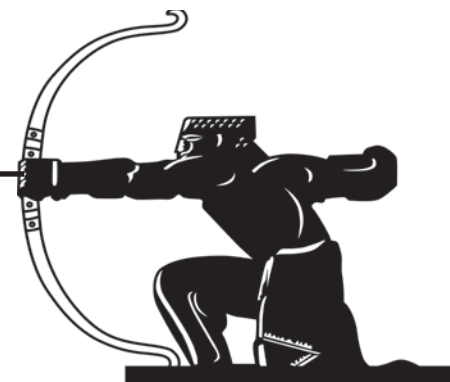




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The Archer

Local News is our Aim



ISSN 1361-3952

August 2024 No. 364

Delivered free to 10,000 homes and businesses across East Finchley

School's out, food's out, let's help out

By Lynn Winton

Food Bank Aid, the grassroots charity that supplies 32 food banks across north London, is this month running an urgent appeal for extra supplies and donations to help struggling families through the school summer holidays.

From its base at the Great North Leisure Park, North Finchley, it wants to provide 50% more desperately needed child and teen-friendly items during the long break. This list includes more fresh fruit and veg, tuna, pasta, and eggs, and household items like laundry tablets and toilet rolls.

Naomi Russell, who lives in N2 and who founded Food Bank Aid when she saw a news report about children in the UK having to go to school hungry, is very concerned about the summer when children cannot rely on free school meals.

tired and in need of emotional support because they are experiencing hardship. "The situation worsens during school holidays, when the need not only for meals, but also extra toilet rolls, washing powder and snacks becomes more acute."

Food Bank Aid will mobilise its packing and delivery volunteers to get food and household items to more than 5,000 children every week in East Finchley and across north London. This will ensure they have the essentials at home and can also rely on having regular meals throughout the summer.

The charity is appealing for people to make cash donations to enable it to buy the goods that are needed. If you would like to help, you can donate on their website foodbankaid.org.uk. You can also donate groceries at the charity's base, opposite the Vue Cinema, or at your local drop-off point. Email info@foodbankaid.org.uk for a list of locations.

WI backs food bank, turn to page 2



Very concerned: Naomi Russell

In term time, these might be their only guaranteed meal of the day. In summer, many parents skip meals themselves to ensure their children have something to eat.

Hungry children

"The latest research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation paints a disturbing picture," explained Naomi. "Primary school staff across Britain are seeing more and more children hungry,



Ways of looking at the world

Portraits, landscapes and abstract compositions, including this shot by Roger Cookson called 'Nuclear Family', are all part of the artistry of local photographers on show at an exhibition running throughout August. Members of Hampstead Garden Suburb U3A photography group are displaying their work at Fellowship House, 136a Wilfild Way, NW11 6YD. Admission is free and everyone is welcome.

Tube line disruption

TfL has announced that no trains will run on parts of the Piccadilly line for two weeks while track and platform upgrades are carried out.

The closures will last from Saturday 17 August to Sunday 1 September and the sections affected will be from Wood Green to Cockfosters and from Rayners Lane to Uxbridge. There will be a reduced service on other parts of the line. A series of weekend closures will follow through the autumn in preparation for a fleet of new trains arriving next year.

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Copy deadlines - **September:** 16 August; **October:** 13 September, **November:** 11 October



Crucial cash: Finchley Foodbank's Louis Victor receives a cheque from W.I president Fiona McSharry

WI lends support to food bank

By Lynn Winton

Finchley Women's Institute have just celebrated their 15th anniversary. Each year members nominate which local charities should receive sums from their fundraising efforts, and this year they decided to focus solely on Finchley Food Bank, who were delighted to receive a cheque for £1,000.

W.I. president Fiona McSharry explained how this decision came about: "The ever-increasing demand on food banks in recent years is horrifying as even those in full time employment in today's economic climate are unable to support themselves. It was clear to our members that feeding people is a priority. We are local women doing what we can."

The Finchley W.I. have meetings at St Stephen's House and Gardens, East End Road, Finchley Central, and you can find out about joining them at wifinchley.wixsite.com/finchley

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PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet

41 Chandos Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension with one roof light following the demolition of existing rear extension

35 Fairlawn Avenue, N2

Roof extension involving rear dormer window and three front-facing roof lights

13 Summerlee Gardens, N2

Single-storey rear extension with three roof lights

238 High Road, N2

Submission of details of condition 5 (Noise Mitigation) pursuant to planning permission 23/4277/FUL

26 Lincoln Road, N2

Roof extension involving side/rear dormer window with one roof light and two front-facing roof lights. Single-storey rear/side extension with four roof lights and associated alterations to existing patio

18 Leslie Road, N2

Replacement and extension of the existing rear patio area

32 Church Lane, N2

Single-storey side extension with two roof lights following demolition of existing lean-to. Alterations to and conversion of existing garage into habitable room including insertion of one roof light and alteration to doors. Alterations and extension to existing rear raised patio

46 Trinity Road, N2

Erection of a two-storey building to provide two self-contained flats. Associated cycle parking, refuse and recycling and amenity space

28 High Road, N2

Submission of details of condition 5 (Construction Management and Logistics Plan) and

10 (Noise Mitigation) pursuant to planning permission 23/0097/FUL

Footpath and underpass between 24/26 Manor Park Road, N2, and 44/46 Trinity Road, N2

