey was Director of Music for 30 years.

The programme will be largely Geoffrey's own works, and performers will be the London Mozart Players and the London Ripieno Society. Admission and refreshments are all free.

and N2United.

New network for N2

As *Archer* readers are aware, N2United has paused its meetings and a new N2Network team is looking for fresh energy to continue to evolve the vibrant network.

N2Network intends to resume quarterly meetings for local organisations, businesses and residents and is keen to speak to anyone who might like to take a turn at chairing meetings. This will be a topic of discussion on the 27th, with an open invitation to anyone interested in being part of N2Network invited to attend. For details see www.iloven2.co.uk.n2network



Double car theft is warning to all drivers

By Janet Maitland

A car was stolen in Huntingdon Road, N2, a few weeks ago, swiftly followed by another from the same road. A week or two later, a window of a car parked in a disabled space there was smashed.

“The recent spike in car crime in our road is shocking,” said a Huntingdon Road resident. “Most recently one of my neighbours with severe mobility issues had her car window broken. The vehicle was clearly parked in a disabled space which makes the break-in doubly egregious. Disabled peoples’ cars are their lifeline.”

Thieves use tech

As in every other aspect of life, technology has changed the way car thieves operate. They no longer need to break a window. They no longer even need to break into your house to steal your key, or steal it at all.

If your car unlocks automatically when you are near to it, thieves can now fool the car into unlocking by using wireless transmitters to relay signals from your key fob. Or they can use a device to jam the electronic signal from your key fob when you lock your car, so you think it's locked but it isn't.

Protect your vehicle

If you own this kind of ‘keyless-entry’ vehicle, police advise you to protect it by keeping your key well away from the car and putting it in a signal-blocking pouch, such as a Faraday bag. When you park your car you should also check that it is actually locked.

Not all car thieves are technologically savvy. It is not unheard of for thieves to literally lift vehicles from the street using an illegal tow truck. Visible steering wheel locks can be a deterrent in these cases.

And drivers should stay alert even when they are in their vehicle. To avoid ‘carjacking’, police advise keeping car doors locked, and, if bumped from behind, to wait to pull over somewhere safe and near people, as you don't know who has collided with you and they might be planning to force you out of the car to then steal it.



Seeded area: The site of the future wildflower meadow on the field behind Coldfall Wood

Grassland becomes a wildflower meadow

By Laura Fox

Children from Coldfall Primary and Eden Primary schools have been busy outdoors recently. They have sowed seeds and made scarecrows to create an important wildflower meadow on part of Muswell Hill Playing Fields close to Coldfall Wood.

Their teachers said: “The meadow will provide an excellent education opportunity for our schools, as learning about, and being involved with biodiversity is more crucial than ever.”

The Friends of Coldfall Wood and Muswell Hill Play-

ing Fields have been lobbying for this initiative for several years. Now it is part of a larger pilot project undertaken by Haringey Council across the borough. More information can be found at www.haringey.gov.uk by searching ‘Meadows Pilot Project’.



Blue sky thinking: Hospice nurse Sarah Wilsher takes the plunge and, inset, back on terra firma

Daredevil hospice nurse ‘always wanted to jump out of a plane’

By David Melsome

A thrill-seeking nurse seized the day when she jumped out of a plane at 13,000ft to raise money for the North London Hospice. Sarah Wilsher said she was most nervous of, but also enjoyed, the first seconds of the plunge and the feeling of her stomach being in her chest.

A skydive was something she'd always wanted to do but first she had to meet another personal challenge: losing nine stone in weight in order to qualify. That done, she took off from an airbase in Peterborough last month for the tandem jump.

Seize the moment

Sarah, 36, admitted to always having been a “bit of

daredevil”, but this took a back seat as she got older and had her children. It was her experiences working at the hospice that made her rethink. “They made me realise I should seize the moment and live for now because today and tomorrow are not promised,” she said.

Sarah started working for North London Hospice as part of its community palliative care

support team in 2018 and is now a bank nurse there at weekends after working as a specialist nurse with the NHS during the week. Her skydive has raised £1,800 for the hospice's work supporting patients and their families.

Find out more and make your own donation by visiting www.justgiving.com and searching for ‘Sarah Wilsher 2’.

Go behind the garden gate again

By Susan Bennett

Originally established to raise funds for district nurses, the National Garden Scheme is now the most significant charitable funder of nursing in the UK. Our beneficiaries include Macmillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie, Hospice UK, Parkinson's UK and Carers Trust.

It is more and more evident that gardens contribute to our physical and mental well-being, so the NGS is funding projects to promote gardens and gardening as therapy, and giving grants to community projects.

