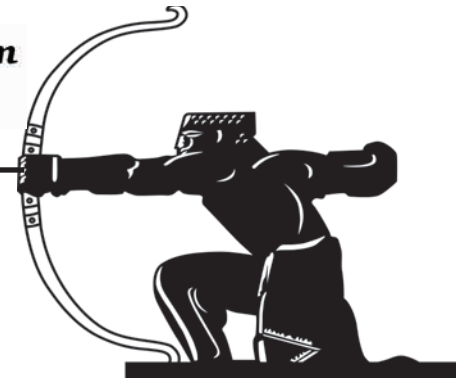


The Archer



March 2023 No. 347

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Top of the bill: The line-up of artists who performed at the High Road Live event in the Phoenix.
 Photo Mike Coles.

Class acts prove N2 is big on talent

A stand-up comic, a nine-year-old DJ, a young violinist and an opera-singing delivery driver were just some of the superb performers who proved East Finchley really has got talent during the highly successful High Road Live event. Turn to page 5 for the full story and more photos.

Inside this issue...

Strawberry Vale heating

Residents on the Strawberry Vale estate in East Finchley have been told that changes to how they pay for their heating and hot water will not take place until the autumn at the earliest. Turn to page 3.

Call for new N2 network

A call has been issued for a new N2 networking group to carry on the valuable meetings started by N2United community and business network, which closed last month. Turn to page 7.

How I ran down the M1

Last month, East Finchley dad Jamie Austin ran 220 miles down the length of the M1 to raise money for diabetes research and it was a journey full of invigorating highs and painful lows. Turn to page 6.

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Be part of the festival

The East Finchley Festival team is gearing up for the biggest event of the year in N2 and is now accepting applications from performers and stallholders.

This year's festival will take place on Sunday 18 June in Cherry Tree Wood, featuring live music and performance art, storytelling tent, street food, bars and a huge makers' market.

The festival, run by non-profit organisation East Finchley Festival CIC, also welcomes sponsorship from local businesses to help meet costs of staging the event.

You can find out how to apply to be part of this year's



festival at www.eastfinchleyfestival.org/take-part

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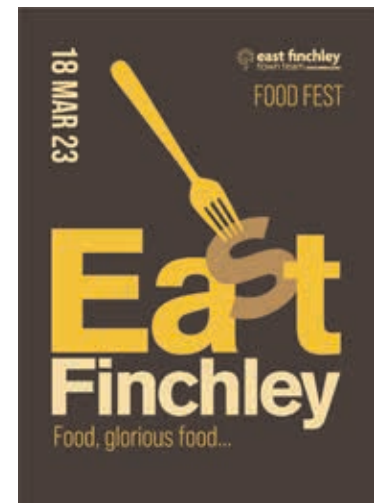
Celebration of food and drink for High Road

By Diana Cormack

The next event organised by East Finchley Town Team in its drive to encourage more people to visit the High Road takes place this month. The Food Festival, known as Ea't Finchley, is sandwiched between St Patrick's Day and Mothering Sunday.

As a starter, on Friday 17 March the Cherry Tree Café in Cherry Tree Wood is serving food and drink with an Irish theme, along with performances of Irish dancing. There will also be celebrations in local pubs.

On Sunday 19 March you can treat your mum to a meal at a local café or restaurant (look out for special offers). Also on Sunday, at 11am, the Phoenix Cinema will be showing a food-related film suitable for all the family, the animated comedy *Ratatouille*.



From noon until 6 pm on the Saturday 18 March there will be tastings and promotions along the High Road in this celebration of food and culture. Local traders and businesses will be joining in by decorating their premises fittingly and offering samples to passers-by.

Colourful stalls run by local charities, schools and volunteer groups will provide information, demonstrations and a variety of food projects, and there'll be a local food trail to follow.

You can't get more local than home cooking, so entries for the Great East Finchley Bake Off (see page 2 for full details) are eagerly awaited. They will be judged by that connoisseur of cakes, local councillor Arjun Mittra. East Finchley's own Alison Moore, Mayor of Barnet, will be present, no doubt eager to see what her ward is capable of producing.

Visit www.iloven2.co.uk/eat-finchley for more information and keep your eyes open for posters and social media @EFtownteam.



The Archer

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Copy deadlines - April: 17 March, May: 14 April, June: 12 May

Get involved in the Great N2 Bake Off

By Fiona Doyle

East Finchley Town Team's Food Fest on Saturday 18 March is shaping up to be a great local community event with cafés, shops and restaurants along the High Road celebrating all things food in East Finchley.

And one of the biggest attractions will be a baking competition where anyone is welcome to take part, with the honour of being named East Finchley's star baker as the prize. Cake lovers of all ages, including children, are encouraged to bring along their bakes on the day.



Competition rules

1. Your bake must be connected to East Finchley in some way. Perhaps you'd like to really challenge yourself and bake an Archer statue shaped cake, or you could create a cake that represents your road or street name, or one that shows some of the wonderful different cultures we have in East Finchley. The theme can be as fun (and as loosely connected) as you like.

2. At least one of the ingredients must be sourced from a shop in East Finchley.

3. All bakes must be brought to the Town Team stall on the High Road outside Budgens by 12pm on Saturday 18 March.

4. All participants will be asked to complete a list of all the ingredients included in the bake (a form will be provided on the day).

5. Once the competition has ended, bakes will be sliced and

offered to the community, with all cash and card donations raised going to the N2 Food Project, which supplies free meals every Tuesday morning from the steps of the Phoenix Cinema.

Local councillor Arjun Mitra will be judging the competition alongside one of the volunteers from the N2 Food Project. It's all in good fun and if the local community can raise some funds for the N2 Food Project at the same time, then all the better. Please encourage any budding bakers you know to take part in the competition. Good luck!

Find out more about the Town Team's activities at www.ILoveN2.co.uk/Town-team

Sharpen your memory

Age UK Barnet has announced a series of new talks from neuroscientist Professor Catherine Loveday, a regular on BBC Radio 4's *All in the Mind*, aimed at improving mental wellbeing.

In the first talk called 'Boosting Everyday Memories', Catherine will offer practical ideas to ensure our important moments or facts stay with us. She will also reveal how the brain makes memories and why some things stick in our mind and others get lost.

It takes place on Wednesday 8 March from 7pm to 8pm at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2. The charity is suggesting a donation of £5 and refreshments will be provided. To book your place, contact Teresa on 07502 989403 or email teresa.gallagher@ageukbarnet.org.uk.

Future talks by Professor Catherine Loveday will include 'Harnessing the Power of Music' on Wednesday 19 April



Those were the days: The eight-strong Safer Neighbourhood team based in East Finchley in 2008, made up of a sergeant, two constables and six Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).

Extra police support officers... but how many in East Finchley?