Resurfacing, drainage improvements, lighting, works to fences, reflector panels and play path improvements to existing footpath

145 Abbots Gardens, N2

Part single, part first-floor side and rear extension with five roof lights. Roof extension involving hip to gable, rear dormer window with Juliette balcony and three front-facing roof lights

Land opposite Chambers Gardens / Strawberry Vale, N2

Remove one 15m structure to replace with one 18m structure with wraparound and nine antennae, along with associated equipment works

Haringey

25, Greenfield Drive, N2

Single-storey rear substantially glazed extension, relocation of kitchen, first-floor rear extension & alterations and loft conversion

17 Lynmouth Road, N2

Hip to gable loft conversion

40 Lynmouth Road, N2

Erection of a single-storey rear extension, hip-to-gable extension, dormer extension, deck in the rear garden, new glazing, bicycle shed in the front garden, internal reconfiguration, reconstruction of the front porch, raising the parapet to the rear, installation of external wall insulation, installation of an air-source heat pump in the front garden, and reconfiguration of the front garden wall

BE PART OF IT Volunteers wanted

Compiled by Lynn Winton

• **HGS U3A** (hgsu3a.uk) based in Hampstead Garden Suburb offers its members a diverse selection of courses, talks and events. They have two volunteer requests: one is to recruit someone for social media and public relations. This role involves connecting with local community leaders and shaping the online presence. For a small amount of time, you could have a big impact. Get in touch with Carole: chair@hgsu3a.uk. They are also looking for someone with reasonable computer skills to manage their Zoom accounts. This role involves scheduling meetings for various groups across three Zoom accounts at the start of each term, providing leaders with the necessary IDs and passwords, and offering members access codes. It's straightforward, with occasional queries supported by the wider team and initial training provided. If you can help please email: groupsorg@hgsu3a.uk

• **Food Bank Aid** provides essential goods to 31 food banks who in turn support over 20,000 people per week. The organisation is looking for drivers, and also help to sort & pack donations for food banks. Its hub in Finchley is a fun place to work, with friendly people, music, cake, tea & coffee. Flexible shifts available! Please contact volunteering@foodbankaid.org.uk

• Could you spare an hour or so a week to chat to an older isolated person? **Age UK Barnet** is looking for befrienders to offer friendly chats, support and companionship. The charity also needs walking buddies to help older people to get out and about again after losing the confidence to leave their homes. Age UK Barnet is helping people who haven't left their house for two years! Just a couple of hours a week of your time could make a big difference to an older person in East Finchley. Please contact Lisa on 020 8432 1422.

If you'd like your organisation to be included in this column and listed on the East Finchley community website, please complete the form at www.ILoveN2.co.uk/be-part-of-it.



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Films shortage forces Phoenix to scale back

By John Lawrence

A serious lack of new film releases coupled with the traditional summer slump in cinema audiences is forcing the Phoenix Cinema in East Finchley to adjust its opening hours in August... but it says it hopes to be back to business as usual by September. The cinema says there will still be a programme of matinees and evening screenings this month, particularly from Fridays to Sundays, but there may be some weekdays when it is not economical to open its doors at all.

The venue is planning its schedule week by week for the next four to five weeks and urges film-goers to check its website at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk or ask in the foyer for the latest screening times.

Strike action

Many cinemas around the

week, rather than seven," said a spokesperson. "This is just temporary and we hope to be back to normal in September."

On screen

Among the films already slated to run at the Phoenix in August are *A Story of Bones*, telling the story of



Summer nights: The Phoenix is adjusting its opening hours during August. Photo Alison Roberts

country are finding there is a dearth of films out for release following the impact of last year's strike by Hollywood writers and actors, which halted production on scores of projects for months.

Post-pandemic struggle

For the Phoenix, this is coupled with already lower output from independent filmmakers, whose work it would want to show but many of whom are still struggling to recover after the pandemic.

While the big multiplex chains have been pinning their hopes for better audiences on a handful of summer blockbusters like *Gladiator 2*, *Twisters* and *Joker 2*, the Phoenix says the number of suitable new releases available through its own distribution partners is low. "Where there is a film that we think our audiences will enjoy we will still show it but maybe for three or four days a

an horrific discovery on the isolated British territory of Saint Helena, including a Q&A session with its real-life protagonist Annina van Neel on Sunday 4 August, and Luchino Visconti's majestic *The Leopard*, which brings to life one of the most popular Italian novels of all time, on Sunday 11 August.



Timber! The huge branch lies across Brompton Grove and a neighbouring garden. Photo Bob Janes

Road blocked by broken branch

By Bob Janes

It was 5.30am on Saturday 6 July and people living near Brompton Grove, N2, were sleeping peacefully. Then, bang! What on earth was that loud crashing sound? An enormous branch had fallen from an oak tree in Cherry Tree Wood and landed right across the unmade rode, blocking it entirely.

The huge branch was around 15 metres long and must have weighed a tonne or more. It stretched from the Affinity Water building in the Wood to the garden wall of the last house in Ingram Road. Luckily, it didn't hit a house or land directly on any of the cars parked along the Grove.

The people living at the bottom of Ingram Road and Park Hall Road whose gardens had been damaged called Barnet Council's Parks Department and Affinity Water but got little or no response on a Saturday morning.

