



## Students get dirty on nature project



Get digging: Bishop Douglass students create a market garden as part of the Bertha Earth project

**Bishop Douglass School has announced that its partnership with the Bertha Earth Foundation is continuing for a second year. The secondary school in Hamilton Road, N2, is one of just 13 schools nationwide chosen to host the programme.**

Last year, 30 Year Seven students were successfully admitted onto the programme after a selection process. They undertook weekly nature-related workshops, took a trip to the Grow Urban farm in Totteridge and travelled to Wales for a week-long stay at a farm, all funded by Bertha Earth.

This year, students have been applying in their masses to

be chosen for the programme, which encourages young people to look after their environment.

Michelle Henderson, Head of School, said: "With the most applications of any of the Bertha Earth schools, we look forward to having yet another group of climate-conscious, empowered young people ready to play their part in being stewards of the world."

## Story of a school that spans 60 years

By David Melsome

**Bishop Douglass School in East Finchley celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary last month by inviting past students and staff to take a journey back in time.**

Professor Sir Mark Caulfield, son of the first headteacher Michael Caulfield, took guests back to March 1962 when his father was appointed to open the first Catholic secondary modern school in Barnet, in the days when 80% of students failed the 11-plus exam.

Sir Mark explained: "He and his team were determined that the school should be a safe, inclusive home that enabled 1960s students and parents to unlock opportunities and realise their potential... to overturn expectations that the school would only produce factory workers."

Within a year of its opening in 1963, the school in Hamilton Road, N2, enabled its students to do O'Levels, normally the preserve of grammar schools, and opened a sixth form for its students. The sixth form spent many years in the buildings of Manor House Convent School in East End Road, with which the school amalgamated in 1969 to become the first comprehensive school in Barnet. These buildings and grounds were sold in 1981 to form the Sternberg Centre for Judaism.

Sir Mark also led a standing

ovation for founding Deputy Head Ms Iride Villa, who is now resident at Nazareth House in East End Road, and who gave her support to the school for over 30 years, until her retirement in 1995.



Welcome back: Former deputy head Iride Villa is applauded by guests at the Bishop Douglass birthday celebrations

Sir Mark said what pleasure it would have given his father to know that the current successful headteacher Mr Martin Tissot is also a past student. The legacy had come full circle, and it was clear that Bishop Douglass School continued to thrive and inspire, he said.

The evening's festivities began with a solemn Mass and continued with a backdrop of hit music from the 1960s through to the 1980s from DJ and past pupil Wilf Achille. Head of School Michelle Henderson said: "The past was celebrated, the present embraced, and the future eagerly anticipated as the school's story continues to unfold."

## Do you have stories about the festival?

**A reminder from last month's edition that the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood are writing a detailed history of East Finchley Festival and need your help!**

They are hosting an open afternoon on Saturday 18 November from 2pm-4pm at East Finchley Constitutional Club, The Walks, N2 8DE, to hear your stories about the much-loved annual event. They are also keen to see any photos or documents connected with it. Research shows that the first festival took place in June 1972. But lengthy legal action in the 1980s and flooding in 2012 mean that 2024 will see the 50<sup>th</sup> Festival being held in Cherry Tree Wood.

Everyone is welcome to go along to the open afternoon to share their memories, photos and memorabilia. If you can't make it, contact the Friends at [friendsofcherrytreewood@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofcherrytreewood@gmail.com)

### Be part of it

And another reminder for those who want to be part of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, the East Finchley Festival organisers are holding an open drop-in meeting from 7.45pm on Thursday 9 November at the Old White Lion pub, Great North Road, N2, where everyone is welcome to come along to share ideas and get involved.

The festival team is also collecting photos from the past 50 years. Find out more at [www.eastfinchleyfestival.org](http://www.eastfinchleyfestival.org)



Paw print: Mickey guards the Archers before delivery

## Thanks for helping, Mickey

**It is with sadness we report the passing of Mickey, The Archer cat, at the age of 16. For the past eight years Mickey has supervised his owners Dave and Jane Marsh in their monthly job of sorting 10,000 copies of this newspaper into rounds ready for distribution. He liked nothing better than sitting on a pile of Archers, watching proceedings and keeping the papers warm until they were collected for delivery.**

A well-known and much loved resident of Bedford Road, Mickey is not only missed by Dave and Jane but also by many of their neighbours who regularly stopped to say hello to him when passing by.

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