By Janet Maitland

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has announced a plan for an extra 500 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) across the capital, funded by a rise in council tax. But there is no confirmation yet if any will be stationed in N2.

East Finchley currently has just one PCSO, Jan Lovell, who has become a familiar and trusted face since joining the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) on the High Road in 2004. She works alongside two constables and is managed by a sergeant, shared with West Finchley and Finchley Church End SNTs, who also have only one PCSO.

It's not yet known where the new PCSOs will be stationed, but East Finchley may not be allocated even one, not only because there are over 600 SNTs in London, but also because the new PCSOs will be deployed in neighbourhoods 'disproportionately impacted by crime'.

East Finchley has a comparatively low crime rate of 56 per 1,000 residents, which is lower than the Barnet borough's rate of 67 and much lower than

London's overall rate of 87.

Why so few ?

PCSOs have 30 powers. Although these don't include arrest, they can require a suspect to remain with them until a police officer arrives. The local intelligence that PCSOs develop as they become familiar with their patch is an essential part of neighbourhood policing. So why are there so few of them?

Jan Lovell was one of three when she first started. By 2008 this had risen to six, a growth in numbers mirrored across London which at that time had a total of 4,300 PCSOs. But drastic government cuts were made in 2015 in order to save money and their numbers have not increased since.

Improvements and costs

There are currently just 1,185 for the whole of London. So, by March 2024, when all the 500 new recruits will have finished training, there will be a total of 1,685 across the 600 SNTs.

Nevertheless, this is an improvement on current numbers, and the Met has announced that from March, an officer at superintendent level will lead neighbourhood policing in every borough.

The Mayor is proposing to fund the new officers by increasing council tax by an average total of £38.55 a year, made up of £15 for the additional PCSOs, £20 for transport and £3.55 for the London Fire Brigade.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

18 Bedford Road, N2

Roof extension involving rear dormer window and three front roof lights.

36 Church Lane, N2

Roof extension including rear dormer window, side dormer window to rear outrigger, three front roof lights.

247A East End Road, N2

Roof extension including hip to gable, rear dormer window and three front roof lights. Extension to existing flat roof.

29 Elmhurst Avenue, N2

Roof extension involving hip to gable, rear dormer, two front roof lights and new side gable window.

14 Hertford Road, N2

Roof extension involving rear dormer and front rooflights. Solar panels. Single-storey side/rear extension with new patio area. First-floor rear extension. Air source heat pump to rear.

28 High Road, N2

Single-storey ground floor office extension, and conversion of

first floor office into one self-contained flat.

118 High Road, N2

Installation of externally illuminated fascia sign, internally illuminated fascia sign and internally illuminated projecting sign.

Ground Floor Flat, 77 Leicester Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension to existing rear outrigger.

20 Park Hall Road, N2

Doors and windows to rear to replace existing ones on ground floor. Roof extension involving rear dormer and outrigger dormer and three roof lights.

27 Summerlee Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension; proposed depth 4 m, maximum height 3.8 and eaves height of 2.8 metres.

71 Summerlee Avenue

Single-storey rear extension following demolition of existing extension.

75 Summerlee Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

Boot sale in the warm

The next Muswell Hill Indoor Car Boot Sale will take place on Saturday 25 March from 10am to 1pm at its usual location in Hornsey Parish Church Hall, on the corner of Cranley Gardens and Park Road, N10, 3AH. Admission is 50p with refreshments available. For more information, contact 020 8368 8180.



Temporary reprieve over heat meters on Strawberry Vale

By John Lawrence

Residents on the Strawberry Vale estate in East Finchley have been told that changes to their heating and hot water system will not take place until the autumn at the earliest.

We reported in December that estate managers Peabody were planning to introduce heat meters into all 268 houses and flats, switching everyone from the existing controlled pricing system to individual meters.

The Strawberry Vale Residents Association said the vast majority of residents were opposed to the move, fearing that the new meters will make it more difficult for hard-up households to budget, and leave them vulnerable to greater fluctuations in their energy prices.

However, last month Peabody announced that they were postponing the switch until the second half of the year and possibly later. The residents' association described it as a "minor temporary victory".

The decision follows a winter when there have been multiple breakdowns in the estate's heating system, leaving many homes with little or no hot water or heating for days.

Peabody was forced to bring in temporary additional boilers to restore essential services.

Peabody's response

A Peabody spokesperson told *The Archer*: "We are postponing the planned installation of the heat meters at the estate while we work on carrying out the necessary repairs to the heat network."

They denied that the new heat meters, when they are eventually installed, would put residents in the position of people across the country who have been forced to use pre-payment meters, a practice recently criticised by energy regulator Ofgem and government ministers.

"Heat meters do not incur the more expensive standing charges which people face using a prepayment meter to pay for other types of fuel; the costs are the same or lower than credit meters," said the spokesperson.



Healthy and happy: Louis Victor, centre, with fellow walkers in Cherry Tree Wood and, below, his eye-catching logo. Photos Mike Coles.

Louis leads the way on wellbeing

By Lynn Winton

Since moving here just four years ago, Louis Victor has become one of East Finchley's many human community assets, volunteering at Finchley Foodbank, being part of *The Archer* newspaper's magnificent delivery team, and coordinating collections on behalf of local project Driving Aid to Ukraine.

So I was not at all surprised when Louis told me he will lead an inclusive and gentle weekly wellbeing walk, under the umbrella of the Ramblers Association, who have given him training and continuing support.

He is aiming for these one hour walking sessions through Cherry Tree Wood and Highgate Wood to improve activity levels safely for adults of all ages. With the added benefits of spending time in nature and making new local connections, all this combines to build up both physical and mental wellbeing.



Walks are free to all on Wednesdays at 10am, meeting at Bus Stop H opposite East Finchley tube station. Look out for Louis in his green tabard with the logo East Finchley Wellbeing Walk. There will be two loo stops, and a chance to take the weight off your feet at Cherry Tree Café, which will give everyone an opportunity for refreshments and conversation.

"From my own experience, walking has benefits for everyone," said Louis, "and a walk shared is doubly beneficial."

It's fine to just turn up at the meeting place, or Louis can be contacted at efwellbeingwalk@gmail.com or on Instagram at [@efwellbeingwalk](https://www.instagram.com/efwellbeingwalk).

One of the best things about East Finchley is that it has so many self-starters who get initiatives of this kind off the ground. Have any other readers started projects that are of community benefit? If so we would love to hear from you. Let us know at news@the-archer.co.uk

Music stops for Les Aldrich shop

By Daphne Chamberlain

Les Aldrich Music, which claims to be the oldest music shop in north London, is closing on Thursday 6 April. According to its website, its roots in Muswell Hill date back over 100 years, and it has been on its present site in Fortis Green Road for 78 years.

