

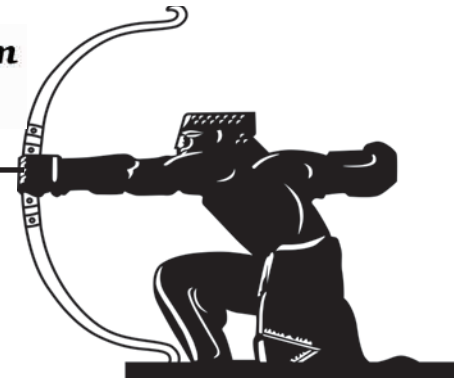


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30 Local News is our Aim
30 years 1993-2023

The Archer



November 2023 No. 355

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Phoenix comes out fighting in finance squeeze

By Ruth Anders

The Phoenix Cinema is celebrating some good news this month at the same time as telling customers that the challenges it faces from the film industry mean it may have to reduce its opening hours.

Our highly valued independent local gem has been awarded a grant of £18,000 from Barnet Council's Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy Fund. This will be used for a much-needed overhaul of the auditorium's sound system, adding state-of-the-art surround sound via a Dolby 7.1 system with an increased number of top-quality speakers, all hopefully to be installed before Christmas.

This comes after other major improvements to the cinema's operations, including a redesigned website, a new projector, a new booking system and, perhaps most visibly, the changing neon lighting outside the building that adds to the venue's prestige.

tribution. All these headwinds have aligned to place the Phoenix under financial pressure.

Executive Director Olly Meek told *The Archer*: "This message is a deliberate rallying cry to our supporters. We're not in crisis but things are challenging owing to circumstances beyond our control."

Buy a cup of tea

The Phoenix, a registered charity, prides itself on keeping its costs competitive. This includes the cost of tickets and refreshments. Olly explained that for each £12 ticket, £2 disappears in tax and £5 goes to the distributor, leaving a balance of £5 for the Phoenix.

Chair of Phoenix Trustees



Courtside homes: Architect's drawing of how the tennis club grounds could look. Image www.fortisgreen.net

Housing plan for hidden tennis club site

Residents living in and close to Southern Road, N2, were surprised to receive a hand-delivered leaflet last month from a property company outlining plans for redevelopment of the nearby Fortis Green Tennis Club. Read the full story on page 2.



Tough times: The Phoenix needs support

Fewer screenings

Meanwhile, the Phoenix has been forced to warn its members of possible shorter opening hours. This is the result of a combination of negative effects, including fewer filmgoers since Covid, rising overhead costs, and the writers' and actors' strikes in Hollywood.

These strikes, whilst understandable, have resulted in a supply chain problem with a good many completed films gathering dust on shelves, awaiting dis-

tribution. Alison Gold told *The Archer*: "Unfortunately, many UK towns have seen their independent cinemas close this year due to these pressures. The Phoenix trustees, most of whom live locally, are determined to keep the Phoenix open but we need people's support. The Phoenix keeps food and drink prices low and customers buying even a cup of tea along with their ticket makes a big difference, so please do that if you can."

Continued on page 2

It's tree time!

By Hilary Townley

The festive season is just round the corner but here in East Finchley, Christmas will be ON the corner. Yes, we like to launch the start of the season on the corner outside Budgens in the High Road, and 2023 will maintain this popular tradition.

This year's tree-lighting event takes place on Saturday 2 December at 5pm and everyone is welcome. There will be a joyous atmosphere to thrill you to swingle, the brass band to tingle, the choirs to jingle, the join-in-with-the-singing as you mingle.

Archer on top

There will be mulled wine and mince pies courtesy of Budgens and with yet more Budgens' generosity we will light up the Christmas Tree itself. The only tree with an archer... THE ARCHER on the top!

And if that's not enough festivity for one weekend... Cherry Tree Wood is hosting a wreath-making workshop the following day, Sunday 3 December, 11am-1pm, where again all are welcome.

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Copy Editor

John Lawrence

Sub Editor

Ann Bronkhorst
Lucy Moorman

Picture Editor

Mike Coles

Production Editor

Alison Roberts

Distribution

Toni Morgan,
Jane & David Marsh

Finance

David Marsh

Editorial Team

Ruth Anders, Daphne
Chamberlain, Diana Cormack,
David Gritten, David Hobbs, Janet
Maitland, Lynn Winton

Social Media: Justine Csaky

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

Copy deadlines - December: 10 November, January: 15 December, February: 12 January



Papers all round: Abe at Long Lane Supermarket

Pride of place

By David Melsome

Missed a copy of *The Archer* or need another one? Then you'll be pleased to know that, besides being delivered to almost 10,000 homes and businesses across East Finchley, our newspaper can also be picked up for free in a number of shops and venues.

One such is the excellent Long Lane Supermarket in, you guessed it, Long Lane, where manager Abe keeps it on the counter so his customers can collect a copy as they buy. "People want to know what's going on in East Finchley. We never have a problem getting rid of our copies," he said.

Subject to availability, *The Archer* can also be picked up at Ella Food Centre, Sainsbury's, Pacey's newsagents and Budgens in the High Road, along with the foyer of the Phoenix Cinema, the High Road entrance to the tube station and the Cherry Tree Café in Cherry Tree Wood.

If you run a shop or meeting place in East Finchley and would like to stock free copies of *The Archer*, contact news@the-archer.co.uk

Phoenix squeeze

Continued from page 1

Customers can help by renewing or registering for membership, by adding a small donation to their ticket price, and by buying refreshments in the cinema. Donations are non-taxable and can also benefit from Gift Aid.

Special events

The Phoenix is also helping itself by holding special events to raise funds, such as the recent morning of Hungarian poetry and music featuring the work of local young poet Peter Noblet and the UK premiere of an independent Japanese film called *Almost People*, followed by a Q&A with members of the creative team who had flown in from Tokyo with minutes to spare. Other events are promised.

Shock at housing scheme for hidden tennis club site

By Diana Cormack

Residents living in and close to Southern Road, N2, were surprised to receive a hand-delivered leaflet last month from a property company outlining plans for redevelopment of the nearby Fortis Green Tennis Club.

The long-established club has four clay courts set in pleasant natural surroundings on land owned by Muswell Hill United Reformed Church. Cherry Tree Wood forms the club's southern edge while its other three sides back on to the gardens of Cherry Tree Road, Summerlee Gardens and Shakespeare Gardens.

According to the leaflet from the Capstone Group: "The courts have fallen into disrepair and are in urgent need of replacement and enhancement to safeguard the future of the club." The developers plan to build eight new homes on the site, reduce the number of tennis courts from four to three and provide a new clubhouse with some modern facilities. Visit www.fortisgreen.net for full details of the proposal.

Club statement

In a promotional video on that website, Capstone's James Winston says his company has been working closely with the church and with Fortis Green Tennis Club to redevelop the site. However, a statement from the club claims they were only involved "under lease pressure" and were not actively promoting the housing scheme.

"Our courts receive regular maintenance and our members are happy with the facilities," said the club. "The club will remain in discussion with the developers in case a site plan can be found that it is able to support."



State of play: How Fortis Green Tennis Club looks today. Photo Mike Coles

Praise

A recent inspection by the Lawn Tennis Association praised the club, especially for its general set-up and the children's coaching. Concerned locals who object to the scheme are working together

to fight it, organising ongoing meetings with interested parties including local councillors and MPs.

The club lies in Haringey, with the eastern edge bordering Barnet. The only public entrance is a single narrow pathway off Southern Road. Any construction traffic would need to gain access via Cherry Tree Road, crossing the

border between boroughs which includes a ransom strip of land, the status of which is at present unresolved. At the time of writing no planning application has yet been made to Haringey Council.



