



Letters

Bikes on pavements
Dear Editor,

It is not uncommon to be walking along the pavement on the High Road and suddenly be aware of a bike racing past in either direction. It happens with e-bikes as well as ordinary pedal bikes. The e-bikes are going much faster than someone in a disabled buggy.

I thought pavements were for pedestrians and roads for vehicles? Does anyone other than myself care about the lack of courtesy or safety shown by adults and teenagers weaving around pedestrians on a crowded pavement? If so, is there anything that we want or can do about it?

Harriet Copperman,
Stokes Court, N2

Crime problem
Dear Editor

Your articles about crime levels in East Finchley (The Archer, July 2024) made interesting reading. I feel for the shop owners and their customers whose premises are raided by gangs who decide to target the area and know they can get away with it. These detestable criminals are in and out of East Finchley before they can be stopped. They know they have quick escape routes and they use them. A visible police presence in our shopping areas would be a deterrent but that is not possible 24 hours a day. We can all take steps to make our homes safer and to increase our personal safety when we are out and about, but there is precious little a solo shopkeeper can do against a determined gang of maurauding burglars. This is a police problem and a society problem. It is all our problem. But goodness knows how we go about solving it.

Mike Haworth,
Long Lane, N2.



Ancient remnant
Dear Editor,

My friend Harriet noticed this flower spike which I know to be a Pyramidal Orchid in a tiny triangle of native grasses, surrounded by concrete near the bike racks in East Finchley Station car park.

I can only surmise that this is a tiny remnant of ancient hay meadow (unless anyone knows otherwise). Native orchids will only grow if they are associated with specific microscopic symbiotic fungi, so the plant is extremely unlikely to be from any but an ancient source.

Linda Dolata,
Leopold Road, N2.

Stone is stark commemoration of my grandfather

By Debora Singer

When a photo of our mother was featured in a BBC podcast and a newspaper article, my sister and I didn't expect it to be circulated around the world, bringing intriguing repercussions. My mother was aged 10 when the photo captured her arriving at Liverpool Street Station on the Kindertransport in July 1939.

The article in a German newspaper came to the attention of historian Anne Kupke, who runs Zeit-Geschichte Verein (History of our Time) in Halle an der Saale, our mother's birthplace in Germany.

Anne asked if we would like a Stolperstein for our grandfather Willy. A Stolperstein is a brass plaque sunk into a heavy concrete block, about five inches cubed. They are placed in Germany and other European countries to commemorate people who were murdered during the Holocaust.

Laid in the pavement outside the last house where the person lived, they are 'stumbling stones' to remind local people of what happened during the Second World War.

Back in May, we gathered outside the house where our grandfather had lived. A group

of school children aged 11 to 14 had volunteered to sponsor the Stolperstein. They raised the 120 euros it cost through bake sales at their school.

My sister Helen and I gave our thanks to everyone involved. Anne told Willy's life history (she knows more about our family than we do!) and two of the children spoke. Meanwhile a local volunteer placed the stone in a pre-prepared hole in the pavement and concreted it in.

The writing, following the formula for all Stolpersteine, states "Here lived Willy Cohn, born 1888". The final line on the stone is stark: "Deported 1942 Auschwitz Murdered." Our grandmother was able to travel to England on a domestic worker's visa, but Willy was too old to get such a visa.

The children placed flowers



Stumbling stone: Debora Singer with her sister Helen and the Stolperstein dedicated to their grandfather

on the pavement around the stone. It was really touching seeing them so interested in our family history. We all observed a minute's silence to remember our grandfather.

Doing something with and

for our family felt very moving, contributing to the students' education in such a personal way felt important and it was a privilege meeting so many welcoming people in our mother's hometown.



The RIP walking football club plays at Power League in Colney Hatch

Find your pace at walking football

By Lynn Winton

Walking football is one of the fastest growing sports in the UK, according to the Walking Football Association, and our nearest local club has the witty name RIP (Running is Prohibited).

Regular player Howard Skolnick co-chaired a tenth anniversary fundraising festival in June at the Power League ground on Colney Hatch by inviting 12 teams to play in a continuous game over 24 hours, which raised more than £7,000 for Prostate Cancer UK.

Howard, who lives near Cherry Tree Wood, explained how they partnered with the charity: "As well as getting sponsorship, all the participants received information about prostate cancer, including the

importance of having regular PSA tests and we estimate we got that message across to 2,000 men. We're looking forward to enlarging the festival for 2025."

RIP are keen to encourage people to try the game which is energetic but much less accident-prone than regular football, thus suitable for later life. They play at Power League on Monday and Thursday mornings. Contact them by emailing 2ripwfc@gmail.com and information on the benefits and rules of playing can be found at thewfa.co.uk

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.



Carers need a living wage

By Maxine Klein

A few weeks ago, I joined a protest outside the House of Parliament campaigning for a Living Wage for Carers. I was shocked to hear from a carer who works part time, whilst her husband, also a carer, works full time so that they can only afford a one-bedroom flat for themselves and their two children. Furthermore, they sometimes need to resort to food banks.

They both love their job even though caring for the elderly and infirm can be a very demanding task but they cannot cope on the wages they receive. Even though they get the minimum wage their hourly rate does not cover the time that they spend travelling from one client to another.



Maxine at the Living Wage demo

This means that their take-home pay is below the minimum wage.

Anyone who has had the service of a carer knows that they live up to their name. They do care for their clients but often must do less than they would like so that they can rush off to the next client.

Hopefully our new government will do more than pay lip service to "the wonderful work that they do" and pay them a wage consistent with their worth.