As well as vinyl and CDs, the shop sells sheet music and a wide range of new and second-hand instruments, with accessories and extras. It also repairs woodwind, brass, guitars and bowed string instruments. Perhaps its most famous customer was the then 13-year-old Ray Davis, of The Kinks, who bought his first guitar there.

A long-time customer who became the shop's owner in 2013 was Ian Rosenblatt. Under his ownership the shop was staffed by professional musicians and for many years Les Aldrich sold tickets for the annual East Finchley Festival.



Falling silent: The Les Aldrich Music Shop in Muswell Hill.

Customers respond

Celebrated local poet Fleur Adcock told *The Archer*, "One year when they were selling tickets for us, I used to go along every afternoon before the shop closed to pick them up. But what I remember most is the pleasant, helpful attitude of the staff. I also enjoyed browsing there occasionally, among the CDs. Wonderful shop; it's tragic that they are closing."

Another appreciative customer told us, "This is very sad. I live at Chingford, and there is no other shop around like Les Aldrich. I often come over to browse. Such a pity. First the Muswell Hill Bookshop and now this."

On its website, staff wrote: "We would like to thank our loyal customers who have supported us over the past 78 years and we wish you all the best in your musical endeavours!"

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Open to all: The Holy Trinity drop-in centre is open on Tuesday afternoons. Photo Mike Coles

Warm hands, warm welcome

By Diana Cormack

On Tuesday 14 February, only a few days after refurbishment had been completed, a new drop-in centre was launched at Holy Trinity Church, Church Lane, N2.

Vicar Father Marius told *The Archer* that thanks to the recently installed heating system the congregation can now take their coats off, making the setting up of the centre feasible as they now feel able to offer a warm space to those who need it.

There is disabled access and

everyone, whatever their age, is welcome on Tuesday afternoons between 2pm and 5pm. Free refreshments are available with toys and games close at hand in the playroom adjoining this warm and friendly space.

The centre is the brainchild of parishioners Sandy and John Barker who live nearby, ably

assisted by Julia Hines of the Grange Big Local. For more information contact info@grangebiglocal.org

This warm space will be available weekly until the end of April and will re-open later in the year, subject to review and prevalent conditions.

Fly-tipping fears as skip is moved on

By Diana Cormack

The delight of local residents at the removal of the abandoned skip in Brompton Grove (*The Archer*, January 2023) was short-lived.

Having liaised with Barnet Council over the problem of this long-standing unsavoury heap, they were pleased when a lorry arrived and took it away in early February.



Pile it high: The skip is gone from Brompton Grove but rubbish remains.

anything that had fallen from the overflowing rubbish or had been deposited around it was not disposed of and, at the time of writing, was still lying there in the road.

Ignoring the fact that some could have been contaminated by whatever the skip contained, it is an open invitation, if one was needed, for other fly-tippers to add to the pile.

Word is still awaited about it being cleared away, but as Brompton Grove is an unadopted road it is not clear that Barnet Council is responsible. Perhaps someone should do something before it becomes a health and safety or environmental health issue.

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Changes to bus routes bring new connections to N2

By Daphne Chamberlain

Last year we reported on a Transport for London proposal to switch the routes of the 143 and 263 buses between the A1 junction and Archway. This was just one of a raft of proposals for scrapping and altering bus routes across London. Public reaction against all these proposals was so strong that, with extra funding of £25m per year from Mayor Sadiq Khan, only 22% of the service changes consulted on will now go ahead.

TFL say that these changes will be only in areas where “numerous alternative public transport options exist”. Here are the changes affecting East Finchley.

263 route

The 263 still runs between Barnet General Hospital and Highbury Barn, but is now rerouted after the Woodside Avenue bus stop on the Great North Road to follow the same route as the 143, via North Hill, Highgate Village, Highgate Hill and Whittington Hospital to Archway Station. It then continues as before through Holloway to Highbury Barn.

It is still scheduled to run every 10-minutes during the day on Mondays to Saturdays, and every 12 minutes in the evenings and on Sundays. It no longer covers Archway Road and Highgate Station, but that section can be reached by the newly extended 234.

234 route

The 234, which used to run from Barnet Spires via Froern Barnet Road, Muswell Hill, Fortis Green and East Finchley station to Highgate Wood, now continues along Archway Road to Archway Station, finishing at bus stop W on Junction Road. The return journey starts at bus stop G on Highgate Hill. It is still timetabled for every 12 minutes during the day on Mondays to Saturdays, and every 20 minutes during the evening and on Sundays.

143 route

The schooltime-only journeys at 08.05 from Archway Station to East Finchley Cemetery and 15.25 from East Finchley Cemetery to Archway Station are withdrawn. There are no changes to the route, and the timetable is still every 12 minutes during the daytime on Monday to Saturdays and every 15 minutes during the evening and all day on Sundays.

N271 route

This night bus replaces the former N271 between Moorgate, Finsbury Square and Highgate Village, before running via the revised 263 route to North Finchley via North Hill, East Finchley Station, High Road East Finchley and High Road North Finchley. There

it finishes at bus stop Z2 on Ballards Lane and starts from bus stop E on North Finchley High Road. It will run every 30 minutes on all nights of the week. The daytime 271 has been withdrawn.

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago:
March 2013

Stanley Road playing field was sold to the Archer Academy for £3.55 million, funded by the Department for Education, for the construction of a new school building for younger pupils at the Academy. A business plan submitted by Sport EF to create a multi-sports facility for the whole community, backed by organisations including the Marathon Trust and Sport England, was rejected by Barnet Council.

15 years ago:
March 2008

Access to the road alongside Park House, opposite East Finchley station, and the parking spaces it leads to was blocked off by Barnet Council and remains so after 15 years. The vacant Park House was then up for sale following the departure of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute and remained empty for some time before becoming a nursery. The area remains an unsightly approach to the entrance to Cherry Tree Wood.

23 years ago:
March 2000

The Phoenix Cinema hosted a film premiere, the first public screening of *The End of the Affair* adapted from the novel by Graham Greene. In contrast to glitzy West End events, the audience was treated to homemade cakes, wine donated by Waitrose in Ballards Lane and tea from an urn lent by Martin School. The sell-out audience could also participate in a raffle and in total over £5,000 was raised towards refurbishment of the Phoenix, which featured briefly in the film.



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Talent and artistry centre stage at High Road Live

By Diana Cormack and Peter Hale

The hidden talents and creative flair of people across East Finchley got a chance to shine in the spotlight during a weekend of arts and music at the High Road Live event in January.

Theatre in the High Road, ready for a full day of free classes and workshops for young people. The programme included ballet, dance, music, musical theatre, glitter art, drumming, song writing, and acting workshops,

success, and we look forward to hopefully being a part of similar events in the future. It was an absolute pleasure to be a part of the High Road Live event, thank you for having us."