Side by side: Homes and a new club house would sit alongside three of the current tennis courts. Image www.fortisgreen.net

A gem of a show

The annual Mineral, Gem & Fossil Show hosted by the Amateur Geological Society Finchley takes place on Saturday 25 November from 10am to 4pm at Trinity Church, Nether Street, N12.

This is a lively show in a large hall with fossils, jewellery, gems, rocks and mineral stalls to browse and buy, along with refreshments and a children's lucky dip. Entrance costs £2 with under 12's free.

The society itself meets on

the second Tuesday of each month in Finchley Baptist Church, East End Road, N3. A guest speaker gives an illustrated talk each time and there is a programme of regular field trips. Find out more at www.amgeosoc.wordpress.com

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PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

Ground Floor Flat, 39 Chandos Road, N2

Changes to ground-floor rear extension fenestration.

12 Elmfield Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension with roof lights.

Land rear of The Bobath Centre, 250 East End Road, N2

Details of condition 15 (air quality assessment), pursuant to planning permission.

61 - 63 High Road, N2

Conversion of rear part of existing ground floor shop and ancillary first floor C3 unit into three self-contained flats. Associated alterations and amenity space, including ground and first-floor rear extension and roof extension to two-storey flat roof, to create new pitched roof and side facing roof lights.

238 High Road, N2

Change of use from vacant office (Class E) to Dwellinghouse (Class C3).

401 High Road, N2

New antenna onto existing pole. Further ancillary kit (cabinets) within existing compound.

56 Huntingdon Road, N2

Single-storey side/rear infill extension.

First Floor Flat, 98 Huntingdon Road, N2

Roof extension, including one rear dormer window and new rear window (amended plan).

1 King Street, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

19 Lankaster Gardens, N2

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

Ground Floor Flat, 77 Leicester Road, N2

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

23 Summerlee Gardens, N2

Bi-folding doors to rear ground floor, to replace existing windows and doors.

Tarling Road Community Centre, Tarling Road, N2

Two front extraction and ventilation units.



Circus diverts to new site for winter shows

By John Lawrence and Fiona Macdonald

A circus that was taking bookings for performances in flood-prone Cherry Tree Wood is moving its big tent to a nearby location. As we reported last month, Revel Puck Circus was hoping to run a season of shows in East Finchley from 21 December to 7 January. It is now moving to Victoria Park in Finchley Central.

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood group had warned that a circus residency could cause severe damage to the park at a time of year when its field is often flooded due to poor drainage. They also feared that neighbours and wildlife would be disturbed by the company's lighting and 24-hour generator.

Barnet Council told *The Archer* that Revel Puck had wanted to be in Victoria Park originally but were prevented by a prior booking. That booking has since been cancelled, leaving them free to make the switch.

A council spokesperson said: "The organisers have asked if they can transfer their application from Cherry Tree Wood to Victoria Park due to its transport links, visibility and proximity to their partner the Artsdepot. At this present time we are no longer processing an application for the Revel Puck Circus to take place at Cherry Tree Wood."

An Artsdepot spokesperson

said: "Our box office team are in the process of contacting everyone who's booked so far and we're updating all the website details as we speak."

Relief

Roger Chapman, chair of the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood, said: "There is great relief that the location of the circus has been moved. The Friends will continue to campaign for changes to the council's events policy which allowed officers to put the Wood forward without any consultation locally."

East Finchley councillor Alison Moore told us: "I think the arguments about the potential for flooding... meant it was a sensible way forward. There are people disappointed that it won't be happening in East Finchley but of course Victoria Park isn't a million miles away. If you live at the northern end of East Finchley it's just a quick walk up Long Lane or for those further south perhaps a hop on the 143 bus."



Wet ground: Close to where the circus would have been sited in Cherry Tree Wood

U3A enters new era with stress-buster

Business stress consultant and author Carole Spiers is the new chair of Hampstead Garden Suburb U3A. She gave a talk called 'Show Stress Who's Boss' at the Free Church in Central Square in September that was attended by more than 150 guests, the largest ever audience for the U3A.

Carole gave insights into the causes and effects of stress and shared her top 10 techniques and tips for reducing it. These included diet, hydration, sleep, mindfulness, exercise and time management.

She also outlined her ambition to help the learning and skills group for over-55s grow from 600 towards 1,000 mem-



New chair: Carole Spiers

bers and expand the number of groups and activities to match.

HGSU3A activities include computers, science and technology, food and drink, history and humanities, languages and literature. Find full details at www.hgsu3a.uk.



Ground level: Ben Wilson working on his pavement art in East Finchley. Photo Mike Coles

A bridge too far for chewing gum man Ben as his art is threatened

By John Lawrence

Chewing gum artist Ben Wilson is fighting to preserve the dozens of tiny artworks he has painted on the Millennium Bridge over the River Thames as the structure undergoes a major refurbishment.

Ben, who is often spotted at pavement level around East Finchley and Muswell Hill turning flattened chewing gum into mini masterpieces, has been taking his art into the centre of town for almost 20 years.

He has painted scenes of iconic London buildings along with personalised messages on chewing gum that has fallen between the ridges of the bridge's metal planks as part of



Landmark: Ben's painting of the Bald Faced Stag pub

a trail leading all the way from north London.

'Killjoys'

But now many of his unique pieces are expected to be blasted off as part of the clean-up, which is already under way. Ben says the authorities are 'killjoys' and hopes at least some of his work can be preserved.

"The art is lovely," he told BBC News. "There's something that people can discover

and often you'll see children jumping from picture to picture. They'll destroy that trail and I'm thinking they're killjoys. Please, please celebrate the art.

"I'm taking something that's thrown away and disgusting, and turning 'eugh' into 'mmm'. People kept coming up and saying 'Will you do one for me?' People from all walks of life, love messages, rest in peace pictures. There's 'Will you marry me?' pictures. They can't go."

Christmas invitation from school

Bishop Douglass School will be holding their annual Christmas party for senior East Finchley residents again this year on Tuesday 5 December, from 5-7pm. Guests are asked to arrive by 4.45pm in order to make a prompt start. East Finchley residents who are over 65 are welcome and you should book your place without delay.

As usual, you will be welcomed with a glass of sherry by Year 10 students and enjoy a Christmas meal, followed by carol singing and entertainment by pupils and staff. Games of bingo and a gift from Santa Claus will round off the evening.

Transport can be provided for those residents who are less able. To book your place, phone 020 8883 0433, leave your name and a contact number and someone will get back to you.

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The timber that built the homes we live in

By Mike Coles

What is now East Finchley was a largely rural area until the massive expansion of London in the late Victorian period. The release of common land and the demand for housing by a burgeoning population saw as much as 75% of the houses we see today being built between 1875 and 1910.

New streets were laid out and individual builders bought plots of land and built on them, often in small blocks. The differences block to block can be seen today. The main resources they needed were bricks, slates and wood.

End Finchley railway station.

Original yards

Why there? Timber at the time was imported from Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia and arrived at London Docks. The new railway linked



Going strong: PO Joyce as it is today, off Church Lane

Finsbury Park with Kings Cross and farther south, so the new freight services were ideal for supplying a timber yard. Benjamin delivered the timber to his customers by horse and cart. Hand carts were

Bricks

Bricks came from Uxbridge and Enfield and most slate from North Wales but what about the wood? Well, interestingly, East Finchley had its own supply.

also available, but it was uphill in both directions so must have been hard work.