My husband Earl and I have opened our Muswell Hill garden three times a year since 1996, helped by a team of wonderful volunteers, along with Earl's amazing cakes and our popular plant sale.

Described as ‘a cornucopia of sensual delights’ and voted Best Back Garden in Haringey in Bloom 2022, our garden's



Burst of colour: Susan and Earl's garden in Muswell Hill

opening dates this year are Sunday 30 April, Sunday 25 June and Sunday 30 July, all from 2pm to 6.30pm. You can find us at 5 St Regis Close, Alexandra Park Road, N10 2DE. Entry is £5, children free. Please bring cash.

And there are plenty of ways for you to contribute too. You don't have to commit to an

official garden opening but why not hold a Coronation garden tea party fundraiser with friends, neighbours and family? You don't even need a garden... how about a picnic in the park? Gardens opening in East Finchley this season include 7 Deansway, N2, on Sunday 7 May. Find out more at ngs.org.uk

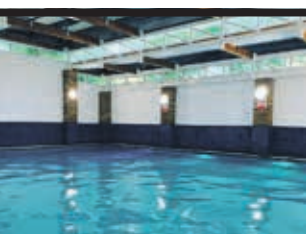


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One more slice: Councillor Arjun Mittra with fellow cake judges and bakers. Photos: Mike Coles

East Finchley pop-up market spotlights local producers

By Alys Wainwright

The I Love N2 Pop-up Market returns on Sunday 23 April to the forecourt of Hexagon Classics, two minutes' walk from East Finchley station. Unlike other local markets, it is unique in that every single one of its stallholders comes from the immediate area.

The market is the brainchild of East Finchley-based Dirt-house, also known as Alison Roberts and Mike Hughes, the organisers of East Finchley Festival.

Amongst the N2-based traders are Colin Turner, or Timbertwist, who has lived in the area for 25 years. After being made redundant from his corporate retail job in 2021, Colin took the opportunity to turn his woodworking hobby into a business.

and craft fairs, especially when I can make them that particular piece that they haven't been able to buy 'off the shelf'."

Resident Vanessa Hernandez, of VH Prints, got into printmaking after doing a workshop at the very first Battersea Arts Fair more than 20 years ago, and has been printmaking ever since. She decided to turn her printmaking hobby into a career after lockdown.

Sheila Fox, founder of The Fox Foundry, says: "I was

keeper Adam Williams, started keeping bees in 2016. He moved them to London in 2021 and currently manages three apiary sites, one of which is on Vale Farm allotments, from where he produces his East Finchley honey.

Other local traders taking stalls include 'Ceramic Justice' - lawyer-turned-ceramicist Jeremy Ornstin who grew up on Aylmer Road, textile designer Jackie O, paper lampshade maker Rosalind Freeborn, knitwear creator Nordic NicNac, resin homewares maker Pengy Resin, Saxby Dog Clothing and Arizan Fudge.

The I Love N2 Pop-up Market will also feature street food, a bar and local musicians Ben Eaton and David Quirke playing live in the covered courtyard. It runs from 12pm to 5pm on Sunday 23 April outside Hexagon Classics, 82-92 Great North Road, N2 0NL. Entry is free. Visit iloven2.co.uk/spring-market for more information or follow @DirtHouseLDN on socials.



Hyper-local: The I Love N2 market features all local vendors

He says: "I started by building a workshop at the end of the garden and that's where I spend my days now, making a range of wooden items big and small. I sell a lot on Etsy, and also love meeting people at local festivals

inspired to set up online homewares store The Fox Foundry after we built our family home in N2. We're very excited to be popping-up with a stall at the 'I Love N2 Spring Market'."

'The Hivesman', N2 bee-

Bakers rise to the occasion for cake contest

By Diana Cormack

One of the rules for the Great N2 Bake Off at the Eat Finchley event was: 'Your bake must be connected to East Finchley in some way'. That seemed a big ask, but the bakers of East Finchley, young and old, met the challenge magnificently.

Nine-year-old Oscar Lugg presented a chocolate cake version of the East Finchley tube station roundel; Thais Ebling and Maya Perone's rectangular carrot chocolate cake was decorated with lots of little signs flagging up facts about the area; Caroline Victor's creation harked back to the time when circus owner George Sanger lived near Park Farm and grazed his elephants locally.

in the Australian outback. Francesco Dore made a blueberry and almond lemon drizzle cake. Contributors to the N2 Food Project at the Phoenix on Tuesday mornings will already know the quality of his cooking.

And the winners were ...

Tasting and testing the cakes was Councillor Arjun Mittra, a role he was delighted to undertake and which he generously shared with a local schoolboy.