Fixation were especially interested in the Phoenix Cinema's showing of *Matilda the Musical* as they will be performing their theatre production of it with young people in May. The film was screened at noon on Sunday 29 January, with queues of excited children forming in the foyer for tickets.

Talent galore

Later on the cinema was even busier for East Finchley's Got Talent, with people who confessed to never having been to the Phoenix before eagerly taking their seats. They



Last-minute entrant: Violinist Gloria with host Pat Leacock.



Guitar duo: Simi and Riley. All photos by Mike Coles.

Opening the weekend, organised by East Finchley Town Team, the Community Choir that meets in the Archer Academy sang and handed out song-sheets to passers-by outside Budgens, many of whom stopped to join in, encouraging the group to give a repeat performance.

Arts activities

Bunting and balloons went up early on the Finchley Youth

run by Fixation Academy of Performing Arts and Barnet Education Arts Trust.

In fact the venue was buzzing all day with more drop-in sessions, including art drawing run by East Finchley Open Artists and the Archer Academy, along with Lego by Barnet Youth.

Carly Pryke and Laura Davitt, directors of Fixation, said: "The weekend was a great



Live and kicking: Dancer Gaia gets her certificate from Pat Leacock.

self-choreographed pieces; a confident young DJ Jesse; Ruchi, an impressive female stand-up comic; and the youngest competitor who stood in at the last minute, violinist Gloria.

The participants each received a certificate and gave the four Town Team judges a hard task in choosing the winner, with the special trophy being awarded to nine-year-old Gloria.

Audience participation followed in the form of a great *Grease* sing-along before a nostalgic viewing of the film itself brought the enjoyable afternoon to a close.

See you next year

Kate Brown, chair of Town Team, told *The Archer*: "Town Team were really delighted with how East



Team effort: Host Pat Leacock and judges Mike Hughes, Hilary Townley, Chris Hampson and Kate Galston with winner, Gloria.

responded enthusiastically to each of the ten talents on show, which ranged as much in age as in activity.

There was Max, the opera-singing delivery driver often heard as he tours our streets on his scooter; Jake the puppeteer Sue who made her performing debut singing *Amazing Grace*; guitarist and composer David singing his own song; teenagers Simi and Riley playing their joint guitar composition; dancing sisters Adara and Gaia who separately performed their



Singer-songwriter: David



Dancer: Adara



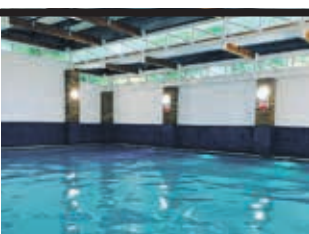
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Finchley came out to the High Road for our Arts and Music activities. We have had great feedback about all of the events. Several people have even contacted us to say they want us to make the East Finchley Got Talent an annual event."

Follow East Finchley Town Team on socials @eftownteam



Pains and pleasures of a long-distance runner

Last month, East Finchley dad Jamie Austin ran the length of the M1 motorway to raise money for research into type 1 diabetes after his son Henry was diagnosed with the condition. Here, Jamie describes the pains that almost stopped him in his tracks and the pleasures that kept him going.

The route was familiar: past East Finchley station, up the High Road, past the Phoenix, over the Stag crossing and on towards our road. But it felt otherworldly as I took the final, tired steps of a run that started 220 miles north and had seen me pass through Yorkshire, the East Midlands and the Home Counties.



Motorway madness: Jamie sets off on his journey down the length of the M1 from Leeds

After the final leg from Hampstead Garden Suburb, I was finally home. In minutes, I would be able to see my wife Rachel, and my children, Rosie, 10, and Henry, 12, after two weeks apart.

It was no real surprise that it felt odd, as the whole project was a curious undertaking. Inspired by Henry's ongoing battle with type 1 diabetes (T1D) and our frequent journeys up and down the M1 to the clinical trial he joined at Sheffield Children's Hospital and to his grandparents in Nottingham, I had decided to run the length of the M1 motorway, from junction 47 at Garforth near Leeds to junction 1 at Brent Cross, over ten days. I called the project 'M1 for T1' and aimed to raise money for T1D charity JDRF.

Secret plan

The hare-brained

scheme only took shape in the second half of 2022. I desperately wanted to do something for Henry and everyone living with T1D, since we had learned what a relentless and exhausting condition it is. I kept the idea secret, as I tested out my legs and my willpower.

In October, having run three consecutive days of 20km+ and made the huge decision to leave my marvellous colleagues at news agency Reuters, I finally announced my plans. The initial reaction from most people was confusion ("Sorry, you're doing what?!") swiftly followed by a wave of support I feel I've been riding ever since.

As I trained, extending the frequency and distance of my runs and learning what and how to eat, the scale of the challenge started to sink in. I had never even completed a marathon, so what was I doing trying to emulate ultramarathon techniques? Talk about running before you crawl!

Some days I felt excited as I stomped up the Dollis Brook path to Barnet, feeling the project was eminently doable. Other days my legs ached and my worry lines deepened as I wondered if I had bitten off more than I could chew. Training intensified as the year closed, with pasta and 30km runs replacing beer and hangovers on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Support team

I set off for Leeds on Sunday 22 January and joined my parents, Barry, 80, and Glenys, 78, who were to be my 'support team'. For the next two weeks, they chauffeured me to start and finish points, kept my spirits up and brought strawberry milk every day (my post-run ritual!). You can say what you like about cycling coach Dave Brailsford and Team Sky's methods, but they have NOTHING on Barry and Glenys.

As we headed south broadly



Close to home: Friends and fellow runners join Jamie, kneeling, in Hampstead Garden Suburb for the final run into East Finchley

following the motorway's route, the days were tough, but I can honestly say that I loved every minute (apart from being away from my family. Thank you, FaceTime).

Low and high points

The lowest point was in the middle. After a fast day through



Off-road: Jamie runs canal-side

Nottingham, my left knee was sore and deteriorated as I ran through Leicester. In the countryside, mud stuck to my feet in huge, heavy clods, straining my knee further. The camber of the canal towpath I was on made my foot land at awkward angles that shot little lightning bolts of pain up my leg.

I carried Henry's cuddly toy, Monkey, in my backpack every day and, as I hobbled to the finish point, quietly wished on him to bring me luck. That evening, as I treated my injury, I told my parents they should be prepared for me to walk from there on. Probably meaning eight hours of slow progress each day.

The thing that probably saved me? My dad had an orthopaedic inner sole in his right shoe to treat a flat foot. I figured a similar, hereditary issue may be hindering me. His left innersole, almost lost amongst old shoes and boxes, fitted perfectly into my trainer. I set out gingerly the next day but, with a straightened gait, the pain dissipated and never returned in the same way.