By the end of the 19th century Edwin Joyce had taken over the company and over-

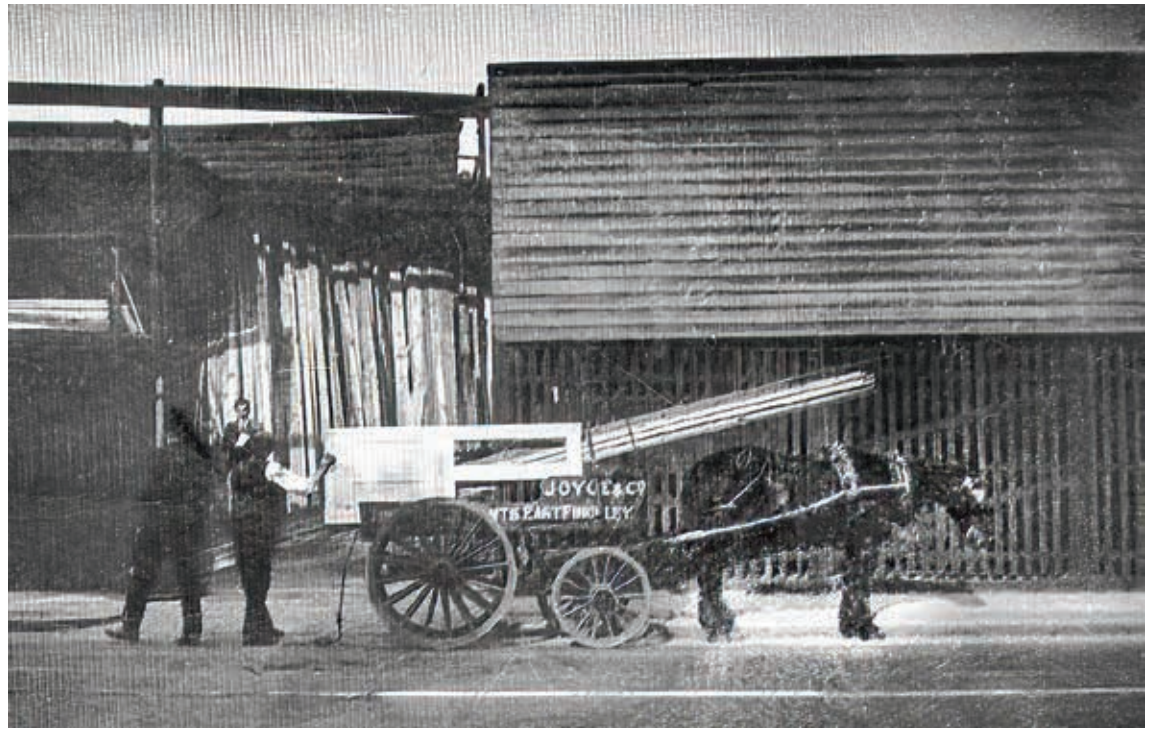


Original site: The red box shows where Joyce's yard was located in 1873, on land behind what was then East End Station and is now part of the tube station car park

In 1863, Benjamin Joyce, an enterprising young man, left Ireland for a better life, a new challenge and to seek his fortune. After a couple of years working in a joinery business in central London he opened a small timber yard near what was then the recently opened East

saw the massive expansion of building in the area. Demand grew and the Joyce company flourished.

The wood needed for house building was mainly pine, often called deal, as either 'whitewood' but usually the better quality 'redwood'. Even



Wagons roll: In the late 1800s, Benjamin Joyce would deliver timber around East Finchley by horse and cart

today most houses in N2 still have these original joists and floorboards.

After Edwin, Percy Oswald Joyce formally registered the company and saw the introduction of mechanised transport and the retirement of the horses in the mid-1920s. But massive disruption followed. Up till the early 1930s trains had run overland from central London to East Finchley but by 1935 the 'Northern Heights' project for suburban railways had begun.

Forced to move

New underground tunnels were built from the Northern Line terminus at Archway giving the now 'East Finchley' station access to London, both overland and underground. A significant effect of the project was the demolition of the old station and the building of the one we know today. Joyce's timber sheds were subject to a compulsory purchase order, and the company had to move.

Fortunately, they were able to acquire land in Church Lane, N2, where they remain to this day.

The company has stayed in the same family throughout and is now in its sixth generation. This year is its 160th anniversary.

BE PART OF IT Volunteers wanted

Compiled by Lynn Winton

- Help young people learn new skills and make friends at **224 North London Air Scouts**, who offer rewarding volunteer and life skills. Whether you're a young adult aged 14-18 looking to volunteer for your Duke of Edinburgh or over 18 and eager to make new friends, they have a spot for you. Do more, be more, and share more by joining 224northlondonscouts.org.uk. Email gsl@224northlondonscouts.org.uk or call Scout Leader Del on 07707 763344.

- Helpers are welcome to contribute towards the life of **The Archer Academy** secondary school in Eagans Close, N2. There is a beautiful school garden and a lovely team of garden volunteers who are always looking for new members. If you are interested in helping in the garden, please contact Rachael Harvey: greenarrows@thearcheracademy.org.uk. There is also a team of volunteers who come into the school library during the week to read with students who need support. If you would like to volunteer in the library, please contact Allison Appelquist, School Librarian: aappelquist@thearcheracademy.org.uk

- **Finchley Foodbank** is supporting a growing number of people who rely on this outstanding organisation to manage through the week. Help clients with choosing their food, toiletries and baby goods, or come in when the food bank is preparing stocks on the days before opening. There's a number of roles and food bank manager Anna Maughan and the volunteer team will welcome you with open arms to find your niche. New recruits are urgently needed to carry out this valuable work. Email finchleyfoodbank@gmail.com to find out more.

- **Driving Aid to Ukraine** is a non-profit organisation based in N2 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 scale up in building and sustaining 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 grassroots level. Find out more at Drivingaidtoukraine.org or get in touch with Michael on 07791 912389.

- Become a Proms volunteer! Could you give a few hours a month to help make next year's **Proms at St Jude's Festival** a success? The skills or experience we need include admin; IT; organisation and logistics; fundraising; and education. It's a great opportunity to get involved in a local community project, gain experience and meet new people. Find out more at www.promsatstjudes.org.uk/volunteering

If you'd like your organisation to be included in this column please send details (max 80 words please) to news@the-archer.co.uk or complete the form at www.ILoveN2.co.uk/be-part-of-it.



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Choir goes

Dutch

Alyth Choral Society is welcoming the Poly Hymnia Choir from Zeist in the Netherlands for a joint concert on Saturday 25 November.

The programme, in which the choirs will perform separately and together, comprises some well-known opera choruses as well as compositions by Ethel Smyth and Nicola Le Fanu. The venue is the North Western Reform Synagogue, Temple Fortune, NW11 7EN. Tickets cost £20 (under 16s free) with free refreshments. Book at alythchoralsociety.org



Traders reel from outbreak of crime along High Road

By Janet Maitland

A burglar shattered the windows of Creightons Brasserie and Genzo in the High Road, N2, at 3am on Saturday 14 October then helped himself to items inside as slowly as if he were in a supermarket. At around the same time last month Domino's, the betting shop next door to it and the North London Hospice charity shop had their windows smashed or broken overnight, although nothing was stolen.

Aki Toumazos, owner of Creightons and Genzo, said he had been burgled five times in the last 16 years but had never known a raider so interested in food. Apart from the windows, there was no other damage to his premises.

the disruption to trade. They also feel a sense of despair at how hard it is to keep the show on the road in these straitened times when money is so tight, without the fear of random violence on top.

"It is just horrible for us, and



Above and below: Some of the works from Art Against Knives artists at the Offshoot Gallery in the High Road. Photos Mike Coles

New home for life-changing project in art gallery

By Dan Crute

Meeting Rickardo Stewart, from Art Against Knives (AAK), at their new flagship space in the Offshoot Gallery on the High Road, N2, you can't help but be struck by his energy and drive for the charity's work with disadvantaged and troubled youth.