With the unenviable task of choosing a winner, they eventually declared a draw. This was between 10-year-old Essie Broomhall's inspired Phoenix Cinema, a carrot cake with vanilla and toffee popcorn cupcakes, and the Cherry Tree Wood in autumn chocolate cake with a fox on top made by eight-year-old Anoushka Raja and her mother Karnika.

Slices of the cakes along



Louis Victor's Finchley Foodbank chocolate cake, described on his entry form as 'made only from ingredients made available to Foodbank clients' was cooked using a saucepan, as some clients do not have use of an oven. The carrots in Roger Chapman's gluten-free cake were grown here, whilst a touch of spring arrived with Angela Corbo's beautiful white iced cherry almond cake decorated with pink cherry blossom reflecting those in Cherry Tree Wood.

Anne Dell's version of an Irish tea cake was derived from that made by her grandmother



with Louis Victor's chocolate chip cookies, ginger biscuits and shortcake were snapped up by the crowd, with their donations amounting to an amazing £228. This was added to the N2 Food Project's own stall total of £340, raising a fabulous £568 in total.

Book an allotment visit

As part of Town Team's 'Eat Finchley' there will be three opportunities next month to join a free guided tour to our local food growing spaces at either end of the High Rd, N2.

There will be visits to Fuel Lands allotments on Saturday 6 May, East Finchley Allotments on Sunday 14 May and Cherry Hill allotments Sunday 21 May.

If you are interested in learning more about fruit and vegetable growing or just curious to see behind the allotment gates, contact Kate Brown on brown.kate@btinternet.com for more details. Booking is essential as places are limited. No dogs allowed as these are food-growing areas.



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Shoppers taste a world of food and drink

By Diana Cormack

Café owners, restaurateurs and traders proved East Finchley can be a feast of food and flavours throughout a weekend of tastings and special offers.

The Eat Finchley event ran from Friday 17 to Sunday 19 March and was the third in a series organised by N2's Town Team to encourage more people to visit the High Road and use local shops and eateries.

The event covered both St Patrick's Day and Mothering Sunday so many businesses responded, for example Maddens Bar offered free Irish stew while the Cherry Tree Café also served Irish stew and held Irish dancing performances which attracted a huge audience.

The Saturday morning rain

had eased off by the time Alison Moore, the Mayor of Barnet, made her welcoming speech. She praised the work of the Town Team, the efforts of the traders and the number of people who were there, underlining the special community feeling which exists in East Finchley.

With her mayoress Helen Gordon, Alison visited a number of businesses in and around the High Road, as well as the stalls set up outside Budgens. These were hosted by East Finchley Library, Healthier High Streets, Food

Bank Aid, Layy's Kitchen, Caffè Nero, the Town Team, N2 Food Project and Martin School. The group of children on the Martin School stall were a credit to the school, explaining the relevant work on display and raising nearly £120 in donations for the school's recipe book.

Food shops, cafés and restaurants joined in by setting out tasting stalls with a variety of free samples. Several musicians entertained along the way – classic guitarist Guilio; acoustic guitarist Dayvid;



Mayor of Barnet: Cllr Alison Moore discovers the High Road offers

accordion player Yuliia and 11-year-old Gloria, winner of East Finchley's Got Talent, playing trumpet and violin.

Find out about East Finchley Town Team's upcoming events at www.iloven2.co.uk/town-team



Free samples: The crowd enjoys the bake off stall outside Budgens. Photos Mike Coles

Invisible peas

The Windsor Castle pub introduced an on-going £2 for 'invisible peas' with donations going to the Finchley Food Bank and even the Phoenix got in on the food-related action with a screening of *Ratatouille*.



Take out: The Mayor chats with Majjo's owner Farrah Naeem



Special offer: Cut-price cakes in Dan & DeCarlo



Recipe ideas: Martin School pupils fundraise with their cookbook

Join your community in supporting your local hospice.

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Register at bigfunwalk.co.uk

North London Hospice





Off the page: Monkey Puzzle staff dress as favourite characters on World Book Day

Dressing up brings story time to life for nursery children

The Three Little Pigs, in the shape of staff members Jenny, Aga and Mira, along with pantomime dame Mama G helped make World Book Day a lot of fun for youngsters at the Monkey Puzzle Nursery in East Finchley. Teacher Basma also read her own award-winning story and encouraged the children to write their own.



Animal friends: The Scouts hand over their fundraising cheque to the RSPCA

Scouts go on stage to help with animal care

Each year, the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts of the 6th Friern Barnet Scout Group vote for the charity they want to support with the proceeds from their Christmas show and this year it was the RSPCA Finchley and District Branch who received a donation of £530.