The high points were too numerous to mention. I ran with friends on all but two days, including N2 residents Joe

Crouch and Tom Avery, and their company was utterly inspiring. As were the messages of support along the way, from our street's WhatsApp group to social media posts from the other side of the world. I was incredibly lucky with the weather, saw some beautiful parts of the country and discovered TikTok (OMG, I am sooo Gen Z).

Most importantly, the project delivered way beyond my expectations. It raised awareness of T1D through media coverage, including stardom for Henry on TV news and the front of *The Archer*, and incredible sponsorship of more than £20,000; a huge amount that will help JDRF deliver their vital work. The gener-

(organised by the wonderful Justine Csaky).

We paused outside the Phoenix, which had kindly put up a sign to welcome me home, before heading to the finish. Turning the corner onto Bedford Road was something I will never forget. A crowd of family, friends and neighbours had gathered in the street to welcome me home. A surreal end to a surreal project. The rest is a blur of confetti, applause, hugs, smiles and cake. Yes, not entirely dissimilar to a wedding, now I think about it...

Now as the dust settles on my adventure (and my trainers), I'm left with nothing but positive memories and a profound sense of gratitude to the people who helped me, especially our amazing local community, which never ceases to get involved, put its money where its mouth is, and support everyone. From me, Henry, our



Glad to be back: Jamie is welcomed home by his family Henry, Rachel and Rosie.

osity has blown me away.

A surreal end

I wasn't alone as I took the final steps up the High Road. A group of local friends, including Archer Academy and Holy Trinity parents and pupils, and Archer Dad football teammates, joined me for the last 3km

family and the whole T1D community; thank you! (Until next time...)

There's still time to support Jamie and his goal to raise as much money as possible for diabetes research charity JDRF. You can make a donation at: www.justgiving.com/page/m1-for-t1

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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

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Device advice: Screen assistance in a friendly atmosphere at the Five Bells Computer Club.

Tea and tech down the pub

By David Gritten

From the outside, the Five Bells on East End Road has the appearance of merely an agreeable East Finchley pub. But step inside at a given time on a given day – Tuesday afternoons are particularly worthwhile – and the Five Bells turns out to be full of surprises.

Most of its customers are of a certain age: no surprise there. But there's a twist: they are visiting because of the support and options not always available to them. The Five Bells can now boast a team of volunteers, mostly senior citizens themselves, who help older people tackle skills that were hitherto new to them: on the internet, on laptops, smartphones and tablets. And the help they offer is free.

How it began

All this has been gladly received and appreciated. The original initiative began in 2016, with a project known as East Finchley Altogether Better. Its aim was to combat loneliness among older people, encouraging neighbours to get to know each other, and hopefully share common interests.

Happily, it has worked:

customers started visiting the Five Bells to explain what help they needed and were matched with relevant skills. And for years the pub's goodwill has given them a place to meet.

Onward and upward

Last October, the club was able to repay some of that goodwill after being awarded some National Lottery funding, enabling the Five Bells to pay for a Zoom subscription, internet access and printed flyers, among other useful upgrades.

Now members bring in their own devices and request assistance from Five Bells volunteers. Refreshments are made readily available and they have proved to be a useful means for members to socialise.

For her part, Toni Koppel, who is the computer club's co-

ordinator, completely understands why the Five Bells is such a success: "A lot of people live on their own. So the social aspect is really important. There's a reason for people to come together."

The Five Bells Computer Club meets on Tuesdays from 2-4pm. For more information, visit five-bells-computer-club.mailchimpsites.com.

The pandemic that no one is talking about

Students at the Archer Academy in East Finchley have set up a group to help people in the area who may be suffering from hygiene poverty. Here **Susana Rio**, one of the students, explains why it's being called a silent pandemic.

Imagine struggling to wash your hair because you cannot afford shampoo. Imagine feeling you have to skip school because you cannot afford soap to keep clean, or detergent to wash your uniform. For many, this requires no imagination; each day they face these unfortunate and dehumanising struggles.

In this country it is estimated that 3.3 million people are experiencing hygiene poverty and are unable to buy essentials like toothpaste and sanitary products, items that most of us take for granted and cannot fathom a life without. Hygiene poverty can leave people caught between paying their rent and being clean.

Anxiety and shame

Despite being a horrifying issue in our society, it isn't widely publicised or discussed in the media. It's a clandestine problem, seemingly invisible due to the shame that shrouds those dealing with it. Not only does it demolish their confidence and ability to enjoy life, the embarrassment that comes with hygiene poverty is almost unavoidable.

Fifty per cent of people who experience hygiene poverty stated they felt anxious and ashamed as a result of going without basic toiletries and a third of people said they felt lonely and isolated. One person stated: "I used to go out, see my friends, but I got anxious about the way I looked and smelt, so I became a recluse."



We are The Hygiene Project

We're a group of 15-16 year olds at the Archer Academy who have created a group with the purpose of helping this issue in our community. Our focus is on spreading awareness in order to help those who suffer from it to receive help and feel less alone, and to encourage action amongst those who can act.

We are also working with Finchley Foodbank to collect donations of hygiene products from students at our school. Fundamentally, hygiene poverty is a silent issue. It carries with it deep shame and it manifests in feelings of inadequacy and disgust. We want, at a basic level, for this to be seen and dealt with, to help end the silent suffering.

Katayoon's fighting spirit



East Finchley student **Katayoon Negahbani** is proving to be a big-hitter in the martial art of Taekwondo. Katayoon, a 13-year-old student at the Archer Academy, is a yellow belt in the sport and recently won two gold medals by beating two 14 and 15-year-old boys, both black belts. Her next tournament will be in Camden at the end of this month against teenage contestants from Greece and Turkey.

Left: Medal winner: Katayoon Negahbani

Join your community in supporting your local hospice.

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Sunday 21 May

- 8.5 mile walk East Finchley to Westminster
- London's most beautiful parks and stunning views
- Free lunch, refreshments and a goody bag

The start line is located next to The Cherry Tree Café

Pricing for adults £18, under 16 £13, and under 5s go free.

Register at bigfunwalk.co.uk

North London Hospice





Power of the people gets aid all the way to Ukraine

By Lynn Winton

Last year, when I started to write about one man's commitment to helping people caught up in the horrific onslaught in Ukraine, little did I know how in just one year this would snowball into a major force amongst the N2 community to send tons of desperately needed aid to the worst-hit regions.



Final destination: Grateful Ukrainians receive essential items from the East Finchley deliveries. Photo Driving Aid to Ukraine.



Transfer point: Michael Byrne unloads his van at the border for onward transport to families inside Ukraine. Photo Driving Aid to Ukraine.