Tidy up

Fortunately the council did send out a team by Saturday afternoon. They arrived with chain saws and were able to cut back the parts of the branch in the two gardens and across Brompton Grove itself. Affinity Water came on Sunday and Monday to clean up and cut up the remainder of the branch in the Wood.

The garden wall the branch landed on was damaged and will probably need to be replaced.



Near miss: This car was lucky to escape being damaged when the branch fell. Photo Bob Janes

Much of what was in the garden was also damaged, including a slide, chairs and a tennis table. It was fortunate that it did not hit the house itself or the story could have been much worse.

What made it fall? The tree has some visible fungus and recent rainfall on the fresh green oak leaves may have added too much weight causing a stress fracture. The tree itself is very

big and old; and the branch has hung over the Grove for a long time.

It had been reported to Barnet Council on several occasions as posing a risk to people passing underneath it, saying that it was not a matter of 'if' but 'when' it will fall. Hopefully they will now survey this and the other large trees near the Grove, and take preventative action.

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Find full contact details for the local SNTs at iloven2.co.uk/local-government-and-policing

- Stay anonymous and report information to Crimestoppers on **0800 555111**

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago:

August 2014

Gardening legend Alan Titchmarsh visited East Finchley for the filming of an episode of his gardening programme *Love your Garden*. It featured the home in Summerlee Avenue of garden designer Ana Sanchez-Martin. Alan was filmed walking up and down the road looking at residents' front gardens before exploring Ana's plot in more detail.

15 years ago:

August 2009

Long Lane Pasture was officially opened in beautiful weather after an 11-year struggle by volunteers to preserve it for the benefit of the local community. The site is a remnant of historic Finchley Common and is now a valued wildlife refuge, with ponds and bird feeding stations, accessible paths and a seating area.

23 years ago:

August 2001

A fight involving criminal damage and assault shook the local community. Residents were further shocked by police and emergency services failing to attend the scenes despite 14 calls being made to 999. An initial incident in Lankaster Gardens flared up again in Bedford Road, resulting in the abandonment of a damaged vehicle left blocking the pavement. It took several days and many more phone calls to get the car removed.

Inside the *other* Black Gull Bookshop



Browse and buy: The bright and airy interior and the colourful street frontage of the Black Gull Bookshop in St Leonards-on-Sea

Many people in East Finchley were saddened to lose the Black Gull Bookshop in the High Road, which closed earlier this year. Owner Chris Overfield runs a sister shop in St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex, and it was there that **Almar Hafidason** and his family went while on holiday to get their literary fix, as he recalls.

The Black Gull bookshop was a major cultural source of pride for East Finchley. Every time one would read an article in the media on the wonders of living in Muswell Hill or Crouch End (with the lack of a Tube station being a mysterious virtue), there would be the quiet satisfaction of knowing that we had our Black Gull.



Seaside special: Almar and Emilia set aside time for a trip to St Leonards during a family holiday to visit the bookshop

It wasn't just a good bookshop, it was a renowned institution for books. In the months preceding the closure I found myself quietly emptying the place of Robert B Parker books, having discovered a rich seam

of these hard-bitten crime thrillers that I'd never seen in a Waterstones.

On two of those visits I overheard someone who had travelled up from Devon to visit the shop and another who

had come from Germany. "I've opened my own bookshop in Germany," he explained. I never did see exactly the curious look that met that remark but sustaining any second-hand book shop is clearly hard work and we were lucky to have the Black Gull as long as we did.

As it turned out, the Black Gull stayed a little longer with my family because my daughter Emilia wanted to see the Black Gull in St Leonards-on-Sea. It's a handsome seaside town, somewhat faded and not always immediately apparent how lovely it is, until you start scratching the surface and discovering some lovely shops, cafés and assorted oddities. Perhaps it's what an East Finchley by the Sea might be like?

Nestling appropriately on London Road, one of the main thoroughfares leading up from the seafront, it was surreal to walk into another Black Gull, because you start recognising props and books you pondered over but never quite got round to buying in East Finchley. It's

bright, airy and has a lightness that our Black Gull never had but it's unmistakably a home from home. The sign above the door is another hand-painted beauty, the bookmarks are quirky, the welcome warm and the desire to stay and soak in the atmosphere, is strong.

It's sad that our Black Gull has taken flight but reassuring to know that, thanks to our Tube connection direct to Charing Cross, you can catch a train from there right to St Leonards and see our old friend looking quite handsome by the sea.

The Archer: read 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. The site also gives information on advertising in our pages and how you can contribute to the paper.

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Where have all the insects gone this summer?

The insect population in the UK has declined by as much as 60% in the last 20 years, a survey by conservation charities Buglife and the Kent Wildlife Trust found in 2022. Sadly the downward trend shows no sign of improving, says East Finchley resident and retired biologist **Linda Dolata**, and this year could be one of the worst years yet for insect numbers.



I am terribly concerned about the complete lack of insects, pollinators or otherwise this summer. I spend much of my time outdoors, on various natural history projects and have always monitored the wildlife that I encounter.

Whilst many of our indigenous plants seem to be doing better than average, given the mild winter and excessive rainfall, there seems to be a



complete dearth of arthropods in general, particularly insects.

Pollinator projects local to us here in East Finchley are commendable efforts to increase the flowers in a 'corridor' to help the pollinating insects, but the many types of bees, butterflies, moths and hoverflies are hardly to be seen. Even aphids are very few in number.