A serious youth violence specialist with past experience of the problems facing the young people he now works with, Rickardo's been with AAK for the past decade, counselling and mentoring by developing trusted relationships, opening pathways to employment and creating opportunities for young people to develop their own art, music



and business projects.

The objective is to steer them away from danger and towards positive life outcomes, giving space, time and focus to those who often receive it the least.

Call to action

Rickardo told me: "We want to put out a call to action to the good people of East Finchley. We want to invite you all to pop in, say hello and see what we're about. We'd like to show you what we do here and also some of the ways you can get involved. Ultimately, we want to get the word out that we're here and looking to engage with the community."

AAK was born in very real and distressing circumstances. In 2008, the unprovoked stabbing of Oliver Hemsley, a 21-year-old art student at Central St Martins College, near Kings Cross, left him in a wheelchair. A year on from that attack, Oliver's friends organised an exhibition to raise awareness of the issue and money for his care, supported by the College and some of the biggest names in art and fashion.

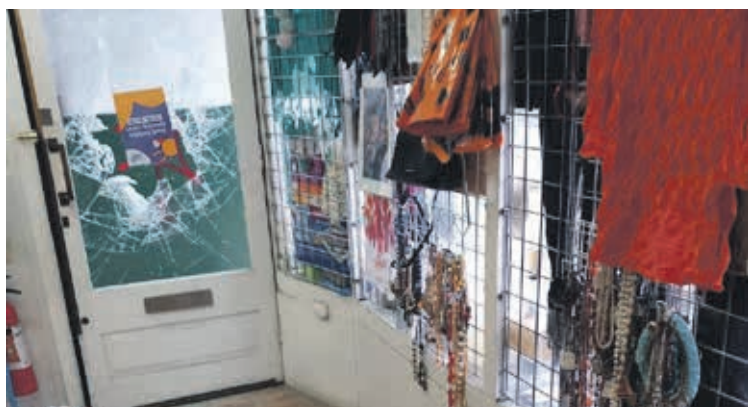
Work was donated by Tracey

Emin, Wolfgang Tillmans, Anthony Gormley, Banksy, and Rankin, among others. To channel this support into action, the group registered as a charity and began running creative community projects all over London. Since then, AAK have engaged, listened to, and supported over 2,000 at-risk young people.

Listening and support

This approach of "addressing the root causes of knife crime by listening to young people and putting them in the lead" is central to AAK's work. The young people find their own ways to succeed, and Rickardo and the rest of the highly qualified team offer guidance and assistance where necessary. A hand up rather than a handout.

Check out their work at the Offshoot Gallery in the High Road, or via www.artagainstknaves.com and on Instagram @Artagainstknaves.



Mindless damage: The broken window at the North London Hospice shop

"He stole about 10 bottles of vodka, a sack of lamb shoulders, and a display platter of salmon. Then he stacked it all in a blue wheelie bin with number nine painted on its side and walked away," said Aki. "This will happen again, I know it. The police can't deal with it, the prisons are full and criminals know they can get away with it. They have evidence that they can, all the time."

Mindless damage

The mindless damage to the windows of Domino's and William Hill was caused by a group of young men. CCTV footage shows them weaving up the High Road taking running kicks at the glass, with one even running back to kick Domino's window a second time.

"How the windows look now is so very bad for business," said the manager of Domino's. "It gives us such a bad image, and the area too." It is not known if the North London Hospice shop fell victim to the same gang of vandals.

Fortunately in these cases, no one was burgled, but the three shops must face the cost of replacing their windows and

for what?" said the manager of the charity shop, adding that more donations would be especially welcome now. "We need more protection, like police patrols after dark," said Shabbir Kadar, manager of William Hill.



Christmas market

East Finchley's Christmas gift market returns bigger and better to the forecourt of Hexagon Classics, near East Finchley Station, on Sunday 26 November.

The Courtyard Market, organised by N2-based social enterprise, Dirthouse, will be filled with local designer-makers selling art and prints, ceramics, homewares, clothing, jewellery, accessories, and small batch cosmetics.

There'll be tasty street food, deli goods and plenty of seasonal treats, plus wine tasting courtesy Bottles'n'Jars.

Entertainment will be provided by Regent Community Brass Band and local singer-guitarist Ben Eaton.

The Courtyard Market runs from 12pm - 5pm on Sunday 26 November outside Hexagon Classics, 82-92 Great North Road, N2 0NL. Entry is free. For more info visit dirthouse.co.uk/courtyard-market or @DirthouseLDN on socials.



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Lights off and on in Norfolk Close

By Claire Biek

Several weeks ago, a resident of Norfolk Close, N2, told the East Finchley Facebook group that seven of the street lamps in his area were still broken despite him reporting them to Barnet Council a few years ago.

Gary said there had been consistent problems with the lamps and that some of them have never really worked. A site visit from an engineer back in January 2021 did not produce any results.

Gary also disclosed that fixing the lamps had been previously delayed by a long-running dispute between Barnet Homes and the council over who was responsible for the work.

As a result, the area where



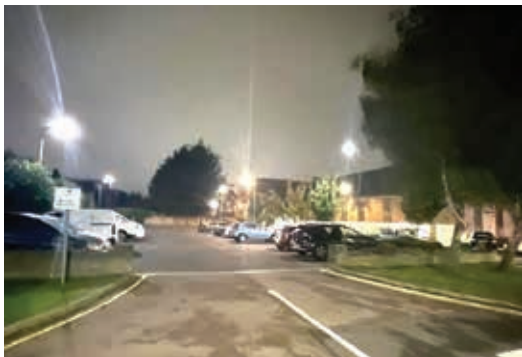
over the years as a result.

Last March, while Gary was abroad, his own van was stolen and abandoned in North Finchley. Luckily, the vehicle was found and reported

by a local company with Gary's possessions still inside. However, he suspects that drugs were used inside his van.

Now comes the good news: the street lamps were fixed last month. Gary's social media post alerted local

councillors and the relevant authorities who decided to revisit the issue and swiftly fix them. Gary is pleased, declaring that they "make the area look bright".



Before and after: Norfolk Close was in semi-darkness (above) until its car park lights were fixed

he and his neighbours park their cars was often in darkness. Gary claimed this had led to an increase in criminal activity in the area, notably drug dealing. Vans have also been broken into



Mobility aids: Volunteers load unwanted wheelchairs onto a lorry bound for hospitals and health centres in Ukraine

Urgent need in Ukraine for unwanted mobility aids

By Lynn Winton

Whilst Michael Byrne, founder of East Finchley based Driving Aid to Ukraine was planning his 16th humanitarian aid transport, he received an urgent message. Known as an organisation that responds to appeals with alacrity, this was a new and alarming one.

Ukraine has had to build a secretly located hospital for military amputees, and rehabilitation was hampered due to a shortage of mobility aid equipment. There was

simply not enough to go round. Michael was able to respond with a huge amount of items, thanks to his supporters in East Finchley and further afield. Now on his 18th aid transport, a third delivery to the hospital is included, and Michael wants to urge anybody who has unwanted mobility aids to add them to the ever-growing list of what they already deliver.

Clothes and medication

This includes wheelchairs, crutches, commodes and shower chairs. The NHS rarely, if ever, want these items back. The 60-bed hospital in Ukraine also needs men's new casual clothes,

toiletries and basic medication, especially for pain relief. C.W Andrew's Pharmacy on the High Road has joined the band of East Finchley shops helping Michael, with boxes of pain relief medication, dressings and bandages and a selection of all the requested toiletries. Additionally, with winter approaching and the Ukrainian energy infrastructure under constant attack, Michael is taking candles, electric heaters and generators.