Lynmouth Road resident Michael Byrne started Driving Aid to Ukraine from his living room after watching the horrific humanitarian disaster of Russia's invasion unfold on our screens.

He has now personally driven or organised the safe transport of 12 trips carrying massive lorry loads full of goods up to the Polish/Ukrainian border, averaging one a month.

And, as his photos show, from there trusted and vetted aid worker teams carry on the dangerous work of driving these loads further into Ukraine to the hundreds of displaced people who wait patiently in line for

warm clothes, food, medical supplies, children's packs, batteries, candles, to name just a few of the items he transports.

Such has been the response of the East Finchley and Muswell Hill communities that Michael has now upgraded to using a 40-ton articulated lorry that can carry 24 tons of aid per trip.

Donations and donors

So how have we done it? Many ways. The most pressing need is monetary donations as fuel and logistics are vital to continue and this is Michael's biggest challenge.

People have been remarkable; groups organising fundraising events, individuals sending

money through the Crowdfunder page, Martin School organising a collection. Then there's the donations of warm clothing, and other items that you will find on the website's list, often by neighbours reaching out via their street WhatsApp groups, including Homefield Garden sheltered housing residents, all of which Michael then collects.

One generous man turned up with thousands of new items, satisfied that they would be distributed in Kherson and neighbouring decimated villages within days. Another person negotiated a refund after a very unsatisfactory Airbnb experience and donated it to Driving Aid to Ukraine. Acts like these are the emotional fuel that keeps Michael going, as he has pledged that he won't stop until Ukraine has no more need.

Volunteers

And then of course, there's the band of East Finchley volunteers who have been inspired to get on board. Scout groups, schools, business owner Amanda McGrath, retired teacher Nicola Cousins, volunteer drivers now driving 4x4s and ambulances to Ukraine, shop owners, website and social media creators and those who use their contacts to collect goods. "The response has been tremendous. I'm just a facilitator, I can't do this without all this fantastic support," Michael says.

His latest fundraising idea is to ask people to 'sponsor a pallet' for £100. This will be to fund fuel and logistics costs, as all goods are donated and neither Michael nor any volunteer takes a salary.

You too?

If you want to help Michael Byrne help Ukraine, whether by sponsoring a pallet, volunteering, collections, fundraising or making a donation, his number is 07791 912389 and the website is drivingaidtoukraine.org.

BE PART OF IT Volunteers wanted

Compiled by Lynn Winton

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. 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.

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 building a social media campaign, fundraising and grant writing and to organise collections of warm clothes and other vital humanitarian aid items, and people who would 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.

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

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



Rejuvenation plan to preserve Cherry Tree Wood for the future

By Debbie Linton

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood have joined forces with Barnet Council to develop a new woodland management plan that will rejuvenate the woodland for future generations.

The wooded parts of the park will be closely monitored and work will be carried out to keep the environment thriving and healthy. The plans were explained at the Friends' annual general meeting by Barnet's biodiversity officer Harriet Duffield, joined by council tree officer Lesley Hipple.

The plan is in its early stages with more details to be circulated soon. To start things off, in January the Friends laid a new traditional hedge near the High Road entrance. This will come into leaf in the spring.

Planning objection

The meeting also heard that the prospect of a new six-storey building being built on the old sub-station site on the Great North Road, opposite the junction with The Bishops Avenue, has not gone away. Last year, as reported in *The Archer*, the Friends successfully opposed the plans on the basis that the building would overlook Cherry Tree Wood but now the developers are appeal-

ing against Barnet Council's refusal. The Friends said they would raise their objections again.

Flooding

With regard to the flooding situation that creates large areas of standing water on the grass in the park, useful surveys have been undertaken and there have also been several visits and meetings with Barnet Council and Thames Water. Answers were beginning to emerge and the Friends said drainage would continue to be a major priority for them in 2023.

They would also continue discussions about improving the approach and extending the wood at the High Road entrance.

Get involved

The next litter pick in Cherry Tree Wood takes place on Sunday 12 March at 2pm-3pm. Everyone is welcome to come along and help. Meet near the café and tennis courts. To get in touch, email friendsofcherrytreewood@gmail.com

COMING SOON AT ARTSDEPOT



Sat 11 Mar

Kate Mosse

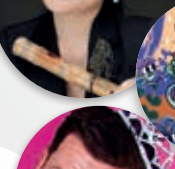
The bestselling author celebrates history's 'Warrior Queens & Quiet Revolutionaries'.



Thu 16 Mar

Dotdotdot Dance: Blue Ghost

Dynamic flamenco dance meets live electronic music.



Thu 16 Mar

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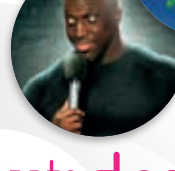
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Thought-provoking: The cast of *Kindness: A Legacy of the Holocaust*

Holocaust remembered

Bishop Douglass Catholic School in Hamilton Road, N2, marked Holocaust Memorial Day on Friday 27 January with a visit by theatre company **Voices of the Holocaust**.

Every Year 9 student saw a performance of *Kindness: A Legacy of the Holocaust*, alongside drama sessions and discussions on the core themes of the day.

Cate Hollis, the theatre company's artistic director, said: "We address the grotesque and horrifying in a way that doesn't traumatise audiences. Holocaust education needs to be creative and imaginative and do the work that survivors' voices have been doing for decades."

30 Local News is our Aim
30 years 1993-2023

RICKY SAVAGE ... THE VOICE OF IRRESPONSIBILITY

To celebrate *The Archer's* 30th anniversary this year, we are printing some memorable articles and classic columns from our archives, starting with this vintage Ricky Savage intervention from July 2012, the summer of the London Olympics. Explore our editions from the past 30 years at www.the-archer.co.uk

Travel tips for our Olympics visitors

With only a few weeks to go until the Olympics, it's time for all Londoners to help visitors to our wonderful city get the most from the experience. Many of them will have never travelled on the tube before and it is our responsibility to help them enjoy their journeys. So here are a few tips for visitors on using the world's finest underground railway.

Let's start with food. For many cultures, breakfast is the most important meal of the day and Londoners will think it strange if you do not combine travel with eating breakfast. Make use of local coffee shops, cafes and McBurgers before joining the train and settling down to eat. The general rule is that anything that does not require the use of cutlery can be eaten between the hours of 7.30am and 9.30am.

If you want to bring along a three-course meal you should ensure that your journey is long enough for you to enjoy it. This matters now that the Circle line isn't a circle and no one wants to end up in Hammersmith. But anyone heading for Heathrow should have plenty of time for dessert. However, for health and safety reasons you are advised not to light barbecues when the train is busy.

Next, we come to the question of space. It is so important to get it right or you might upset the entire fabric of space and time, potentially releasing cybermen from the dark recesses of the Northern line. So, always make full use of all seats. We Londoners normally occupy at least two seats and you should resist all suggestions to move your bags.