Hannah Carson, of the RSPCA, said: "The Scout group arranged a lovely presentation for the giant cheque handover, which the chair of the RSPCA

Finchley branch was able to accept. A massive thank you to all those involved."

The money raised will be used to provide vaccinations, neutering, microchips, flea and worming medication and veterinary treatment to local animals in need. In addition, it will help support the charity's clinic scheme which offers reduced rate veterinary services to local people in receipt of certain benefits. For more information, contact the RSPCA Finchley Branch on 07928 628771.

Free concert on a Sunday

The next free Sunday evening concert at East Finchley Methodist Church features violinist Junko Ishigaki, viola player Ruth Cohen and pianist Caroline Soresby performing a programme of works by Mozart, Grieg and Rebecca Clarke.

It takes place at the church in the High Road, N2, opposite Creighton Avenue, on Sunday 16 April at 7.30pm. Admission is free with a collection in aid of The Trussell Trust.

Children's book award winners

Publishing company Green Bean Books and Jewish Book Week have announced the winners of the second Jewish Children's Book Awards. The winner of the illustration prize is Rome-based Mel Zohar and the winner of the writing prize is London-based Dina Leifer. They each win a £1,000 award and a glass trophy.

Judge Michael Leventhal, an East Finchley resident, commented: "Mel Zohar's illustrations about an ever-growing challah are bright and exciting. She is an incredibly creative and original

talent. Dina Leifer's story *And Eddie Had An Egg* is a charming, witty and clever story about a boy who is a fussy eater but eventually gets one over his parents."

Mel Zohar, 32, said: "These images come from my personal family background and from my personal bond with the Jewish tradition and creating them was very emotionally involving for me."



Writing award: Author Dina Leifer

Dina Leifer, 56, said: "I am delighted. Winning this award has boosted my confidence to go on and write more Jewish stories for children."

The 2023-2024 competition seeking next year's winners will be launched this month. For more details visit www.greenbeanbooks.com or contact michael@greenhill-books.com



Big game: The CCF basketball in competition at the Royal Hospital School in Ipswich

Basketball players come away winners

The boys senior basketball team at Christ's College Finchley in East End Road, N2, has been having a strong season, including a journey to Ipswich to play against the Royal Hospital School.

The Royal Hospital School is an independent boarding and day school with a unique naval heritage. Founded in 1712 in Greenwich, London, it moved to its spectacular site, set in 200 acres of Suffolk countryside overlooking the River Stour, in 1933.

Spectacular game

The basketball game was as spectacular as the school site, and was watched by a large crowd of teachers and pupils.

CCF produced one of their best performances of the season, coming away 90-70 winners, although the game was much closer than the final margin suggests.

Despite the four-hour round trip, the CCF team thoroughly enjoyed their visit to one of the oldest and most prestigious schools in the country and are hoping it will become a regular fixture on the calendar for years to come.



Garden opens in time for spring



Outdoor clothing: Barnet Mayor Councillor Alison Moore at the opening of the neighbourhood garden in Leopold Road. Photo Mike Coles

Barnet Mayor Alison Moore has formally opened the Leopold Road Neighbourhood Garden, which has been the result of a year of hard work and planning.

More than 50 people joined in the celebrations, with tea and cakes, and a group of children accompanied by Tim Brierley on guitar sang John Denver's *Garden Song*.

It was two neighbours, Edwina and Kathy, who decided something could be done to improve Leopold Road's dilapidated corner of The Walks and the community enlisted the help of Councillor Arjun Mitra to get support from Barnet Council.

They used a grant to buy plants and commissioned local artist Judith Devons to

paint a colourful mural on the brick wall. They designed an information board with words by local historian Roger Chapman, and East Finchley Community Trust have sponsored the benches.

The garden forms part of the East Finchley pollinator trail and links up with a community garden further along The Walks. Provision for wildlife will be further enhanced by the forthcoming 'natural' refurbishment of the Market Play playground.

Resident Kathy Batten said: "We're looking forward to the spring colour when the bulbs come up. So many people walking by express their thanks and are constantly cheered up by the space. It has been transformational for the area."

Netball openings

By Diana Cormack
With netball being one of the country's fastest growing sports it is not surprising that East Finchley is following the trend. A second netball club has started at the Archer Academy on Wednesday evenings, with the previous group still meeting on Tuesdays (see *The Archer*, November 2021, page 4).

GRDNS Netball Women's League began in January and comprises six teams who play in a competitive but friendly way. They are made up of local women, as is reflected in the team names: Archer Arrows, Martin Blue Birds, Shooting Stars, Tetherdown Tigers, Tigers Too and Team Wren. Organiser and East Finchley mum Sonia Bownes told us she is hoping to add to the teams next season, which begins on 19 April.

