



Long-serving helper Peggy, centre, gets a special thank you from fellow volunteer Annette Morris, left, and hospice shop manager Anastasiya Zhinipotoku.

Thirty years helping out at hospice charity shop

Anyone who shops regularly at the North London Hospice shop in the High Road, N2, is likely to know Peggy, one of their longest-serving volunteers. Peggy, whose real name is Mary-Jane Kevin, has lived in East Finchley for 38 years and recently completed 30 years behind the counter and in the back room at the charity shop.

She was presented with flowers and a certificate by fellow volunteers and hospice managers as a thank you for the years of service she has given to the store.

Shop manager Anastasiya Zhinipotoku said Peggy was truly deserving of the Long Service Award. "Peggy always welcomes the shoppers with a big smile and keeps the staff in

stitches with her many asides and Irish humour," she said.

"She is extremely supportive and dedicated."

As we report in our Be Part of It column this month, the North London Hospice shop always welcomes new volunteer members to its team. For more details, pop into the shop any time or call Anastasiya on 020 8883 6493.

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago: July 2013

After the Somali Bravanese Community Centre in Coppetts Road, Muswell Hill, was destroyed in an arson attack the previous month, Barnet Council promised a rebuild. Council leader Richard Cornelius said: "I have no intention of leaving a hateful scar on the landscape." Local people were shocked and disturbed by the attack and a vigil was held at the site soon afterwards, organised by Unite Against Fascism. Four years ago, the Somali Bravanese were finally offered permanent facilities in the new Tarling Road Community Centre in East Finchley.

15 years ago: July 2008

Traders in the High Road, N2, warned that a council decision to start charging for use of the pavement outside their premises could threaten their livelihoods. Until 2008, Barnet had allowed traders free use of 10% of the pavement outside their shops as long as at least two metres was left clear for pedestrians. Despite shopkeepers' fears, pavement use has continued to increase, especially by cafés and restaurants.

23 years ago: July 2000

Archie, East Finchley station's famous statue, celebrated its 60th birthday this month. The statue was unveiled on 22 July 1940 by its sculptor Eric Aumonier and cost £245 to make, using steel, beech wood and lead. The Archer statue, from which this newspaper takes its name, links the station to its historic surroundings as an ancient hunting ground.

Food bank draws on the power of 10

By David Gritten

It has now been a whole decade since the need was recognised in Finchley for a means to support residents hit hard by poverty and suffering from a shortage of food for their families. Clearly, something needed to be done, and a food bank was duly introduced in 2013.

Based within St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church on the High Road, N2, Finchley Foodbank swiftly became a sought-after destination for local people who were struggling to make ends meet. It was a laudable enterprise and, while it initially alleviated a problem for many individuals and families, that was not the end of the story. Back in the food bank's early days, no-one could have foreseen the ways in which life would subsequently change so abruptly for masses of people.

The Covid-19 pandemic was bad enough, but it would soon be followed by a widespread cost-of-living crisis, which continues to this day.

Foodbank facts Remarkably, Finchley Foodbank has steadily grown with the passing years and has succeeded in meeting local demand. The Foodbank now regularly supports more than 200 households and offers aid to as many as 650 people in any given week, not only in Finchley, but across the borough of Barnet, often supplying three days of food and essential household goods.

Such has been the success

of its operation, an event was held last month at St. Mary's to mark the ten years of its existence. It was a well-attended occasion, and the mood among the guests was distinctly upbeat. The main speaker for the evening was the then Mayor of Barnet and East Finchley councillor Alison Moore, who said: "From small beginnings, the Finchley Foodbank has grown over the past ten years to meet rising demand, the challenges of the Covid pandemic and the ongoing cost of living crisis, with their trademark blend of compassion, determination and professionalism.. "With food banks sadly more needed than ever, I congratulate all the staff and volunteers for their fantastic service to our community over the past decade, and know that they will be there alongside us to meet the challenges of tomorrow." Something about Finchley Foodbank's tenth anniversary has galvanised local people connected with it. The phrase 'The Power of 10' is currently in wide use, and plays its part in stimulating a major push to address the challenges of food poverty in the borough.



Double-decker: Author and illustrator Oscar Ellis hands over his donation to Finchley Foodbank volunteer Louis Victor. Photo Mike Coles

Oscar's bus donation

By Lynn Winton

Oscar Ellis is a young man with a talent for drawing and illustration, and has just completed an Arts Award in the highest category Gold level.

As part of that, one of his tasks was to create a portfolio, and Oscar went a step further by writing, illustrating and printing a storybook which was then exhibited for three weeks at the Artsdepot in North Finchley. Called *The Breakfast Bus*, it tells the story of a campaign to raise money for hungry families. During the exhibition, sales topped £200 and Oscar wisely decided it would be very fitting, given the subject, to donate it all to Finchley Foodbank.

"It's so kind of Oscar to donate his profits to us," said Anna Maughan, co-ordinator, "We are currently supporting 220 households a week, that's around 600 people, so we can definitely make good use of donations like this". Find out more at finchleyfoodbank.org.uk Oscar, 19, was already familiar with the Artsdepot, having won a place on their work experience scheme for learning-disabled young people.



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