The fabulous and famous station announcements will keep you informed, but in the fast-moving world of modern London they can seem confusing, so remember that 'mind the gap' is advertising for a well known high street retailer and that keep left and keep right signs are political slogans. On a more serious note, 'baby on board' badges merely relate to the wearer's love of surfing.

Finally, Londoners are well known for their love of music and we'll be disappointed if you don't share your music with us. Please make sure that your iPod is turned up loud enough for us to join in the listening experience. After all, it is the Olympics and you are welcome to them.

What's On at the Phoenix in March

By Zalan Pall,
general manager

A British comedy celebrating the spirit of the elderly patients, an Irish drama, a 90s classic, live opera and theatre, an exhibition on screen and a film to tie in with the East Finchley Food Festival are all happening at the Phoenix Cinema in March.

The release of *Exhibition on Screen: Mary Cassatt*, a painter of 'the modern woman', coincides with International Women's Day on Wednesday 8 March.

Then from Friday 17 March, *Allelujah* is a warm and deeply moving story about old age from the pen of Alan Bennett. When the geriatric ward in a small Yorkshire hospital is threatened with closure, the hospital decides to fight back by galvanizing the local community: they invite a news crew to film their preparations for a concert in honour of the hospital's most distinguished nurse. What could go wrong?

On Sunday 19 March, we are showing animated favourite *Ratatouille* as part of the East Finchley Food Festival weekend.

For lovers of live performances, we have the Met Opera's *Lohengrin* on Wednesday 15



March, and the Royal Opera House's *Turandot* on Wednesday 22 March, followed by the West End stage production of *Life of Pi* on Thursday 30 March.

There are two classic films to enjoy this month. On Sunday 19 March, we are showing Polish anti-war masterpiece *Ashes and Diamonds*, then a week later on Sunday 26 March, we will be screening Martin Scorsese's elegant and romantic adaptation of Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*, a triumphant exercise in stylistic and thematic restraint.

Finally from Friday 31 March, *God's Creatures* stars Emily Watson and Paul Mescal. In a windswept fishing village, a mother is torn between protecting her beloved son and her own sense of right and wrong. A lie she tells for him rips them apart...

For more information and bookings visit our website www.phoenixcinema.co.uk or pop into our foyer.

Memorial concert for Geoffrey Hanson

By Daphne Chamberlain

There will be a memorial concert for organist and composer Geoffrey Hanson at All Saints' Church, Durham Road, N2, at 7.30 pm on Saturday 15 April. Geoffrey, who founded and directed the East Finchley Arts Festival until his death in 2020, was Director of Music there for 30 years.

The performance will be of Geoffrey's works: *The Singing Will Never Be Done*, from his 80th birthday concert, a chamber symphony which was the last work he wrote, and *Now Welcom Somer*, unaccompanied part songs. There will also be Mozart's *Piano Concerto No 21*,

aka *Elvira Madigan*, and *How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings Fair* from the Brahms *Requiem*. The singers will be the London Ripieno Society, founded by Geoffrey, and they and the London Mozart Players will be



Memorial: Geoffrey Hanson

conducted by Geoffrey's friend Geoffrey Simon.

Admission and refreshments are all free. Chris Hughes will be the house manager, as he was for many of the arts festivals.

Free concert series returns

The regular series of free Sunday evening concerts returns to East Finchley Methodist Church this month with quintet Dorten Yonder performing traditional songs, tunes and new writings by Maggie Eiseman-Renyard and Richard Cryan.

The concert takes place on Sunday 12 March at 7.30pm at the church on the High Road, N2, opposite Creighton Avenue. Admission is free with a collection in aid of child refugee charity Clowns Without Borders.

All Saints' Church, Durham Road, East Finchley Church of England

You are welcome to join us for:

Sunday mass at 10.00 a.m. and
Weekday masses as advertised on the website.

Or join our live-streamed services on our Facebook page:

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Prayer requests are gladly accepted.

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Letters

N2United is a loss

Dear Editor,

I am writing following the disappointing news that the N2United group is disbanding (The Archer, February 2023). For those who don't know, it was a group that brought together shops, businesses, charities and others linked together. I was introduced to it by a neighbour when I was mooted the idea of Bin There, Donate That. My first meeting was the last before lockdown and the small group gathered gave me some useful ideas on how I might take the next steps.

Then once Bin There launched, I was invited along to give a talk about its concept. I'd never really understood what networking meant, but by going along and listening to a range of talks, and then having time to chat with others, I began to get it.

Through this, 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 N2 United meetings.

Above all I have met a whole range of local people: acquaintances and friends I can say hello to, and thus I shall miss our monthly gatherings.

I understand the reason for the closure is that Nick Allen, who chaired the group, is turning to other projects. Is there no one else in the whole area who could take this task on? Could the chairing be a shared role? I presume that there was a reason for the sudden ending, but maybe there could be one or two meetings where we consider other options, including meeting fewer times a year.

I work full-time and am trying to keep Bin There going, so cannot offer anything long term, but could think about chairing a meeting where we put possible ideas together.

Emma Frampton, Bin There Donate That, N2

Editor's note: A new N2Network intends to resume community and business meetings. An initial informal meeting has been arranged for Thursday 27 April, 7.30pm at East Finchley Constitutional Club, in order to rebuild the group. See p7 for details

Send your correspondence to: news@the-archer.co.uk

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be printed. Contact details can be withheld on request at publication. We reserve the right to abridge letters for reasons of space.

Damage and distress

Dear Editor,

Further to Eugene Myerson's letter (The Archer, February 2023), I find his stance on 'dishonest' solicitor George Nosworthy truly disturbing.

He may have found him 'warm and charming' through his dealings. However, I cannot forget the distress and damage inflicted on innocent clients, which in many cases compounded their original problem, by assuming he was an honest professional with his clients' needs paramount.

Some, including myself, experienced at great cost his behaviour nearly 20 years ago, wrongly believing in the integrity of his dealings at Cree Godfrey and Wood in the High Road, N2.

His tribunal was based on a few cases only and in my view there were numerous other victims who could have contributed to this. Well done to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal for striking him off and preventing more clients losing out.

Name and address supplied.

Call for crossing

Dear Editor,

I was interested to see the article and letter about the length of time it's taking to have some sort of safe pedestrian crossing provided on The Bishops Avenue close to the junction with the Great North Road (The Archer, February 2023).

The same problem has been encountered with Haringey Council over the provision of a crossing on the Great North Road in 'their patch'. As there's no traffic island between Woodside Avenue and East Finchley station, if you live on the west side of the Great North Road you have to risk crossing The Bishops Avenue to get to the station or shops. The alternative is to brave crossing the Great North Road with its fast-moving traffic.