She says: "If you've ever played netball before and liked it then you should join the league. It's recreational level, so all about fun. You can join as an individual and be matched to a team."

Sonia was full of praise for trainer Maya Somayah, who works at Martin School and is deeply involved in a number of sports and devoted to passing on the skills involved. Indeed the two teenagers refereeing when I visited the club gained their qualifications under her guidance. One player said: "We come together on a Wednesday night for fun and not a gruelling battle. Just brilliant."

Starting at 7pm on Wednesdays and priced at £6 a session, you can join in the fun by emailing netball@lymoregardensfc.com

RICKY SAVAGE ...

Shop till you drop

It's Saturday and time for the weekly shop. You grab your list, bags for life and what's left of your sanity and head for the supermarket. First up is the car park challenge, driving round in ever increasing circles trying to find a bay that isn't occupied by one and a half Range Rovers.

Out of the car, you grab the last trolley and naturally it has a mind of its own and will only go sideways. This makes dodging the skateboarding kids, the 4x4 baby buggies and the kid throwing a tantrum in Aisle 7 even harder. Finally you queue for eons before some disinterested teenager reluctantly scans your stuff and you wrestle the trolley back to the car for the traffic jam back home.

That's when nostalgia creeps in like a stray cat and you think about how much better it must have been in the olden days. I mean, you've been to the farmer's market and bought wonderful hand pummelled sourdough and artisan pate. Wouldn't it be nice if shopping was like that, when the shopkeepers knew everyone and the sun always shined?

Back in the olden days it was. No supermarkets, no one-stop shopping, no bags for life, just something hand crocheted by great aunt Esmeralda from old socks. There was the butchers with its array of dead rabbits hanging outside like an advert for the ex-cast members of *Watership Down*, the bakers with its two types of bread, white or brown where 'French bread' was a long way from a baguette.

There might be a Sainsbury's, but not as you know it. Back then, there were marble counters, and you queued to get bacon, queued for cheese, queued for flour, queued for canned peas and queued again to pay. And that meant you got to hear all the local gossip about how her at number 36 had a fancy man or that Mrs Grumpy at number 27 was furious that her pedigree Siamese had been devalued by the local marauding tom.

And that was before you got to the greengrocers where your 5lbs of potatoes came with 10% soil. Then you had to conjure up something appetising for dinner. This was a world before avocados, when aubergines were foreign, Clingfilm hadn't been invented and frozen pizza was in the future. A time when there were no buggies but prams the size of wheelbarrows parked outside shops so that babies could chuck teddy bears out into the street.

So, next time your trolley weaves off in the wrong direction or the queue at the checkout is too long, remember that the olden days were different, even if they weren't always golden.

Charity offers free advice on getting into business

Spring is one of the best times to look for a new job or build a business. Research by recruiters in the UK has found that the start of the new financial year in April leads to new jobs being created, promotions being offered and opportunities for start-ups.

N2United connection

Business guru Sara Gatoff hopes to help. She will be known to those who attended an N2United networking meeting, where she delivered a very popular lecture on ten top tips for running small businesses effectively.

Sara, who has worked for Harrods, Tesco and advised many businesses over a career spanning three decades, has now joined Finchley-based Work Avenue, a charity set up to give free guidance to those who own companies, want to start one, or need advice in finding employment.



Business advice: Sara Gatoff

Work Avenue was created originally by and for the Jewish community but has since spread its wings to give free help and advice to all.

Sara would like to offer *Archer* readers a free one-hour initial session to understand their needs and then see if she can be of further help. All info can be found at theworkavenue.org.uk or by phoning the charity on 020 8371 3280.

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Musicians assemble: The London Mozart Players will be playing at the Proms in Hampstead Garden Suburb

Mozart to Metropolis in Proms

By David Melsome

The full musical line-up of this year's Proms at St Jude's in Hampstead Garden Suburb has been announced, including classic symphonies, opera, Broadway and a shot of science fiction.

For opera fans, the Armonico Consort present Purcell's masterpiece *Dido and Aeneas* as a semi-staged opera, followed by Pergolesi's haunting *Stabat Mater*.

The Sitkovetsky Trio, Chamber winners of the prestigious *BBC Music Magazine Awards 2022*, will perform works by Shostakovich, Mendelssohn and Beethoven.

And there will be a rare screening of the 1927 German Expressionist science-fiction

film *Metropolis* accompanied by the Covent Garden Sinfonia. When first performed in Berlin, this sold out three times in a weekend.