This obviously has a huge knock-on effect on anything that would normally rely on insects as a source of food. Omnivores, pigeons, crows etc are fine so far, but insectivorous songbirds, swallows and swifts (especially) which we would expect to see right now, are just not here.



Sadly, it's not just London where this decline is apparent. It's far more widespread. Of course, climate change, loss of habitat, use of chemicals in gardening, and in flea treatments for pets all have disastrous consequences, but I still would not have anticipated such a sudden plunge in numbers.

I can only hope that perhaps it is also a result of the very rainy winter and spring, that may have flooded the soil and drowned the pupae which would have emerged this summer, and that the numbers can therefore recover... but I am fearful that they will not.

Photos © Buglife, Katie Waddington and Ed Phillips



In a spin: Young DJ Albie Whur-Stewart with his high-tech DJ controller

DJ Albie is on the decks

By Julia Lawrence

The deck-spinning skills of Martin School pupil Albie Whur-Stewart have earned him a coveted Blue Peter badge. Ten-year-old Albie, who lives in Richmond Road, N2, was awarded a Music badge, specially designed by the musician Ed Sheeran, for his prowess and passion as a DJ.

The badge is given by the BBC children's programme in recognition of a special achievement and allows holders free access to a number of attractions around the UK.

Albie, who's in Year 5, got a taste for the disc jockey craft in a course run at his school by the Barnet Educational Arts Trust, and has performed a set for fellow pupils, with more

planned in the new term.

Albie uses a high-tech Smart DJ controller to mix and perform his playlists with no need to carry around heavy vinyl. Some traditions remain,

however, and Albie says he has incorporated some of his dad Paul's 'old' music, like Abba and Duran Duran, alongside more modern artists like Dua Lipa.

Green flag flies over the Pasture

Long Lane Pasture, opposite Finchley Fire Station in Long Lane, Finchley, N3, has been recognised by the Green Flag Award Scheme. The volunteer-run Pasture is among a record-breaking number of UK parks and green spaces that have receive the mark of a quality park or green space



for being well maintained with the highest possible environmental standards. Donald Lyven, chair of the Long Lane Pasture Trust, said: "Our team of dedicated volunteers are absolutely delighted to receive a Green Flag Community Award for the 13th year running."

Did you know?

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Race rescued from cancellation gets over the line

By David Melsome

The popular Race the Neighbours event that almost never happened this year got over the starting line in fine style, with 500 runners competing over a 10k route between East Finchley and Muswell Hill.

The event was rescued from cancellation after the North London Hospice took over the organisation from the

elsewhere in north London tackled the 10k course from Cherry Tree Wood, N2, to Alexandra Palace and back on Sunday 30 June. The coveted Cherry Tree Cup was won by N10 (Muswell Hill) with their runners crossing the finish line in an average of 55 minutes. Individual male and female winners in first place were Monte Watson, 34:09, and



founding team of volunteers, who had announced they'd run out of time to stage it this year (The Archer, March 2024). Runners from East Finchley, Muswell Hill, Highgate and

Gillian Hughes, 43:18; in second place Alexander Mulvihill, 36:00, and Chloe Lane, 48:11; and in third place Fred Beale, 36:17, and Claudia Neira, 49:07.



North London Hospice thanked everyone who took part and the 60 volunteers who helped on the day. Altogether, the race raised £22,000 to support patients needing end-of-life care.

Funding services

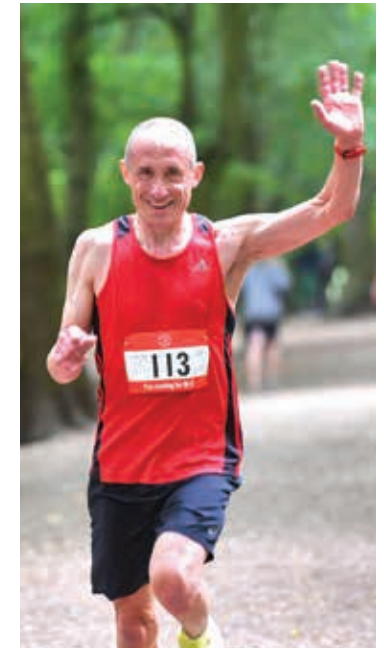
Hospice CEO Declan Carroll said: "Our care is free of charge, but it does not come for free. It now costs nearly £16million a year to fund our services. Most of our funding comes from donations, this is something that we never take for granted. That is why the support from our local community, through events like Race the Neighbours, is so important."

North London Hospice cares for over 3,500 people with a life-limiting illness every year within the boroughs of Barnet, Enfield and Haringey and provides support for their families, friends, and carers.

Wave of runners: Race the Neighbours competitors make their way along the Parkland Walk towards Alexandra Palace and, below, arrive back in Cherry Tree Wood.

Left: The fastest runners line up and the race gets under way.

Photos North London Hospice



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- 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



High praise for our High Road

By David Melsome

Customers want vintage shops, record stores, artisan coffee, a decent pub and a Chinese restaurant in their dream town centre, according to a study. The perfect high street also has hair salons, a pharmacy, a florist and a delicatessen.



Desirable: East Finchley has a valued mix of shops, cafés and restaurants

Well, on that basis, East Finchley must rank pretty highly. We have a record store, plenty of great coffee, some excellent pubs, a Chinese takeaway, many hair salons, three pharmacies, a florist and a choice of delicatessen outlets on the High Road alone.

