



On stage: English Youth Ballet principals Lyndsey Fraser and Joshua Webb will be joined in *Coppelia* by Jessica McDonough, right, taking her first role.

These feet were made for dancing

By Lynn Winton

Jessica McDonough is only 11 but her dream to dance professionally has already become reality after having been invited to perform alongside international professional dancers in the English Youth Ballet's production of *Coppelia*.

Jessica, who lives with her family in Durham Road, N2, and goes to Fortismere School, trains at Little London Ballet in Muswell Hill for 11 hours a week, as well as managing to

stay on top of her schoolwork. Any spare time is taken up with visits to Sadler's Wells and Royal Ballet screenings at the cinema. I asked Jessica if she is planning to focus on dance for her

future: "The highlight of my day is going to my ballet class. I'm aware that it's a really hard career but I can't think of my future without dancing."

Coppelia was staged on Sunday 26 February at the Beck Theatre in Hayes, west London, and Jessica and her family are hoping it will be just the first of many professional roles.

Play area revamp wins green spaces cash

By John Lawrence

Parents and residents seeking to completely re-equip the ageing Market Place Playground in East Finchley have won another huge tranche of cash to help them get the project under way. The Friends of Market Place Playground group learned in January that they have been awarded £56,500 by the Mayor of London's Grow Back Greener fund towards converting the current hard-surface play area into a natural space.

The funds will be used to remove the existing tarmac and replace it with grass, sand and other permeable surfaces. The remainder of the grant will be used to plant 20 new trees.

The Grow Back Greener Fund supports communities in creating and enhancing green space in London and improving the city's climate resilience. Market Place Playground was chosen partly because it is in an area more than ten minutes' walk from the nearest green space.

It is also deemed currently to be at particular risk of air pollution, surface flooding and the 'urban heat island effect', all as a result of a lack of natural

surfaces.

Fund-raising continues

This latest grant brings the total raised by Friends of Market Place Playground so far to £276,500, well on their way to their final target of £350,000, with work still in progress on further grant applications and funding sources.

The detailed design, by landscape designer Aileen Shackell, has been submitted for planning approval to Barnet Council. As we reported last month, the plans also include new play equipment such as a table tennis table, climbing frames, swings, balance bars and a roundabout and slide.

Land sale at the Phoenix

On show for free throughout March in the foyer of the Phoenix Cinema is a solo exhibition of paintings by London-based contemporary artist Ava Grauls.

Called *Land Sale*, it uses source maps, geological surveys and satellite images to explore questions around the legitimacy of land ownership and nation building. Ava, who is South African-Belgian, experienced the end of the Apartheid regime in the 1990s.

Spring concert

The next concert to be performed by Alyth Choral Society will take place on Sunday 19 March at St Mary-at-Finchley Parish Church, Hendon Lane, N3 1TR.

The programme features choral works by Haydn, Gilbert and Sullivan, local composers and a selection from *Schindler's List*. Tickets cost £10 and those under 16 years of age can come along for free. The price includes refreshments. Further information can be found at alythchoralsociety.org where tickets can also be purchased.

New N2 network invites members

By John Lawrence

Members of East Finchley's business and community network N2United have come together and are calling for community members to step forward to help keep its much-valued networking activities alive.

As we reported last month, chair Nick Allan stepped down after seven years at the helm of N2United to pursue other interests. With other members unable to take his place due to their own commitments, the group decided to pause their monthly meetings.

But there are still meeting dates in the diary and plenty of demand to maintain the valuable connections that N2United worked hard to build since 2015.

The re-formed group, which has re-branded itself N2Network, intends to start with a quarterly residents' forum, and hopes to find different people to chair the meetings.

Invitation to join the team

Anyone who is interested in joining the new N2Network is invited to go along to an informal networking meeting at the East Finchley Constitutional Club in The Walks, N2, on Thursday 27 April at 7.30pm where several local forums will come together to discuss cooperating for the benefit of East Finchley. You can also express your interest by emailing N2network@ILoveN2.co.uk.

Help the network grow

Hilary Townley, original member and co-founder of N2United, said: "It would be such a pity to lose it. We've built

a huge following and achieved many positive things for the community and local businesses.

"It was always my intention, having launched it, that local businesses and residents would take it on and evolve the network. So let's throw the invitation out to N2! The door is open and we'd be very happy to hear from anyone or even several people or businesses who'd like to continue to build on the success of N2United."

Emma's experience

One grateful member is Emma Frampton, who has drawn on advice and expertise at N2United meetings to help her get the Bin There Donate That recycling and reuse project off the ground in shops, schools and homes all around East Finchley.

Emma told *The Archer*: "Through N2United, I met people who introduced me to others including many who have set up environmental schemes; people who have links to funds; and ideas on how to make Bin There official, to get funding and more voluntary help eventually. While following through on the above is time-consuming, I have the tools, and this is all thanks to N2United meetings."

See Emma's letter on page 11.

Beethoven and Bonis

Finchley Symphony Orchestra and conductor Christopher Stark's first concert of 2023 will feature music by one of the world's most famous composers and one of its lesser known.

The orchestra will be joined by German-Brazilian violinist Konrad Elias-Trostmann to play Beethoven's monumental *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*. The orchestra will also play Beethoven's *Fourth Symphony*. Completing the programme will be the *Suite en forme de valse* by the Parisian late-romantic composer Mélanie Bonis, whose music suffered years of neglect despite winning high praise from contemporaries such as Saint-Saens.

The concert takes place on Saturday 25 March at 7.30pm at Trinity Church, Nether Street N12. Tickets cost £18, concessions £15, under 18s £7 and you can save £2 per ticket by advance booking online at www.finchleysymphony.org



Where to donate your unwanted household items for recycling

- Batteries to EF Electricals and Sainsbury's, High Road
- Bicycle inner tubes to Bike & Run, High Road
- Blister packs to Oakdale Pharmacy, High Road, and Links Pharmacy, East End Road
- Bras to Aliya J Boutique, High Road
- Cables and small electrical items to EF Electricals, High Road
- Crisp packets to Cherry Tree Café, Cherry Tree Wood
- Dental products (toothbrushes and heads) to Cavendish Dental Practice, East End Road
- Electrical wires to Everything Electrical, High Road
- Inkjet cartridges to UOE, High Road
- Lightbulbs to Amy's or EF Electricals, High Road
- Make-up to Oakdale Pharmacy, High Road
- Paper, cork, ribbon, foil, wood off-cuts, buttons, stationery, sequins, carpet samples to Amy's, High Road
- Spectacles to Stewart Duncan Opticians and David Hillel Opticians, High Road

FUN and MUSIC for BABIES and TODDLERS in N2 on TUESDAYS and THURSDAYS



with LIVE ACCOMPANIMENT ON VIOLIN AND GUITAR at EAST FINCHLEY BAPTIST CHURCH, Creighton Avenue

Price £7 per child, £3.50 per sibling

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