For a night of glamour and glitz, Emma Kershaw and Katie Birtill will sing musical theatre favourites including *All That Jazz*, *Cabaret* and *Wouldn't it be Lovely* in a Broadway and *All That Jazz* concert.

on Saturday 1 July.

The London Mozart Players will perform at The Last Night

of the Proms with highlights such as Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings* and Mendelssohn's *String Symphony No 8*, as well as Last Night favourites.

Public booking for the Proms, which run from the end of June to the start of July, opens on 17 April. Ticket prices range from £10 to £38. The programme for the Literary Festival and a Family Afternoon will be announced soon. Find full details at promsatstjudes.org.uk.

Parcels of land hold precious memories

By David Melsome

A former projectionist at the Phoenix returned to the cinema last month to sell off sections of Great Britain as part of her art exhibition called *Land Sale*.

Ava Grauls works from maps, satellite images and geological surveys to create pieces that explore our relationship with our country, our territory and our landscape.

The centrepiece of the exhibition hanging in the Phoenix foyer was a huge map of Britain divided into 12 sections, each of which was for sale.

Ava said: "One lady bought Scotland because her family is Scottish but she herself has spent a lot of her life growing up in South Africa. Their family are still very attached to their homeland. Another lady bought Wales because she spent a very special summer there, camping on the hills with her daughter.

"Yet another buyer has become attached to Exeter because it is where her university was. I enjoyed this exhibition because there is a heartfelt sincerity and dedication people have to this land and their memories."



Divided country: Artist Ava Grauls with her *Land Sale* art work at the Phoenix Cinema

What's On at the Phoenix in April

By Zalan Pall, general manager



An 80s classic, live opera, ballet and theatre, an art exhibition on screen and panel discussions are all in the April line-up at the Phoenix Cinema.

We have a great art release coming: *Vermeer* on Tuesday 18 April is a new Exhibition on Screen film which invites audiences to a private view of the exhibition, accompanied by the director of the Rijksmuseum and the curator of the show. A truly once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

For lovers of live performances, we have the Royal Opera House ballet *Cinderella* on Wednesday 12 April, the MET's opera *Der Rosenkavalier* on Saturday 15 April and the Royal Opera House's *The Marriage of Figaro* on Thursday 27 April, plus the National Theatre's play *Good*, starring David Tennant, on Thursday 20 April.

There's a strong argument that if you're looking for the best performance of Robert De Niro's impressive acting career,

you need to be turning your head in the direction of Martin Scorsese's *Raging Bull*. This biopic of boxer Jake LaMotta is a cinematic masterpiece and it's playing at the Phoenix on Sunday 16 April.

On Sunday 23 April, the cinema and Black History Walk present a fascinating profile of Ebony presenter Juliet Alexander, with a panel discussion focusing on Black women in broadcast journalism.

Finally, in the heartwarming *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*, from Friday 28 April, a seemingly unremarkable man in his 60s named Harold (Jim Broadbent) learns his old friend Queenie is dying and embarks on a 450-mile walk to see her. For full details and bookings, visit www.phoenixcinema.co.uk or pop into our foyer.

Young writer earns place with first story

Former Fortismere School student Eve Wersocki Morris has been shortlisted for the Bibliobuzz Alexandra Palace Children's Book Award 2023 for her debut book *The Bird Singers*.

Eve spent most of her time at Fortismere writing stories and even wrote a poem for the school library when she left the sixth form in 2011 which is still in the library today.

"I am over the moon to be shortlisted for the Alexandra Palace Book Awards," said Eve. "I used to spend my teenage years walking around the lake at Ally Pally thinking about stories and now I'll be in the theatre talking about my own book! It feels like I've come full circle." Her debut novel, published by Hachette Children's Books, is a mystery adventure about two sisters who discover a mythical



Ally Pally lover: Eve Wersocki Morris and (below) her new book



Eve's debut book

monster in the Lake District. It was inspired by her Polish heritage and holidays in the Lake District.

Eve, who works as a publicity manager for a publishing company, has written a second book, *The Wildstorm Curse*, an adventure based on her experience of being dyslexic, which is out now.

Bibliobuzz is run by Alexandra Palace's Creative Learning team in partnership with a team of Haringey School Librarians, who shortlist the books, and Haringey Library Services. It is aimed at stories for young people aged nine to 12 years old.



Letters

After the fall

Dear Editor,

I was walking along the High Road recently at night and was only five minutes from my home when I stumbled on one of the many slightly lifted paving stones and fell flat, hitting my nose. I was aware first of lots of blood, and then of people around me.