People were asked to picture their perfect high street for the survey by Smart Energy GB. Vintage shops ranked highly and we have plenty of vintage clothes available in our charity shops, as did farm produce shops... we now have a farmers' market every Sunday on the Great North Road.

Almost two thirds of people in the survey believed a good high street has a mixture of modern and traditional shops and that seems to match East Finchley's profile too, with long-established traders co-existing alongside newcomers like nail bars and beauty salons.

Over half of the 2,000 people polled said they worried about the increasing pressure that small businesses are under, with nine in ten seeing local shops close around them. Another reason to count our blessings here in N2 and to support all the excellent local shops that we have.

Happy ending after cash machine malfunctions

By Charles Haydn

A customer has praised High Road supermarket Budgens after its manager went the extra mile when the in-store cash machine malfunctioned. Several customers were left short-changed when the ATM, operated by LINK, dispensed incorrect amounts of money. After one customer's bank and LINK themselves initially denied any problem with the machine, one customer reported it to Budgens store manager Ripon Shaha, who took immediate action.

"Through his persistence, he discovered that seven other customers had encountered similar problems that day. Ripon went above and beyond his duties by contacting me multiple times and coordinating with other affected customers. He even offered to sign a written statement to my bank. I believe his actions not only helped resolve the issue but also restored my faith in the community's support system," said the customer.



Fixer: Ripon Shaha

Ripon told The Archer: "We discovered that after a recent ATM cash cassette change, the machine malfunctioned. Initial checks by Nationwide and LINK found that a software glitch was responsible

for the fault and they sent an engineer who fixed it the next day. It took me a while to identify those who had lost out, but we managed to make up everyone's shortfall."



Hare-do: Margaret Andrews and daughter Wendy Gallagher with their Pink Patsy character

A friend to learner readers

By Diana Cormack

Children visiting the storytelling tent at the East Finchley Community Festival in June could not only hear tales about an adventurous hare called Patsy but also take part in related stone painting and arts and crafts. Local author Wendy Gallagher told The Archer how she created this character and the effect it has had on her.

During lockdown, Wendy's mother Margaret K M Andrews, 84, was unable to attend her art classes, so she started painting at home. One particular picture of a pink hare looking at the moon caught Wendy's eye. Margaret named it Pink Patsy after her sister and, when mother and daughter began to compose the first of nine books, the colourful hare became the main character.

Written for three- to six-year-olds, Wendy hopes they will be especially helpful to young readers with dyslexia, which she herself has and which remained undiagnosed for many years. Because of this she is especially proud about having produced on her own these fun and informative books, which act as 'windows into a world where kindness reigns supreme and every creature, great or small, holds a vital role.'

Influenced by nature, stories and memories of childhood walks with her mother and drawing inspiration from their own lives, Wendy hopes the books will encourage a love of the natural world and a desire to cherish and protect it.

She carries this message on visits to nurseries and primary schools and spreads the word further through events like World Bee Day and World Book Day. This must make a change from her work running Gallalock, the key-cutting shop

in Muswell Hill, a long-term family business.

Published by MagMay books (the name being derived from Margaret's childhood nickname of Maggie May), with Wendy's inspired writing and Margaret's beautiful illustrations, the Pink Patsy

books are bringing reading pleasure to Key Stage One children. Matching merchandise is available for them to enjoy and, in the not-too-distant future, an animated cartoon is in the offing. Visit www.magmaybooks.co.uk for more information.

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Chiropractor overcomes injuries to practise again

By Eva Weinstein

Chris Berlingieri, local chiropractor and former lead guitarist for East Finchley Festival favourites Sound of the Suburb, has faced a challenging recovery following an accident in April 2021 that significantly impaired his mobility.



Back in business: Chris Berlingieri

Despite undergoing multiple surgeries and a demanding rehabilitation process, Chris's steadfast determination fuelled his return to professional life. "I thought I had lost the ability to do the work I love forever," he reflects.

Yet his resilience has led him back to his role at a central London chiropractic clinic and now, with his mobility restored to a degree, Chris is channelling his 33 years of experience and

expertise into his own business at home in Durham Road, N2.

Dr Chris's Chiropractic Clinic offers high-quality chiropractic care at a fraction of the cost of central London clinics with a range of treatments, including spinal joint adjustments, acupuncture, and tailored lifestyle advice.

Chris says his journey back to health was buoyed by immense community support. Local fundraising efforts for his sponsored walk from East Finchley to the Princess Grace Hospital (where he had surgery) helped cover his substantial medical and rehabilitation costs. Further support came from a fundraising event at Madden's pub, a local favourite and a venue where Chris had performed many times with his band.

For more information about Chris's chiropractic services or to schedule a consultation, visit his website at www.drchris.org.uk.

Kitchen showroom voted one of the best

By Lynn Winton

If you are lucky enough to be planning to splash out on a kitchen refit, it's now official: a showroom in N2 has been voted one of the best kitchen suppliers and designers in the country.

Owner James Nicholson received this accolade at the industry BKU awards for his Kutschenhaus showroom on Lyttelton Road. Previously a Barclays Bank, it now houses various German-engineered kitchen displays and appliances.

As well as launching this new business, James and his wife are busy refurbishing a house in Cherry Tree Road, N2, which has not been modernised for 60 years.