15,000 amputees

To give an idea of the numbers of amputees, there were 15,000 Ukrainians who lost a limb in the first half of this year alone, according to the Department of Health in Kyiv. That's more amputees than the UK had in the full six years of the Second World War, when 12,000 servicemen and women lost limbs. Michael and his collection team, led by Springcroft Avenue resident Nicola Cousins, will collect or accept delivery of any of the items listed. If you were thinking of having a clear out, now would be a very good time. The full list of items can be found on their website drivingaidtoukraine.org. Michael can be contacted on 07791 912389 and Nicola by email at nicolacousins0812@gmail.com

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Christmas fair

The Christmas Fair at St Mary's Catholic Church, 279 High Road, N2, takes place this year on Sunday 26 November from 11am to 2pm.

Go along to soak up the festive atmosphere with carol singing, hot food, tombola, craft stalls and Santa's Grotto. Entry to the fair is free with a £2.50 charge to visit the grotto and receive a gift.



A crime that could be hiding in plain sight

By Janet Maitland

Officers from the Met Police are working alongside ANITP, Romania's national agency dealing with human trafficking, to raise public awareness of modern slavery and identify victims. The focus is currently on Romanian communities in Barnet as police intelligence indicates they are particularly vulnerable to becoming victims.

What is modern slavery?

Modern slavery is the exploitation of individuals for profit using threats, violence, deception or abuse of power. It includes sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, forced or bonded labour, domestic servitude, and the removal of organs for surgical transplants. Human trafficking is when modern slavery victims are taken between countries or around a country.

Who are the victims?

Anyone can be a target, but some people can be more vulnerable because of lack of money or job opportunities, or their immigration status, age or gender.

How common is it?

"Modern slavery is everywhere, a crime hidden in plain sight," said Cristina Huddleston from Justice and Care, a charity that works with police to identify people trapped in slavery.

The Modern Slavery Policy Unit estimated in 2020 that at least 100,000 people in the UK were being exploited, of which 10,000 were identified and referred for support. There is a steady rise in British victims being identified; they constituted a third of all victims in 2020.

Where might I see modern slavery?

Victims can work as office cleaners, in factories, in hotels, as construction workers, on farms, in nail bars, in car washes, and in people's homes as domestic slaves. Others are made to commit crimes like shoplifting, pickpocketing, stealing fuel from cars, cannabis growing and selling drugs. Some are forced to beg.

What are the signs?

Those who are being exploited can show a reluctance to interact. They may be working excessively long hours, look malnourished and have no money. If the cost of a service offered to you is too low, that's another warning sign, as is a small property in your neighbourhood housing too many people.

What can I do about it?

"The public has an important role to play in reporting modern slavery," said Detective Inspector Mel Lillywhite from the Met's Modern Slavery Unit. "If you suspect someone may be a victim, please report it. You will always be taken seriously. Call us on 08000 121 700 or on 101. You can also contact the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or online at crimestoppers-uk.org."



On the ball: Football coach Andy Francis is being backed by his players as he recovers from illness

Help coach get back on his feet

By Claire Biek

Women's football in England has undeniably experienced a recent and rapid increase in popularity, and this is no different in East Finchley. Resident coach Andy Francis is the beloved backbone behind women's football in the local community.

Since 2014 when he began training on the Archer Academy's pitches, the number of women coming to play each week has shot up to around 70. Andy's found competitions for seven-a-side teams, and last year he found a league for five-a-side beginner teams. His enthusiasm and dedication to the sport and his teams are undoubtedly unmatched.

Sadly, Andy recently underwent surgery on his foot and the long recovery time afterwards means that he is now suffering

from a serious back injury. The prolonged waiting times for treatment from the NHS have forced Andy to go privately for his medical care.

Financial strain

Now, he is not only dealing with these health challenges and medical bills, but also facing financial strain in his daily life due to his inability to work. He is struggling to manage these financial burdens alone.

His teams and players are rallying behind him to help him through this rough patch. East

Finchley Women's FC committee has created a GoFundMe page to help him cover his medical costs. Any contributions are welcome and appreciated and will go directly to his expenses.

The players state: "Andy's passion for women's football is unmatched, and we miss his presence on the sidelines. Let's come together as a community to support him during this tough time and help him get back on his feet." Find more details and make a donation by searching 'CoachAndy' at gofundme.com.

Newsreader's anger over death of friend in senseless bombing

By John Lawrence

BBC newsreader Clive Myrie has spoken about his friendship with Miriam Hyman, the East Finchley woman who was among the 52 people killed in the 7/7 London terror attacks. In an interview with *The Mirror* newspaper, he revealed that she had been a guest at his wedding and her death left him "angry at the senselessness of it all".

Miriam, who worked as a picture editor, was on the bus that exploded at the hands of a suicide bomber in Tavistock Square on 7 July 2005. She was 32. More than 750 people were injured in attacks across the capital that day.

In his new autobiography *Everything is Everything*, Myrie says: "It was the worst terrorist atrocity on British soil. My wife Catherine worked with one of the victims who died. Miriam came to our wedding and the beautiful pottery she gave us as a present 25 years ago still sits in our home."

The newsreader and *Mastermind* presenter also noted that three out of the four bombers were British-born, second-generation immigrants, "like me", and said he felt "overwhelming anger" towards the terrorists.



Friends: Newsreader Clive Myrie and Miriam Hyman

As we've reported in a previous edition, three years after Miriam's death, her family set up the Miriam Hyman Memorial Trust, which is working to build community cohesion as her legacy.

The trust has created a set of education resources for teachers

of 11 to 14-year-olds to help them approach sensitive issues surrounding violent extremism and radicalisation.

All of these teaching materials are freely accessible in the Miriam's Vision section of the trust website at www.miriam-hyman.com

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Hand-drawn memories of a newspaper cartoon master

By Diana Cormack

Older readers may remember that Christmas was never complete without a copy of the Giles cartoon annual. With his regular output of three cartoons a week on topical themes in the *Daily Express*, there were plenty to fill the pages of these favourite stocking fillers.

Being deaf in one ear and blind in one eye following a motorbike accident, Ronald Giles was rejected for war service but did become the paper's correspondent cartoonist with the 2nd Army in the Second World War. Later he was assigned to the Coldstream Guards unit that liberated the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

Following the war he introduced his imaginary Giles family, featuring the formidable Grandma Giles with her offspring and grandchildren. These highly detailed drawings, which first appeared in 1945, gave him the chance to comment

widely on current affairs for over 50 years. He also designed Christmas cards to donate to friends and favourite charities, one being the Royal National Lifeboat Institution of which he was Life President.

A regular recipient of these was my mother-in-law Gladys. From 1937 to 1938, at the age of 22, she became the Giles family lodger in Edgware to help cover the bills, following the death of his older brother.