Instantly, a young man lifted me back onto my feet and supported me whilst three ladies, all, it transpired, previously unknown to each other, produced tissues and wipes to try to deal with the blood, someone called an ambulance, and I was led very carefully to one of the seats outside Budgens, from where help was also offered.

People stayed with me, which was so kind and so comforting. A message came to say that the ambulance should be along within two hours but by this time help from home was arriving. In fact, the ambulance came within about ten minutes of being called and I was taken into its warmth and checked out very efficiently before being taken home. I have made a good recovery and would like to thank those kind, caring and competent people who helped make bearable what could have been a frightening and lonely experience. Many thanks to you all,

Heather B,
Address supplied

Contact us

Dear Editor,

We have all seen ads on TV and bus shelters saying 'contact us online'. Surely the powers that be, the government, the council, the NHS and big companies, realise by now that the poor will never be online, never have bank accounts or credit cards.

We exist and always will. Phone numbers please, non-automated, and postal addresses. Any good company would give these. We are not going to go away so stop pushing us out at every turn, and help.

M Murphy,
Wilmot Close, N2.

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Tresses and dresses: Stylist Daniella Farrell in the thick of London Fashion Week

Catwalk creations with an ethical edge

By Lynn Winton

Daniella Farrell, one of the senior staff at Jo Sutherland Hair Studio in East End Road, N2, was thrilled to be invited to lead the team creating hair styles for a groundbreaking new show at London Fashion Week in February.

Called 'Source', it showcased international designers who focus on sustainable and ethical collections made using organic materials, such as those derived from grasses and coffee plants.

Jo said: "I was so proud that Daniella was chosen to create creative styles for the catwalk models for such an event. I also enjoyed the excitement of attending, knowing it was the first show at London Fashion Week that harmonised with my own passion for sustainability."

Her salon specialises in a vegan and cruelty-free product range from Scotland called Ffor,

which is formulated without the use of sulphates or synthetic fragrances.

Jo, who grew up in Widecombe Way, N2, and still lives there, took an unusual route to become a hairdresser. Originally working as a barrister, she switched professions and much prefers running a hair salon, which she combines with her acting career.

Jo is offering readers of *The Archer* a 15% introductory discount when booking their first appointment. Just mention this article when booking. Find out more about the salon at www.jo-sutherland.co.uk

Choir finally ready for long-awaited concert

Following North London Chorus's programme of Charpentier, Corelli and Handel last December, the choir is delighted to announce its forthcoming concert at St James Church, Muswell Hill on Saturday 22nd April at 7.45pm.

In 2020, family and friends of North London Chorus musical director Murray Hipkin gathered at a party for his 60th birthday at which donations were pledged to enable the choir to perform Vaughan Williams' magnificent work *A Sea Symphony*.

The pandemic interrupted their plans but finally the choir is ready to stage the concert. It takes place at St James Church, Muswell Hill, on Saturday 22 April at 7.45pm.

The concert will feature soprano Verity Wingate and baritone James Cleverton as

soloists, with The Meridian Sinfonia accompanying the choir using the composer's own orchestration.

Murray Hipkin said: 'I am immensely grateful to everyone who dug deep and gave so generously, and as this term also marks the 20th anniversary of my first concert with NLC, I hope that you will join us for this special, and very personal, double celebration.'

Tickets can be booked at <https://tickets.northlondonchorus.org> or purchased from St James Church bookshop. Prices £25/£21/£13, concessions £2 off.

A painter whose whole world was torn apart

Archer reader Ruth Kersley recalls the life of her friend Alicia Melamed Adams, who has died aged 95. She describes her as a unique artist who managed to transform the horrors of her wartime experiences into potent and expressive images.

Born in Eastern Poland to a middle-class Jewish family, Alicia's happy life ended abruptly when she was 13 and the Nazis occupied her home town. Jews were placed in a ghetto and Alicia's beloved and creative brother Josef was incarcerated in a concentration camp in Lvov where he disappeared without a trace.

In 1943 Alicia and her family were taken to the local prison, where the Gestapo starved Jews for three days and then took them to the woods to shoot them. A young man called Poldek Weiss, known to Alicia's family, was released because his father, a tailor, made suits for the Gestapo. Poldek pleaded with his father to ask if Alicia could be saved as his wife. His father made another suit and Alicia was released. Her 1963 painting *The Parting* shows Alicia in one final embrace with her family,



Life story: Alicia Melamed Adams in front of her painting *Looking Back* at her last exhibition in May 2022

who were all shot the next day.

Alicia survived the war and met Izrael Natan Melamed, who had also lost his entire family. They married in Warsaw in 1946, living in France before emigrating to England in 1950. Their son Charles was born in London in 1951. Izrael later changed his name to Adam Adams in the 1960s.