I have written to Haringey Council about this several times but have been fobbed off with the problems of dealing with both Barnet Council and TfL.

A local councillor has now taken up the issue and following a council officer's visit they have made a request for a pinch point/crossing point midway between Woodside Avenue and the Barnet boundary. Let's hope it's installed before someone is seriously injured or worse.

Stephen Barry Noblefield Heights, Great North Road, N2.

A huge loss to the community

By Lynn Winton

Yvonne Ruth, who has died aged 68, was a familiar sight on the High Road in East Finchley, as she dedicated her time to volunteering and animal welfare, dividing her week between the North London Hospice and the RSPCA charity shops.

Easily recognisable with her purple hair and often accompanied by her tiny Chihuahua Milo, she made hundreds of friends who are having to come to terms with her unexpected death.

Julie Brill, manager of the RSPCA shop, who became a very close friend, told The Archer: "She was an amazing character, the customers loved her and so did their dogs as she always kept treats in her pockets. We all miss her terribly."

Anastasiya Zhinipotoku, manager of the hospice shop, recalled: "She was such a colourful person inside and out, we had such fun when she was working here and became great friends."

"I called her 'naughty little fairy' as she often wore a crown, and moved around the shop helping with absolutely everything: sorting at the back, jumping into the front to assist customers, and then being responsible enough to help me with banking."

Yvonne lived in Manor Park Road, sharing her flat with Milo and her friend Darren Mitchell,



Much-missed: Yvonne Ruth with her beloved Chihuahua Milo

who recalled: "One of the many things we loved about Yvonne was that no matter what walk of life you were from she would

always say hello and chat with people and make new friends, especially amongst the dog walkers."

Home cooking takes off by word of mouth

By Diana Cormack

Imrana Naz really loves her job at Martin Primary School in East Finchley where she is a nursery nurse, kept busy the whole week with the demands of the youngsters in her care. Yet at the weekend when she could be resting her time is devoted to something else she loves. Imrana told The Archer: "Cooking is my passion."

Ever since she started working at the school over a decade ago Imrana has cooked food for the winter and summer fairs. Her dishes proved to be so popular that people encouraged her to set up in business.

So, using her daughter's name for the company, she created Layy's Kitchen. Early on Saturdays, Imrana starts preparing the Pakistani dishes she will deliver to local customers later in the day.

Her reputation has grown by word of mouth, WhatsApp and tasting sessions, leading to her now catering for birthday parties and similar events. These include various quiz nights and even the East Finchley Community Festival where, last year, she cooked for 500 people.

And everyone will be able to sample her dishes again soon because Imrana is taking a stall at the East Finchley Food Fest in the High Road on Saturday 18 March.

For the summer festival, Imrana was able to use Martin



Top chef: Imrana Naz. Photo Layyinah Naz.

School's kitchen, since catering for large groups means she needs somewhere more spacious than her own home. With business expanding, she is looking for a local kitchen to use on Saturdays on a more regular basis.

Email imranaraz@live.co.uk if you can help her with that and also for details of menus. The menu changes weekly and there are party menus from which to select your order.

Tantalising tikka to try

The final recipe in our series running up to East Finchley's Food Fest in the High Road on Saturday 18 March is supplied by local meal-maker Imrana Naz. Try your hand at this popular dish with these simple instructions, using ingredients available in our High Road shops.

Chicken Tikka

Ingredients

- 1kg boneless chicken, cubed
2 tsp red chilli powder
1/2 tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp salt
Juice of 1 lemon
1 tsp cumin powder
2 tsp garlic paste
4 tbsp yoghurt
2 tsp ground coriander
1/4 tsp of yellow/orange food colour if desired
3 tbsp oil

Preparation

First put the cut chicken into a bowl. Then mix in the lemon juice. Add all the rest of the ingredients and mix it well. Let it marinate in the fridge overnight. Finally, cook it under the grill until golden brown, remembering to turn each side.

See our other recipes at www.iloven2.co.uk/eat-finchley

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Pavement proposal like a scene from a movie

By David Melsome

Shirlei and Aloisio Tavares met many years back in Brazil and have been together ever since. They have three lovely children, now aged 21, 18 and eight but, in Aloisio's case particularly, had never felt the need to get married.

That changed recently when their youngest son was miraculously cured from a long-term illness without any obvious medical intervention. Aloisio felt there was a higher power out there somewhere and wanted to bless the whole family by marrying in church.

So he planned a movie scene by enlisting the help of staff at the Phoenix Cinema to plaster his proposal to Shirlei across the front of the cinema while a guitarist friend from the Lagoinha Church in Tufnell Park sang one of her favourite songs from the musical *Godspell*.

Passers-by witnessed the romantic scene as Aloisio went down on one knee on the pavement to ask Shirlei to be his bride. East Finchley is the place they have lived in and loved since they moved to the UK so he couldn't have picked a better spot, nor a better day as it was Shirlei's birthday.

And whether Shirlei knew he was going to pop the question or not, we're not sure, but either way her answer was yes. We're pleased to say the couple, who live in East End Road, are now happily engaged and planning their wedding.



Will you marry me? Above and left, Aloisio goes down on one knee in front of Shirlei at the Phoenix Cinema for his surprise proposal, and there are flowers for Shirlei after she said yes. Photos Sam Sherard.



N2 makers' market

The pop-up I Love N2 artisan market, which proved so popular before Christmas, is set to return to East Finchley next month.

It will run from 12pm - 5pm, on Sunday 23 April outside Hexagon Classics, 82-92 Great North Road, N2 0NL, near East Finchley tube station.

It features a selection of creatives and producers, all

from the local area, selling everything from honey to homewares. There'll also be street food, beer and wine and live music in the covered courtyard.

For more information, or to apply to be a vendor on one of the few remaining available pitches, visit www.iloven2.co.uk/spring-market or email stalls@iloven2.co.uk.

Music group honours forgotten works of women composers

By David Melsome

The Youth Music Centre, based in Hampstead Garden Suburb, is inviting all entrants for its annual Concerto prize to perform works by neglected women composers.

This year's Silent Scores and Concert Prize Festival on Sunday 14 May will see young musicians play in front of a panel of distinguished judges before all prize winners perform

with a professional orchestra at HGS Free Church on Sunday 4 June.

Some of the pieces they will play have only recently been discovered because of

the immense difficulty these women faced getting their works published during their lifetime. Composers include Amy Beach, Pauline Viardot and Florence Prize. Some led difficult, often tragic lives and most of their amazing music has been forgotten or lost.

Artistic director Marina Solarek has put together a substantial list of works for the programme. She said: "It has been an interesting journey for students and teachers to discover this vast new repertoire together. The festival and concert will give these composers their deserved platform."

The concert is on 4th June. Find out more at www.youthmusiccentre.uk



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