James said: "We went for a contemporary Kutschenhaus kitchen, including an island and a pantry, with dark walnut doors and brass handle trims to keep the warmth in what we consider the heart of our home. So often a modern kitchen can be cold, clinical



Winner: James Nicholson

and soulless which is so wrong for these period houses. Experience led us to have porcelain worktops which are heat-proof and you can chop on them." James and the team have recently opened a second showroom in the Finchley Road, Swiss Cottage.



Class act: Co-headteachers William Dean and Becca Lewis celebrate their Ofsted rating with pupils

Top rating for primary school

Highgate Primary School children, staff, parents and governors are celebrating after being graded 'Outstanding' in its recent Ofsted report. Following a rigorous couple of days, the exceptional report concludes that at the school off North Hill, N6, all pupils receive an excellent education. Becca Lewis, co-headteacher, said: "Our children and staff are fantastic and inspectors noted this when they visited. Throughout the report, praise is given to them, and quite rightly as they are the ones who make the school such a happy place to learn and work."



Fresh air: The office workers who got out in the open to clear ground at Fuel Land Allotments

Allotment dig-nitarries for a day

Ten volunteers from financial planning company James Hambro & Partners leant their man and woman power for a day to clear space at the Fuel Land Allotments, off the High Road, N2. The aim is to grow food for the Finchley Foodbank, based across the road at St Mary's Church hall, and for The Finchley Charities' monthly brunches in Wilmot Close, N2.

Carmel Miedziolka, CEO, The Finchley Charities said: "This is a great example of how brilliant things can happen when people with shared values and passion come together."

The charity has been running the Fuel Land Allotments since the late 1800s. The land rent generated was originally used by the charity in order to buy coal for 'the poor of Finchley', hence the name. Today the site

is still there for the benefit of enthusiastic gardeners from the community and of course for a

diverse range of wildlife such as hedgehogs, slow worms, woodpeckers and voles.

Late summer boot sale

The next Muswell Hill Indoor Car Boot Sale takes place on Saturday 31 August from 10am to 1pm at 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. More information from 020 8368 8180.



Street furniture with a function

By Diana Cormack

Shoppers have been enjoying the Stagesette seating that appeared on the pavement earlier in the summer between Budgens and Amy's on the High Road, an area already being reimagined as East Finchley's town square.

Consisting of two wide, slatted, wooden benches which can be moved into various positions or made into a community stage, it has been well-used and talked about as an alternative to the traffic-facing benches already there.

The Stagesette was a temporary installation organised by East Finchley Town Team after a successful bid for Barnet Community Grant funds. At the time of writing it is due to be moved to a new home, probably Martin Primary School further up the High Road.

Also causing comment and speculation has been the wigwam/teepee bamboo construction using the empty Christmas tree space in the raised garden outside Budgens, as reported in last month's edition. It is to remain there for the rest of the year.

Many have questioned the origins of the 'flag on top, which turns out to be a handy piece of material used by one of the constructors. Others have suggested that the teepee stays there and is decorated as our



The stage is set: Singer Eila Zecevic entertains in the High Road. Photo Mike Coles

Christmas tree, a good example of reimagining.

Unfortunately we may soon see less welcome examples of street furniture. Despite strong objections from Town Team members and local councillors, Barnet Council is set to go ahead with the installation of more digital advertising hoardings like the two large examples already outside Budgens and

Amy's. The new units will each house an EV charging point.

Citizen scientists monitor air quality

By Dave McCormick, Friends of the Earth Barnet
In early June, some local residents met with Clean Air Barnet in the High Road, N2, to talk about local air quality and how they could get involved in measuring our air using five portable monitors purchased by East Finchley Community Trust.

The use of monitors is a borough-wide project, led by Clean Air Barnet, Middlesex University and Barnet Council to build a database of indoor and outdoor air quality across Barnet.

The project involves seven small groups of volunteers having monitors for a month before passing them on to a different group to use. Data analysis is carried out by the university in ways that meet data protection requirements.

The Atmotube Pro monitors gather data about volatile organic compounds, air pressure, humid-

ity, temperature and location. Pressing a button gives an instant composite score of the data and an app provides more detail including a map of results from other monitors around the world.

"I used to be a scientist and now I do science for fun," said one volunteer. Another, on hearing that she was now a citizen scientist, said: "Brilliant. That is going straight onto my CV."

If you would like to become an air quality citizen scientist or would like to help fund buying more monitors please contact eftownteam@gmail.com

Insights from a local menopause expert

Dr Charlotte Iveson is an experienced NHS GP and menopause specialist, who practises in Fortis Green, Muswell Hill. Charlotte went through early menopause herself and has compiled a set of answers to the questions about the perimenopause and menopause that she gets asked most frequently.

What is the difference between the perimenopause and menopause? The perimenopause is the time leading up to the menopause, which can be up to 10 years before the menopause. The menopause is the point in time when you have not had a period for 12 consecutive months.

What symptoms might I get in the perimenopause or menopause? There are a whole host of symptoms that can be caused by fluctuating hormone levels. The most common ones are: changes in mood, poor sleep, night sweats, hot flushes, and changes in periods. Women may also experience palpitations, weight gain, muscle and joint pain, hair loss and dry skin.