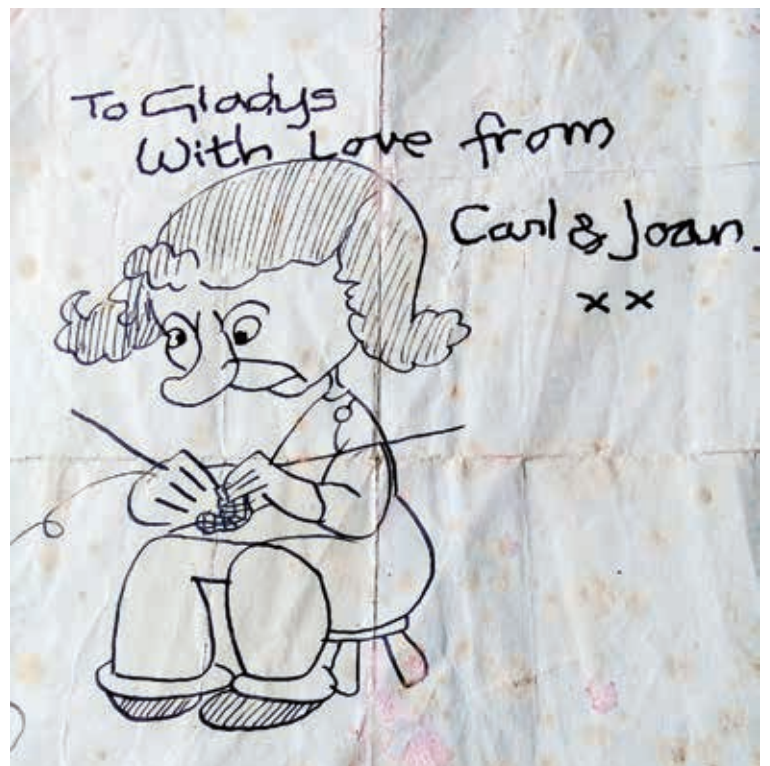
At that time Giles drew cartoons for the Sunday paper *Reynold's News*. Later he changed his name to Carl after friends commented that he looked like film star Boris Karloff. Hence all

the cards she received from him over the years were signed Carl and Joan (his first cousin whom he married in East Finchley).

Memorabilia

My mother-in-law kept all those cards, along with newspaper cuttings and articles about her old friend, who passed away in 1995, eight months after his wife's death.

My husband and I recently sorted through this memorabilia and took it to the museum in Ipswich, where the couple made their home. They had no children, but it seems some of Giles' characters were the inspiration for the *Beano* comic's fabulous Bash Street Kids. We



Personal touch: The cartoon drawn by Giles for Diana's mother-in-law Gladys

were delighted to know that what Gladys had carefully and lovingly kept was to be put on display and credited to her.

From The Archer archives ...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago:
November 2013

Future prospects continued to improve for Avenue House, now called Stephens House, in East End Road, N3, as Barnet Council awarded a £25,000 grant to the Avenue House Estate Trust. This was to be paid in three instalments during 2013-2016 and would unlock £1.9 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund for improving outbuildings and grounds. The house and grounds were bequeathed to the people of Finchley by Henry Stephens, founder of Stephens Ink, when he died in 1918.

15 years ago:
November 2008

Many of our older readers will remember the Mandarin Chinese restaurant, which closed in November 2008 after over 20 years in business. It was one of the High Road's longest established restaurants but William, whose parents first opened the Mandarin, and his family's farewell notice in the window confirmed the closure and wished all former customers well. The site is currently occupied by Going Greek.

23 years ago:
November 2000

The Phoenix, one of the oldest working cinemas in Britain, was granted Grade II listed building status by English Heritage. General Manager at the time, Ruth Mulandi, said "We feel good about it. It's great to know we're not the only ones who think the auditorium is well worth preserving." Twenty-three years later, the Phoenix is still entertaining East Finchley residents with a wide-ranging programme of films.



Gifts galore: The campaign aims to make sure young people in need aren't forgotten

Make a young person's Christmas

An organisation has put out a call for people to donate Christmas gifts for children and young people in need in Barnet. The presents will go to young carers, young people in care and those families most in need.

The Young Barnet Foundation runs its gift campaign every year in partnership with 200 trusted grassroots charities. Last year more than 2,500 donations flooded in, including toys and games, toiletries and some items that specifically matched children's interests.

Organiser Maria Copelin said Barnet's green and leafy appearance can mask significant areas of deprivation. One in nine young people in the borough are thought to be living in poverty.

"Many of our local charities are stretched to capacity and so we support them through running a centralised Christmas campaign. We aim to reduce isolation for young people and create a positive touch point with local charity services that can help them," said Maria.

There are several ways in which supporters can donate. New toys and gifts can be dropped off at the foundation's offices at Old East Barnet Library, 85 Brook Hill Road, East Barnet, EN4 8SG, or items can be purchased from the foundation's wish list on Amazon. Alternatively, people can donate money to purchase age-appropriate gifts. Find out more at www.youngbarnet-foundation.org.uk/christmas-campaign or via the QR code here.



Choir is back with a Baroque spectacular

North London Chorus is back this month with a programme of Baroque music celebrating the genius of Bach and Handel. The centrepiece of the concert will be Bach's *Magnificat in D*, accompanied on period instruments by the Meridian Sinfonia.

Bass soloist Trevor Eliot Bowes will sing Bach's aria *Grosser Herr* and soprano soloist Ellie Neate will perform Handel's *Laudate pueri* (Psalm 112), accompanied by the choir. Handel composed this work in 1707 when he was only 22.

Mezzo-soprano Bethan Langford and tenor Graham Neal complete the starry line-

up of soloists. The strings and continuo will showcase their talents in Handel's *Concerto Grosso Op 6 No 7 in Bb*.

The concert takes place on Saturday 25 November at St James Church, Muswell Hill, at 7.30pm. Tickets from £13 are available from northlondon-chorus.org/tickets or St James Church bookshop.



Stirring sound: The North London Chorus in concert

Frost fair

The Finchley WI and Stephens House and Gardens in East End Road, N3, are hosting their 12th annual Frost Fair on Sunday 26 November from 10.30 to 5pm.

A wide range of beautiful gifts and treats will be on sale, all made by local artisans, and at affordable prices. Choose from edibles, jewellery, candles, room scents, artwork, knitted and textile gifts and more. The event supports local charities.

Calendar of a year on Long Lane Pasture

Looking for a 2024 calendar that supports a local good cause?

The Long Lane Pasture calendar is available from this month, priced £5 and showing 12 natural scenes photographed on the nature reserve. Visit the pasture, opposite the fire station in Long Lane, N3, on any Saturday morning from 10am to noon, to pick up your copy.



Stories to tell: Baroness Young, second from left, with guests at the Black History event at Age UK

Tales of inspiration from experience of Baroness

By Karen Williamson

People from all backgrounds enjoyed Age UK Barnet's celebration of black history, food and culture in East Finchley last month, where Lola Young, Baroness Young of Hornsey, shared a few stories from her incredible life.

She told guests at the charity's base in Oak Lane, N2, about going into foster care at the age of eight after her parents separated. "Five of us were sleeping in the same room and there was no bathroom," she said.

But by 2004 she had been made a peer of the realm and

was giving her maiden speech in the House of Lords. "I saw Margaret Thatcher talking to Normal Tebbit and I thought whatever they've achieved, I'm here too."

She left her listeners with an important message: "It's important to look back at our history and share stories and learn from

the past so we don't end up making the same mistakes."

East Finchley resident John, who is part of the Windrush generation, spoke movingly about his first impressions of London when he came here as a young man.

"Everyone had a fantastic time celebrating our wonderful culture and I was overwhelmed by the positive comments from people afterwards from all walks of life and backgrounds," says Age UK Barnet services manager Jenny Jean-Charles.

Recycling project gets back on track after difficult year

By Emma Frampton, Bin There, Donate That
The Bin There, Donate That project was set up two years ago and aims to simplify recycling and upcycling for East Finchley residents by providing easier places for them to take items that cannot be given away, sold, or left kerbside.

In our first year, we recruited a few volunteers and began to establish the name along the High Road. However, the last year has presented challenges as well as positives. It has been difficult to continue this project over the last year due to my own work commitments, but with a number of new volunteers we are back on track.

