



LETTERS

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page", The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA

Foul Mess

Dear Editor

I would like to point out an incident that occurred last week. I was coming out of our house when I saw a dog fouling the pavement. The owner was further up the road and I approached her, asking her why she let the dog do this. She was most annoyed with me for

telling her. I think dog owners should be fined - it is not the dogs' fault, it is their owners who have no respect for the environment. I would also like to point out that a workman in the road who heard the conversation backed me up and I do like animals. Yours sincerely (name and address supplied)

Care for Someone

Dear Sir

After reading your article "Care for Someone" (June 2002, issue 109) I felt compelled to write to support the campaign led by a fellow East Finchleyan, Patricia Rogue. I have been working in Zambia for almost two years in the nation's prisons as a health development worker. The impact of HIV/AIDS on Southern Africa is devastating and obstructing any chance of development.

Schools are hit as teachers are dying and often children are forced to stay at home (especially girls) to care for sick members of the family. Businesses are losing managers, the agricultural industry is losing farmers as HIV/AIDS prevalence reaches over 25% in urban areas (and up to 65% in prisons!). The days of "awareness" are over as research shows that 80-90% of Zambians know about the disease and how it is spread.

Behaviour change programmes are required here but the traditional and strong religious culture suppresses condom use even though premarital sex and adultery are just as prevalent here as they are anywhere else in the world.

The rise in the number of orphans has left governments unable to cope. Many children are forced to live on the streets and although international agencies have prioritised this issue, one child on the streets without education, food and love is heartbreaking to observe.

Let me not paint a picture of complete despair, at least in Zambia the national prevalence has stabilised at 19% and research shows that the youth are having less partners, waiting longer to have sex and using more condoms. Uganda is showing a similar trend so a difference can be made.

I wish luck and thanks to Patricia and THE ARCHER for highlighting this issue.

Yours faithfully Carl Edmonds Ndola, Zambia (formerly of Tarling Road, N2)

PS. It was great to read that my old school, Martin Junior, was celebrating the Jubilee by embracing cultures by learning how to Samba. Maybe on my return I'll show them how to Rhumba!

Waitrose

Dear Sir

I do not think we should have one. East Finchley used to be a clean, residential area. Now all we have at the station and Budgen is pigeons who foul up the environment (the council do nothing about this which is a disgrace), extra cars parking in the area which is already congested and extra rubbish.

I think the residents and traders of East Finchley should have a say in what is proposed for the area, after all it is us who pay the price. People like Waitrose are only interested in profit and the Council are not much better.

Yours (name and address supplied)

My First Operation

Dear Editor

I recently had an operation on my knee at the Barnet Hospital Day Surgery Unit and would like to share my experience with you as there has been some adverse publicity regarding Barnet Hospital and I would like to redress the balance.

I was very apprehensive and concerned with this operation as this would be the first occasion I had had a general anaesthetic.

The appointment for my operation was scheduled for the morning. After the anaesthetist took my medical particulars and explained her responsibilities, the nurse allocated to my case took my blood pressure etc., then the consultant explained the procedure in detail and marked the knee that was to be operated on.

It was now 09.30 and I was asked if I would like to sit in and watch the World Cup before my operation, as my procedure was scheduled for 10.30am. I was rather nervous at this time and the wait seemed an

eternity, but the World Cup helped. At 10.30 I was asked to return to the ward and again seen by the consultant. I was then escorted to the operating theatre.

The next thing I remember was the nurse waking me up. I was returned to the ward and asked if I would like a cup of tea and biscuits. As I had not eaten or drunk for 16 hours this was greatly appreciated. The nurse said my wife had called and would arrive at 13.15 to collect me.

I was provided with physiotherapy guidance for my knee plus some painkillers and an appointment to see the consultant in two weeks' time.

This whole experience was made extremely pleasurable due to all the staff at Barnet Hospital Day Surgery Unit and their professional and understanding approach to patients. I cannot praise the staff highly enough.

Well done Barnet Hospital. Terry Stone, Manager of East Finchley Advice Service

GARDENING

Seeds of Change

by Zena Robson

And so to the lawn - that magnificent green sward that shows off the rest of the garden to perfection - maybe!! So that means a little work. Scarify with a spring-tine rake (good aerobic exercise or completely debilitating depending on your point of view) to remove thatch that has built up, possibly over years. Why? - because thatch is bad news! It stops water and light getting through to the roots and as it builds up, it allows annual meadow grass to seed into it; this in turn, harbours disease and is quick to die off at the first hint of trouble, leading to bare brown patches....see, makes sense now, doesn't it!?

After the scarifying comes the aerating - fork in, wiggle-wiggle every 20-30 cm; time-consuming but you've got nothing else to do, have you? Then, brush in some top-dressing, available already made-up, and watch your lawn recover. If you need to re-seed any patches then now is the time to do it too

It's also time to whip out all your annual in-fills and look at what to do with the spaces. Maybe a reorganisation and bringing in some new herbaceous to extend the season? Or those old standbys, biennials, like wallflowers; they'll be available soon so plan for them now. There are some great varieties available. I really like the bright orange ones that zing in the garden, and the dark red ones that look great with blue-pink tulips growing through them.

Talking of which, bulbs have been available since the beginning of August but if you buy early, be sure to check them over carefully for fungal infection and softness - they'll be last year's badly stored. Use dwarf bulbs in containers near the house so that you will be able to see them in February and March without having to tramp down the garden. I'm very keen on Chionodoxas, lovely, starry blue and white flowers (don't like the pink - sorry - a bit like pink lavender if you know what I mean!!) or the larger Ipheions that flower a bit later. Add dwarf Narcissus, really early ones like January Gold and the later beautiful flat-faced Minnow and you'll be on to a winner!

Bulbs are not just for spring - look out for lilies and alliums that are summer flowering but need to be planted now. Have fun!

THE ARCHER PRIZE QUIZ? Sponsored by: The Five Bells Monday Night Jackpot Quiz Shakespeare's longest play is Hamlet. How many words are spoken in it? If you think you know the answer, contact us with your phone number by Friday September 20th. The nearest answer will win a bottle of wine, presented during The Monday Night Jackpot Quiz, at The Five Bells, on Monday September 23th. If you don't know, guess!! Email fivebellsquiz@yahoo.co.uk Write to The Five Bells, 165-167 East End Rd, N2 or Call on 08717 33 45 28

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