Do I need a blood test to diagnose the perimenopause/menopause? For most women over the age of 45, blood tests are not very helpful as hormone levels can fluctuate over the day. However, for women under the age of 45 it can be helpful to have a blood test to decide if they are going through an early menopause.

What can I do to help my symptoms? Look at your lifestyle first! Get out into nature for walks and do some weight-bearing exercise. Try to eat a wide variety of fruit and vegetables as well as increasing your protein. Reducing your alcohol intake and stopping smoking is also key.

What is Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)? HRT is made up of oestrogen and progesterone (for women who still have a uterus) to replace natural hormones. HRT is important during menopause as it protects against heart disease and osteoporosis. Oestrogen can come in

the form of a tablets, patch, gel or spray. The topical ones (applied onto skin) are the safest. It is crucial to use progesterone with oestrogen, to protect against the potential complications of endometrial (lining of the womb) thickening. Progesterone can be given in the form of a capsule or Mirena coil.

Charlotte is available for appointments at 360med in Fortis Green, Muswell Hill, offering menopause consultations at <https://360med.co.uk/>. You can follow her on Instagram @dr_lotte.



Q&A: Dr Charlotte Iveson

RICKY SAVAGE ... THE VOICE OF IRRESPONSIBILITY

Give it five rings

It's here, the climax to a long wet summer of sport. Yes, it's the running, jumping and falling in the water festival that is the Olympics. But these are no ordinary Games, these are being held in the place that Parisians call the centre of the cultural world: Paris. And that means it's my job to tell you how to survive a trip to that fair city and what not to look out for at the Olympics.

This is the third time Paris have played host and it feels like a good time to look back at the forgotten sports that thrilled the world the first time they hosted in 1900. Back then sport was different, it wasn't that it was pretty much a men-only affair, Paris went in for some weird sports.

They had angling: 600 people trying to find out if there was anything alive in the Seine worth catching. There was live pigeon shooting as a one-off Olympic sport. Maybe they had run out of clay or the Parisians just want to do a bit of pest control in the name of either sport or cooking.

You want to talk about animals and water, what about the aquatic horse long jump? Yes seriously. Someone came up with the weird idea of a man on a horse jumping as far as he could down an elongated, water-filled long jump pit. And that's before you get to the completely insanity of the obstacle swimming race involving boats, poles and some sort of underwater obstacle. And to top it all off, that school fete favourite, a tug of war.

But if you go to Paris this year please remember your manners. When getting on the Metro always shake hands with the other passengers before taking your seat. You'd be thought rude not to in a city that prides itself on courtesy and good manners. You should of course ensure that you have learnt French, but do not be surprised if Parisians refuse to acknowledge your efforts, they are merely trying to help you improve.

In such a centre of gastronomic excellence it is rude to ask what variety of bird or small furry animal has given its life for your lunch, particularly if has been drowned in cognac before being fried in butter. The same goes for wine. There are two sorts of wine in Paris: French and undrinkable foreign muck, so never order Chianti.

And finally, don't mention Waterloo, Wellington or French wartime collaboration if you want to get out alive, and remember to apologise for Brexit every chance you get. Thank goodness the Olympics only come round every four years.

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Hospice owls take up their roosts

By Lynn Winton
For art lovers and for anyone who just loves going for an urban walk, the North London Hospice's easy-to-follow Owl Trail will be launched on Saturday 17 August and will be out on the streets of north London for eight weeks.



Painted plumage: Artists put the finishing touches to two of the North London Hospice owls, above and below

Everyone can enjoy scouting for the 30 giant owl sculptures, each one painted by a different local artist, including comic actor Matt Lucas and children's author Rob Biddulph, to help raise awareness and funds for the only hospice providing support

for the residents of Barnet, Haringey and Enfield. There will also be a parliament of 20 owlets, decorated by schools and community groups, waiting to be spotted in various indoor venues.

The hospice picked owls because they are known for their wisdom and for passing on stories through generations and across cultures. North London Hospice staff, like owls, also work through the night supporting patients and healthcare professionals.

After eight weeks on their perches, the colourful owls, each one sponsored by a business, will be auctioned to raise much-needed funds for the hospice, and the owlets will be returned to the care of their school or group. You can find a trail map to print or download and all the auction details on the hospice website northlondonhospice.org or follow them on their social media channels.

Splash of colour at summer show

All-inclusive arts charity Community Focus hosted its summer exhibition last month at the Artsdepot in North Finchley, showcasing the colourful creations of its students with additional needs. During the event, the charity was presented with a cheque for £1,000 by friends of the late artist Debbie Jedwab, whose artwork was displayed and made available to buyers at the same venue in May.



Cheers: Dennis Evans

Poem for a poet

Dennis Evans, East Finchley poet and publisher of the N2 Poetry magazine, celebrated his 91st birthday in June with a birthday lunch for friends at the Genzo Greek restaurant in the High Road. Here one of his friends, **Shereen Abdallah**, has written a poem in his honour.

Dennis

Garden bulbs wait for promised spring,
still, deep earth. I ring the bell.
You open the door, red braces
wide smile, peppered chin,
you lead me in.
'Would you like a cup of tea?'
Yes please
'I only have soya milk'
That's fine
Your sitting-room is as it's
always been;
Aladdin's Cave of books,
russet and green.
Sofa cushions lean into our
conversation.
You bring a tray, two sturdy
mugs, rose-leaved
plate of chocolate digestives.
'Dig In'

Single shingles jab was not all it seemed

By Diana Cormack
Last September, a new version of the Shingles National Immunisation Programme was launched, which made more individuals eligible for a free shingles vaccination on the National Health Service. Visit GetShinglesReady.co.uk or contact your local surgery or pharmacist for details.