We spent a lot of last winter trying to become official in order, in part, to advertise for support. This was a frustrating three or four months of going round in circles until the East Finchley Community Group stepped in to take us under their wing. We are extremely grateful to them.

As a result, we have now advertised and recruited several new volunteers. After a year abroad, Isabella returned in the summer and has been instrumental in organising the admin and meeting some new members. Alongside her, and equally important is the new manager, Dominic.

Over the next few months, we hope to reinstate the blister pack collection at Oakdale Pharmacy, begin to raise some funds, and improve our communication with local businesses.

If you haven't already,

please check out our website and social media pages to get updates on Bin There, Donate That, and we will continue to keep everyone informed in *The Archer*.

We would like to thank the East Finchley residents who have embraced the Bin There concept, and give a welcome to anyone with an interest in us. A full list of what can be taken where for now is on our website; if you'd like to get in contact, please email us at bintheredonatethat@gmail.com, or contact us on Facebook.



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
- 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 cables to Everything Electrical, High Road
- Ink jet 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

RICKY SAVAGE ... THE VOICE OF IRRESPONSIBILITY

Circus minimus

Soon parents everywhere will be searching for something to do with the kids at Christmas. Well, roll up, roll up because everyone loves a circus, they always have.

Let's start with the Romans who had the Circus Maximus, a race track for chariot racing, a sort of speedway meets banger racing with added horses. And then there was the Coliseum, where you got blood-curdling fights, full-scale sea battles and, on special feast days, the Roman equivalent of the FA Cup final when the lions took on the Christians. Then the lions took on the bears, the tigers, the leopards and anything else that was heading for extinction. This was the Roman equivalent of a nice day out for all the family.

Oh boy, how times have changed. Everyone knows what you used to get with a proper circus, the sort they used to show on TV on Bank Holidays. You got high wire acts and trapeze artists flying high above the arena in death-defying stunts. There were clowns with exploding cars, custard pies and baggy trousers. And back then they, like the knife throwers, weren't extras from some horror film, they were meant to be funny, but usually weren't.

Dancing elephants

And there were still animals. Lots of them, usually starting with dancing elephants and women standing on the backs of horses that raced round the ring. Sure, throw in the performing seals who'd do anything for fish, the camels with attitude and the performing poodles, but the main attraction were still the lions.

Every kid loved the sight of a man putting his head in a lion's mouth, followed by various roaring and cavorting in a cage. Some days you'd get tigers jumping through hoops of fire. A real treat for the kids, but obviously not for the tigers who hate fire.

Today, the circus animals are long gone and the cutting-edge spectacle is left to us humans to provide. We nearly had such a circus on our doorstep in Cherry Tree Swamp until everyone saw sense and it was moved to higher, dryer ground. Mind you, it would have been the perfect place to recreate those Roman sea battles.

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Birthday concert

Fifty years to the day since it was formed, Finchley Chamber Choir is celebrating its anniversary with a special concert in a central London venue.

The choir will be performing Vivaldi's Gloria, Handel's Concerto Grosso Op3 No4, Bach's Lobet Den Herrn and Handel's Dixit Dominus in the company of the Linden Baroque Orchestra. The concert takes place at St James's Church, 197 Piccadilly, W1J 9LL on Saturday 11 November at 7.30pm. More information and tickets, from www.fcchoir.co.uk



Beach party as Beavers celebrate

The 224 North London Beavers group turned one last month after an adventure-filled year that included a day in Brighton exploring the aquarium and having a treasure hunt on the beach.

The youngsters have also tried sit-on-top kayaks and stand-up paddle boards at Enfield Scouts Sailing Association while, back at their hut in Sheldon Avenue, N6, they mastered important life skills like road safety, fire safety and first aid.

Get involved

Group scout leader Del Chambers said none of this would have been possible without the fantastic team of parents supporting the Beavers since they started last October. And now, they are looking for a volunteer team leader to help keep the fun going.

No prior experience is required, just a sense of humour and adventure. Training will be



Picnic time: The 224 North London Beavers group enjoying a trip to Brighton back in the summer

provided, mainly online, including first aid training, and you will become part of a great team. There are also opportunities for anyone aged 14 to 18 who

is doing service for their Duke of Edinburgh award. Contact Del on 07707 763344 or email gsl@224northlondonscouts.org.uk

Owls are a big hoot for hospice

By Lynn Winton

Meet Owlbert, the first of the many 5ft creatures that will form a 60-owl trail next summer, organised to raise funds for North London Hospice.

The idea is that local firms will sponsor an owl, which will then be decorated, each one by a different artist, and sited across north London to create a trail for people to follow. Local schools and youth groups can also adopt and decorate a 3ft owl to add to the fun.

Charlie Langhorne, co-founder of the owls' creators Wild in Art, said: "We are delighted to be teaming up with North London Hospice on this exciting sculpture trail. We hope that the owls will inspire businesses, the creative sector, and the wider community to come together to create something very special."

One of the first business owners to find out about the initiative was Hussein Lalani, who is the owner of The Muswell Hill Club on Fortis Green. "I am really interested in sponsoring an owl and am already making enquiries. We are currently supporting the



Bird trail: Owls from North London Hospice's will be landing all around the area

hospice with an autumn raffle, and would love to have an owl outside the gym," he said.

The venture is a new way for the charity to raise funds to support their vital end-of-life care. As well as the sponsorship of the unique owl sculptures, they will all ultimately be auctioned and sold to the highest bidders. Enquiries regarding how to sponsor an owl can be made now to fmurphy@north-londonhospice.co.uk

What's On at the Phoenix in November

By Zalan Pall, general manager



A German and Basque drama, a British classic, film festivals, a major fundraiser, live opera, ballet and theatre are all on the Phoenix programme for a busy November.

The Pigeon Tunnel, which is showing on Saturday 4 November, is a deeply human and engaging documentary exploration of John le Carré's extraordinary life and the paper-thin membrane between fact and fiction.

That's followed by a smart, solidly crafted procedural that's anchored in family drama. *Anatomy of a Fall*, from Friday 10 November, finds star Sandra Hüller and director/co-writer Justine Triet operating at peak power.

As the people of Ukraine face another winter of war, we're hosting a **Ukrainian Fundraiser** on Saturday 11 November. Please come along and support this event to enable urgently needed funds and goods to reach them.

For the lovers of screen arts, we will have *Exhibition on Screen: Klimt and The Kiss* on Sunday 5 November, the Royal Opera House's *Don Quixote* on Tuesday 7 November, the National Theatre's *Skylight* starring Bill Nighy and Carey Mulligan on Thursday 16 November and the Met Opera's *The Life and Times of Malcolm X* on Saturday 18 November.

We are also hosting two releases, to be announced, as

part of the **Jewish Film Festival** on Monday 13 November and Wednesday 15 November, along with two films as part of the **Migration Festival**, starting with *R.M.N.* on Thursday 23 November and then *No End* on Saturday 25 November.

In *20,000 Species of Bees*, showing on Tuesday 21 November, an eight-year-old child struggles with the fact that people keep addressing her in confusing ways. During a summer in the Basque Country among the beehives, she explores her identity alongside the women of her family, who at the same time reflect on their own lives and desires.

We're having a Powell and Pressburger classic season, screening *A Matter of Life and Death*, starring David Niven, on Sunday 26 November. Finally, *Maestro* is the towering and fearless love story chronicling the lifelong relationship between composer Leonard Bernstein and actress Felicia Montealegre Bernstein. It shows from Friday 1 December.

For full details of all events and screenings and to book tickets, visit www.phoenixcinema.co.uk or come into our foyer.

