



Autumn or the Fall

During the recent storms a large oak tree next to the fence bordering Cherry Tree Road and the park was uprooted. It fell towards the park, ending up with its crown only a short distance from the pathway.

This happened mid-morning, but luckily no one was hurt. As it fell a branch was ripped off which smashed through a newly erected fence and part of the shed in a Cherry Tree Road back garden. A silver birch tree close to the park entrance opposite East Finchley tube station also fell; both have been dealt with by council workers.



Fr Laurence Hill with some of his congregation.

Holy Trinity Church

Holy Trinity Church in Church Lane is the oldest functioning public building in East Finchley, having been built in 1846. In 1991 it was refurbished internally, combining its pretty picture-postcard exterior with a tastefully modern interior. Babies and small children are warmly welcomed at Holy Trinity's services.

For further information contact Fr Laurence Hill on 020 8883 8720

Holy Trinity Church

Christmas Services

17th December - Advent Sunday, 6pm: The carol service.. 24th December - Christmas Eve, 6pm: The nativity play and blessing of the crib, 11.30pm: The midnight Mass. 25th December - Christmas

Day, 8am: Holy Eucharist (said), 10am: The parish communion.

Lest We Forget

By Anthony Tuck

Daphne Chamberlain's feature on the badly burned Battle of Britain pilots, the Guinea Pigs, in the November edition, was a timely reminder in this 60th anniversary year of the massive debt owed to "The Few".

I had the pleasure of meeting Squadron Leader Tom Gleave in 1990, when I was writing a play, "Freedom to Forget", to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the battle.

Tom was in the thick of the fighting in 1940, and by 31 August, the day his Hurricane was blown up, he was credited with shooting down - or sharing in the destruction of - at least eight enemy planes.

When his wife, Beryl, first saw the extent of his burns, she hid her shock and calmly asked, "What on earth have you been doing with yourself, darling?" Through his pain, Tom quipped, "I had a row with a German."

His reply became the title of a wartime book he wrote under the pen-name of "RAF Casualty" (published in 1941). While working on the second draft of my play, I was browsing in the Aviation Bookshop on Holloway Road, when I came across a copy of this book. Tom kindly inscribed it for me.

Tom became Chief Guinea Pig in 1960. He worked tirelessly for his fellow Club members, and rarely mentioned the health difficulties that were a legacy of his terrible burns. He died in 1993, aged 84.

Another Battle of Britain pilot, Wing Commander Geoffrey Page, died this year. Sixty years earlier, his Hurricane was hit when attacking a huge formation of Dornier bombers. His hands and face were so badly burned that as he descended by parachute into the Channel, he could smell his own flesh burning.

Over the next two years, he underwent 15 agonising major operations and graftings, but by the end of the war his tally of confirmed victories stood at 10, with five shared and many more "probables", "possibles" and "damaged".

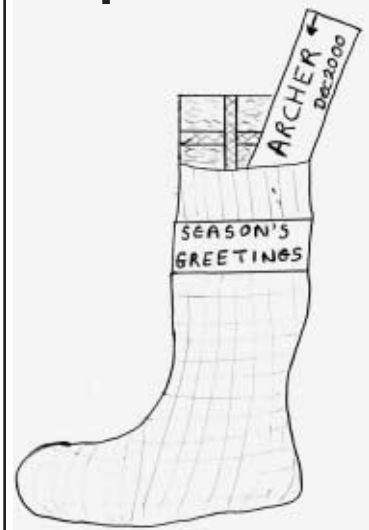
I first met Geoffrey Page at a reception for "The Few" at the Guildhall, in 1988. At 68 years of age, he was still undergoing minor opera-

tions - he endured over 40 - and graftings. With him was his beautiful wife, Pauline, daughter of "Dr Watson" film actor Nigel Bruce. Geoffrey told me, "We Guinea Pigs could always get the best looking girls."

I have a signed copy of Geoffrey's book, "Tale of a Guinea Pig". A revised edition, "Shot Down in Flames", was published this year, with the profits going to the Battle of Britain Memorial Fund.

If readers are interested in knowing more about the Battle of Britain and "The Few", and helping to perpetuate their memory, the Battle of Britain Historical Society welcomes new members. Contact: Mr Bill Bond, Secretary. Address: Gunthorpe, Melton Constable, Norfolk, NR24 2NS, Tel: 01263 861 476.

Help Needed!



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RECIPE

Mulled Wine

By Diana Cormack (with acknowledgement to the Holy Trinity School Association of 1990). Put a punch into your Christmas party by welcoming your guests with a glass of this tasty tippie!

Ingredients

- 3 litres of red wine
- 750 ml of cold tea
- 3 oranges stuck with 30 cloves
- 9 cinnamon sticks
- 6 teaspoons of ground mixed spice
- 400 g of brown sugar

Method

Mix all the ingredients in a large pan and heat through. DO NOT BOIL, but keep the wine very hot for about half an hour so that all the flavours blend together. (It is a good idea to keep tasting the wine, just to make sure it is not getting too hot, too cold, too sweet, too spicy - or for any other excuse you can find!)

The wine will keep well if re-bottled when cold. Just before serving, add half a cup of whisky. Cheers!

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