Shingles is caused by the same virus as chickenpox, so you can only develop it if you have had that particular disease. There seems to be no definite reason why this happens, but as we age our immune system gradually weakens and may allow the inactive virus in our body to reactivate.

Treatment within the first 72 hours is vital to try to ensure as little development as possible. It first appears as a red, sore area where little spots show, then develop into liquid filled blisters. The rash can be on several sites on one side of the body, following the path of nerves. It is extremely painful and can take four weeks or more to heal, though sometimes long-term pain or other complications develop.

I speak from bitter experience because, at the time of writing, I have just left that fourth week of my third bout of shingles. "But didn't you have the vaccination?" friends ask. Well yes, I did. Not the new one which is two separate jabs a few weeks apart, but the single one during a previous shingles prevention programme.

Last month, recognising it straight away, I was prescribed medication within 24 hours which I believe saved me from the horrendous rash I have suffered from in the past, though the pain level was still high. It's like being wrapped in a thorn bush!

I felt hard-done-by too, having believed I was immune to the disease. Further investi-

gation revealed the vaccination not to be 100% effective nor to last as long as I hope to! Maybe it saved me from having shingles so severely? Medical advice was that I could not have another jab but other sources have said I could, at a price, though not on the NHS. Either way, it seems I could get the condition again.



Fringe farce: The cast of *Argy Bargy*

Comedy kidnap caper

East Finchley theatre company Mutley and Minques are bringing their new comedy *Argy Bargy* to Upstairs at the Gatehouse in Highgate this month as part of the Camden Fringe.

Two hopelessly inept kidnapers navigate the dark world of drug cartels, canal-side shoot outs, freshly baked shortbread and 80s prog rock in this farcical road trip comedy set entirely on a narrowboat heading towards Camden Lock.

Playwright Dave Barron and artistic director Mary Musker

live in East Finchley and have set up their company as a spin-off group from the Garden Suburb Theatre.

Argy Bargy runs from Wednesday 7 to Friday 9 August at the theatre in Highgate Village. Tickets are available from www.upstairsatthegatehouse.com. Suitable for 12 years upwards.





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.



Now I truly know why open gardens matter

Susan Bennett and her partner Earl Hyde have opened their Muswell Hill garden to the public three times a year for almost the last 30 years. This year, she experienced on a very personal level the benefits that the National Garden Scheme brings. The National Garden Scheme was founded in 1927 by individuals opening their gardens for a shilling a head, leading to the inauguration of the Queen's Nursing Institute. It now supports Marie Curie, Macmillan Cancer Support, Hospice UK, Carer's Trust, Parkinson's UK and many smaller garden and health charities.

Shortly before our first garden opening in April this year, my only brother Brian Rose was diagnosed with inoperable cancer. It was a huge shock. He was single, 78, and

organs. He was given weeks to live.

I was torn apart. From his bed Brian urged me: "Get on with the garden opening. More people will benefit than you



Happy memories: Susan, left, with Earl, her mother Bertie and her brother Brian

had been told his conditions were all treatable. Then he was called back to hospital urgently to learn that cancer cells had been found in all his major

sitting here with me." He was a Buddhist, totally at peace, but keen to be back in his own home. I had no idea where to turn.



Suburban oasis: A view of Susan and Earl's garden



Star guest: Susan Bennett and Earl Hyde welcome TV's Charlie Dimmock to one of their open garden days

That's when Macmillan Cancer Support took over. Handing over to his local hospice, Brian was supplied with a hospital bed, essential equipment, medication, GP supervision and district nurse visits, all for free.

At home, Brian was able to spend his final weeks, albeit bed-ridden, pain-free, enjoying visits from family, friends and neighbours. Now we both had peace of mind. I felt so much anxiety was lifted from my heart. The professionalism and care was priceless.

Brian died on 15 May, on his bed a red rose given to him by a carer and a photo of our mother Bertie Rose.

Last year Earl and I raised over £8,500 by opening our garden to visitors, including groups and coach parties from Austria and the US. Little did I know then that I was to become a beneficiary of the charities the NGS supports. The reality of what we do became tangible.

Next time you visit a National Garden Scheme garden, you can be sure the money you donate will be a blessing to an unknown recipient like me.

Susan and Earl's garden at 5 St Regis Close, Alexandra Park Road, N10 2DE is open on Sunday 4 August from 2pm to 6.30pm with home-made teas and a plant sale. Admission £5. Children free. Cash preferred. Or book online at ngs.org.uk. Private groups of 10 or more are also welcome at other times by appointment. Email Susan at suebearlh@yahoo.co.uk

Market to expand

The market at The Engine Rooms on Great North Road is set to get bigger. East Finchley-based social enterprise Dirthouse has been asked to host a monthly artisan market to run alongside the East Finchley Farmers' Market.

The Courtyard Market will run on the last Sunday of the month, starting on 29 September and will feature local makers and producers selling everything from art, textiles,

jewellery and ceramics to condiments and confectionery. There will also be live music and free childrens activities. For more details see Dirthouse.co.uk/courtyard-market

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