Heaven for children and a haven for grown-ups

Anne Isaac is an English teacher, newly retired after a long career at University College School in Hampstead. She has lived in Huntingdon Road, N2, and been part of the East Finchley Methodist Church for 33 years. Here she shares her enthusiasm for the pre-schooler play sessions she now helps to run there.

It seems eminently appropriate that the beautiful huge wooden garden statue of Susanna Wesley, who had 19 children, welcomes and watches over children twice a week at East Finchley Methodist Church in the High Road.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays during term time, between 9.30am and 11.30am, the cavernous internal space and pretty garden are transformed into a child-centred heaven: we have teepees, cars, bouncy chairs, dolls and so much more. The £2 entrance fee (£2.50 on Tuesday for more than one child) includes coffee / tea and biscuits and two hours of play and company.

Sing-a-long

The play is remarkably peaceful and the atmosphere is very relaxed. At the end of the sessions Jean leads a sing-a-



Archer writer Lynn Winton's granddaughter Louisa at a play session

long which is both stimulating and calming.

One lovely thank you letter described Wesley's as a "haven" and "invaluable." My journalistic research one Thursday produced some heartwarming responses: "inclusive", "heart of the community" and "wonderful."

Both mornings are staffed by volunteers expertly led by

Jean on Tuesdays and Chris and Ken on Thursdays. A few of our stalwart guests, including the wonderfully consistent little chap who ate the end piece of the chocolate log every week, are now at school, so it would be great to entertain some new children, particularly ones with chocolate cake eating skills. Come and meet us. On Thursdays we even have professional coffee machines, oat milk lattes and M&S cake. All are welcome.

Boot sale is on

The monthly Muswell Hill Indoor Car Boot Sale is going strong.

This month it takes place on Saturday 18 November from 10am to 1pm at its usual venue of Hornsey Parish Church Hall, on the corner of Cranley Gardens and Park Road, N10 3AH. Buses W7, W3 and 144 stop nearby. Admission is 50p and refreshments are available. For information, contact 020 8368 8180.

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Letters

Tennis court charges

Dear Editor,

Whilst some might have thought that the announcement that Barnet Council was now charging for the use of the two tennis courts at Cherry Tree Wood (*The Archer*, September 2023), was bad news, allow me to explain why it is in fact a very positive move for tennis in the borough.

Ever since the courts were refurbished two years ago and a free 'booking system' was introduced, it has been virtually impossible to book a court. Why? Because whilst in theory anyone could book a court up to seven days in advance, in practice both courts were being fully booked virtually every day from morning to night.

Sounds great, lots of tennis being played - but in fact virtually no tennis was being played because these courts were being booked preemptively on the basis that in theory someone might need them for playing or coaching but in fact, anyone turning up at the time of a 'booked court' would usually find them deserted.

The argument against charging was that this would prevent young players from using the courts but the Council, very sensibly, are keeping a number of sessions open and free to book every day.

So, congratulations to Barnet for finding a sensible solution and thanks to Councillor Arjun Mittra who pursued this matter on behalf of real, as opposed to phantom, tennis players.

Ivor Gaber
Fortis Green, N2.

Say no to Co-op

Dear Editor,

Under no circumstances should the Co-op be granted permission to open in East Finchley (*The Archer*, October 2023). We have more than enough food shopping choices and are blessed with very diverse and well stocked independent food markets. Don't allow any more large food retailers to disrupt the diversity of what is on offer already. It would be another nail in the coffin of our hard working independent food retailers which can only damage our small and vibrant high street.

Natalie Baskin,
Maya Road, N2.

Race night will be fun

Dear Editor

Many, many thanks for the article you did on me and my charity walk in the October edition.

Thank you for also mentioning the Race Night at Madden's Pub in the High Road, N2, on Monday 6 November at 7.30pm. It will be a fun night of betting on horse racing. There will be complimentary Italian food available, prepared by me, and I must say, I'm a very good cook! Also, there will be a short acoustic performance by my band Sound of the Suburb. I'll be joined by my great friends and former band mates and we'll be playing some songs for your listening pleasure. All together, it will surely be a great night.

Chris Berlingieri,
Durham Road, N2

The Archer online

Did you know you can catch up with past issues of The Archer online? Every edition since the start of 2000 is available on our website www.the-archer.co.uk.

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.



New hosts: Arina and Eamonn are celebrating their first year in charge at the Windsor Castle

Couple mark a year behind the bar

The new managers of The Windsor Castle are hosting a special evening to celebrate their first year in business at the independent pub in The Walks, N2. Arina Piskunova and Eamonn England took over in November 2022 following an extensive refurbishment.

The pair will be hosting a live jazz evening on Saturday 18 November with discounts on all food until 9pm and a buy-one-get-one-free offer on selected drinks from 4pm to 6pm.

Arina said: "The support we've received locally has

been incredible, and we're very grateful to everyone who steps through our doors. Energy and food costs have been very high for us, and as an independent business we've struggled at times, but we appreciate that the cost of living is impacting

everyone."

The Windsor runs a popular quiz on the second Tuesday of each month (booking essential) and there's a free acoustic folk session on the last Wednesday of each month where musicians are welcome to sit in and play.

Be on your guard against shingles

By Diana Cormack

As well as the Covid vaccination, older people are being offered a jab against the painful condition of shingles. Having suffered from it twice in the past, I would encourage others to get themselves immunised.

Shingles is caused by reactivation of the chicken pox virus which lies dormant in many of us who had the childhood illness. The risk of contracting it increases with age and in those with a weakened immune system. Shingles cannot be caught from someone with the condition, but those lacking immunity to chicken pox can develop it.

Shingles shows itself with tiny tracking reddened spots that increase in size and spread, following a nerve pattern. It forms blisters which are extremely painful and can cause

damage to specific areas such as the eyes, face and skin. As they dry out, rough and sensitive patches may remain for many months.

The NHS website says: "The shingles vaccine helps protect against shingles. It's recommended for people at higher

risk from shingles, including all adults turning 65, those aged 70 to 79 and those aged 50 and over with a severely weakened immune system."

If you match the age ranges and conditions above and have not been immunised, contact your GP surgery.

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Talent show comeback

By Diana Cormack
East Finchley Town Team is planning to stage a talent show at the Phoenix Cinema in January for the second year running.

Last year's East Finchley's Got Talent event was a big success. At the same time there will be another cake baking competition, possibly with a film theme.

Everyone is welcome to the Town Team's next meeting on Thursday 9 November at 7pm for a 7.30pm start in the Constitutional Club, The Walks, N2. Food will be available and drinks can be bought at the bar.

Any reader who feels strongly about any matter is invited to use this "Soapbox" column.

Please note that opinions expressed are those of the writer alone.



Dirty dogs or careless owners?

By Diana Cormack

On a recent television quiz contestants were asked to estimate the number of dogs in this country. Amazingly the answer was 20 million, approximately one to every three human beings. Before Covid there would certainly have been fewer, for many people bought a pet during lockdown.

Sadly, since then, many dogs have been abandoned or put into care because their owners find them too expensive or too much trouble to keep.

But another aspect of dog owning that seems to be on the decline is clearing up after them. Nobody can have failed to notice that the amount of dog poo on pavements and paths has increased along with the number of dogs.

When a dog is involved in an attack we're often told that it is the fault of the owner. We can't know if this is always true, but in the case of foul piles of dog muck there is no doubt. Whoever was in charge of that animal is responsible for disposing of the mess and in the places provided too, not hanging off a branch or secreted beside someone's garden fence.

So watch your step when you're out and about as our streets are not as safe as they used to be, even in fragrant East Finchley.



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 60th 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 50th 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

Be part of it

And another reminder for those who want to be part of the 50th 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



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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