In the 1960s Alicia attended St Martin's School of Art where she was encouraged by a fellow artist to confront her painful memories by keeping a diary. She described her first painting *Looking Back* as a way of combatting depression. "You can see me coming out of darkness towards the light," she said.

Her paintings were exhibited widely including at the Imperial War Museum. She became a member of the United Society of Artists and her still lifes,

flower paintings and portraits became increasingly full of light and colour with her hallmark, a heart, reflecting her hopes for a loving world.

I first met Alicia when accompanying a group of primary school children to one of her exhibitions. She went into secondary schools to speak, was interviewed for several BBC documentaries to mark Holocaust Memorial Day and exhibited with Polish artists in 2019.

Adam died in 2020. Despite increasing frailty and loss of sight, Alicia never lost her sense of humour and remained beautiful and elegant to the end. I miss my visits, her laughter and her vivid memories. She is survived by her son Charles, grandchildren Craig, Leigh, Melissa and Nicholas and great-grandson Felix.

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Class-to-class call rekindles friendship with school in India

Earlier this year, children at Martin Primary School in East Finchley were able to talk to their counterparts at their twin school in India for the first time since the pandemic. Jane Conway, who was visiting Tryamboli School in Kolhapur at the time, reports.

Since the two schools were twinned in 2014, this was only the second occasion pupils were able to speak to each other, and the first since the pandemic, making it especially significant for rekindling the friendship.

As the children took turns to ask each other questions about their school life over Zoom, any initial shyness soon gave way to a more relaxed exchange.

The time difference meant it was 9am in London, on a cold winter's morning, in contrast to the afternoon 38-degree heat in southern India. This stretched the imagination on both sides and prompted a demonstration by the Martin School students of how many layers of clothing it takes to keep warm.

Other comparisons were the timetables, with a later start and finish in India, as well as Saturday school, and the number of children per classroom (as

many as 60 in Tryamboli). The question that received the most excited response was when a child asked whether the children at Martin School would like to visit Tryamboli School, provoking a unanimous and unequivocal YES.

For the Tryamboli children, it was an opportunity to try out their English skills and they impressed their London peers with their ability to converse in their third language after Marathi and Hindi. This extended to a musical finale from the Tryamboli children, who sang a Jolly Phonics song with actions they had learned from Martin School teachers Shona Glackin and Julie Taylor when they visited the school in 2018.

As the Martin School children filed out of the classroom, arms were raised in prolonged goodbyes with promises to speak again soon.



Close connection: Pupils at the Tryamboli School in Kolhapur, India, talk online to their friends at Martin School, East Finchley. Photo Jane Conway

Free art exhibition

East Finchley Open Artists' latest exhibition reveals how the visual arts can explore the interplay of ideas, media, techniques, colours and forms. For example, in her piece *Colours United*, Laura Fishman creates a multi-coloured flag to symbolise the diverse culture of Britain.



Laura Fishman's Flag

"The artists at this exhibition have created a varied, powerful and evocative body of work that includes 2D and 3D art plus functional craft work, too, that I'm excited to share

with everyone," said fellow artist Gail Altschuler.

The 'Interplay' show takes place at Hornsey Library in Haringey Park, Crouch End, N8 9JA, from 4-6 April and then, with a break for Easter, from 11-23 April. Open Monday to Friday from 1-7pm, Saturday from 1-5pm and Sunday from 12-4pm. Entry is free. There will be art workshops for children on Sunday 16 April from 1.30-3.30pm. Find out more at eastfinchleyopen.org.uk



Keep dancing: Strictly winner Rose Ayling-Ellis with birthday boy Leslie

Rose takes to dancefloor with Leslie

When actress and 2021 *Strictly Come Dancing* winner Rose Ayling-Ellis saw videos of people enjoying themselves at Finchley deaf charity JDA on their TikTok feed she thought it looked a fun place to be and decided to drop in for a surprise visit.

Rose, who was born deaf and has just finished appearing in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* in the West End, spent a morning at the charity's base in Woodside Park Road, N12, chatting to members, staff and volunteers.

She answered all their questions about her time on *Strictly* and *EastEnders* and also took

to the floor to dance with JDA member Leslie, who was celebrating his 90th birthday.

JDA spokesperson Jacqueline Nortman said: "The room was electric and full of laughter and happiness as Rose answered many questions and posed for lots of photos before joining members for lunch and

bidding everyone farewell." JDA is the only charity in the Jewish community to support deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing people. It operates 40 services benefitting more than 2,000 people each year. Find out more at www.jdeaf.org.uk and on TikTok @jdeafcharity

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