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THE ARCHER



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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Charles Woodhouse, age 83, squares up to Sir Henry Cooper.. Photo by John Dearing

The Right Jab from Sir Henry Cooper

By John Dearing

As part of the on-going campaign by the Department of Health and charities such as Age Concern to persuade people, especially those such as older people who are most at risk, to have a 'flu jab this year, Sir Henry Cooper, famous for a different kind of jab, visited the Ann Owen Centre in Oak Lane on the morning of 13 November.

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He extolled the virtues of vaccination against influenza, warning that the 'flu can lead to much worse conditions such as pneumonia, stroke, and heart failure, and gave his whole-hearted support to the campaign. A number of the regular visitors to the centre were pictured with the famous ex-heavyweight boxer, before taking the plunge and being inoculated.

Planned grant cuts to hit Ann Owen Centre - see page 5.

Estate Heating Scandal

THE ARCHER has learned that a large proportion of houses on the Strawberry Vale Estate (estimated currently to be around 50%) have had to manage without proper heating or hot water during the winter period for the best part of 22 years!

Strawberry Vale's heating is powered by two central boilers. However, ever since they were installed over 20 years ago they have been plagued with problems. A number of residents I have spoken to told me that during the weeks, often months, that the heating is not working, living conditions have been very hard, particularly for the elderly and young who are more susceptible to illness. They say this is an outrageous situation that should have been dealt with many years ago. Since the Peabody Housing Trust and, before them, Camden Council have failed in their responsibilities, residents say they have had to find their own coping mechanisms. They have had to make do with leaving their ovens

on, making baths out of kettle water and investing in their own electric heaters. This is not only grossly inadequate for heating homes, it can be dangerous and significantly increases their electricity bills.

Continued on page 2

Bogus Police Con

A 78-year-old woman had her Christmas savings money stolen after a man pretending to be a police officer forced his way into her flat.

The incident happened in Chapel Court on Friday 7 November at about 10am. The victim answered the door to a man who told her that he was a police officer and had some bad news for her. He pushed past her into the flat and then said he had to go into the back garden to look for a suspect. The man then kept her talking and several minutes passed before the victim realised that the front door was still open. When the man left, the victim discovered that her bedroom had been searched and about £3,000 cash stolen from her bedside cupboard.

The suspect is described as a white male aged about 45. He is about 5 feet 9 inches tall with fair, wavy hair and stocky build. He was wearing beige jeans and a white shirt.

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Voicemail & Fax:
Editorial/enquiries: -
08717 33 44 65

Advertising/finance: -
08717 33 45 28

e-mail:
the-archer@lineone.net
website:
www.the-archer.co.uk

PUBLISHED BY

**East Finchley
Newspapers**

EDITOR

Kevin Finn

SUB-EDITORS

**Frances Loveday
Pam Kent**

EDITORIAL TEAM

**David Hobbs
Diana Cormack
Daphne Chamberlain**

PICTURE EDITOR

Erini Rodis

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

**Alison Roberts
Tony Roberts**

ADVERTISING

**John Dearing
Toni Morgan**

FINANCE

Sue Holliday

ADMINISTRATION

Toni Morgan

LEGAL ADVISER

Francis Coulson

DISTRIBUTION

**Alison Roberts
Pam Kent**

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THE ARCHER team wishes to thank all the generous people who give up their spare time, in all weather, to deliver the paper for us.

If you have a news item, memory or anecdote please send it in to us at the above address.

14 December is the copy deadline for the January issue.

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Heathrow 020 8759 4321

Animal Welfare

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RSPCA 0870 5555999

Estate Heating Scandal

continued from page 1

Cold comfort

Residents have attempted to address the heating problems before. While Camden Council was in control of the Housing Trust, residents claim they were often fobbed off by explanations ranging from environmental regulations (that have required heating to be on a constantly low heat), "mindless acts of vandalism" or temporary faults. None of these excuses help explain why heating has consistently broken down for the last 22 years. *THE ARCHER* can reveal that when Peabody took over the Trusteeship some six years ago they received a grant from central government of £1,374,000 for upgrades around the Estate. For that much money, residents point out, they could have all had brand new boilers fitted into their homes. Instead, they say, money has been wasted attempting to fix a system that is not only too old but has *never* worked to the satisfaction of the Estate.

Action stations

Residents of the Strawberry Vale Estate complain that, under the Peabody Housing Trust, the Estate has been in a state of decline. They cite issues such as the heating system failures, poor rubbish collection, the presence of abandoned cars, sub-standard gardening and, above all, the apparent absence of effective cleaning as signs that the Estate is not being run properly. Dave Green, a Vale resident, fears that without immediate action the Estate could deteriorate into a ghetto.

Right to manage

After years of frustration a number of residents are taking a more concerted and organised approach to resolve the problem. Debbie and David McCauley

have got together with other residents to form the Leaseholders and Freeholders Action Committee Group. They have written a letter to Peabody Housing Trust outlining their grievances and have threatened to take over the running of the Estate themselves under the Government's *Right to Manage* scheme unless these issues are addressed. We eagerly await Peabody's response.

Witness Appeal

Police are appealing for information following a fatal collision on the North Circular Road near the junction with Finchley High Road at approximately 18.25 on Friday 14 November.

A white Renault Clio travelling east on the A406, and close to the BP Garage was seen weaving in and out of traffic before it left the road and hit a tree. The driver, a 22-year-old man from N15, was pronounced dead at the scene.

Anyone who witnessed the accident or who has any information is urged to contact the police on 020 8246 9820.

Public Involvement in Planning

Barnet Council wants to involve the public in Council planning, in areas such as housing, open land and sustainable development.

At a recent meeting of the Finchley Society, Ros Ward, the Borough's principal planner for development and regeneration, said that "unless the community is involved, the new planning system will not work. It must reflect what the community wants, and individuals must feel that their participation will make a difference."

Mobile Mast Update

By John Dearing

A second mobile telephone array has been erected on top of the Viceroy Close flats and looks like it is there to stay, much to the dismay of the residents.

The Barnet Council Planning department has informed residents that this array, commissioned by MMO2, and the one that preceded it last year, erected on behalf of the Hutchison Company, are 'Permitted Developments' and are, as such, outside planning regulations. However, they also state that only two antennae systems may be installed as 'Permitted Developments' and any more must be subject to planning permission.

About two weeks after this, new scaffolding appeared by the building and it was learnt that Orange now intended to install an array. At the time of writing, however, Barnet Council had not received a planning application.

The installation team eventually arrived to do the work, to be met by a deputation of Viceroy Close residents, who told them that their array was unwelcome. On hearing this they decided that they would postpone their work, as they

did not wish to incur any undue opposition. They said that after reconsideration it may or may not be restarted but, if it were, they would include a security guard in the team, given the strength of local opposition.

No doubt they are mindful of the reception given to the team installing an antennae system on a factory building in Albert Road in Muswell Hill, a couple of weeks ago. Placard-bearing residents and TV news cameras greeted them and the incident was featured on the news programme that day.

Local Planning Applications

11 Fortis Green, N2 (pavement outside)

– erection of new freestanding, non-illuminated London Borough of Barnet signage and sponsorship panel.

332/334 High Road

– (land at rear of). Erection of new three-storey, one bedroom dwelling house following demolition of existing storage building.

27 New Trinity Road

– erection of a terrace of six three-storey houses with associated car-parking and vehicular accesses following demolition of existing Scout Hall.

472A Long Lane

– demolition of existing buildings and construction of a three-storey building comprising of six flats.

258 East End Road

– partial demolition and partial reconstruction of existing building to form six three-bedroomed self-contained flats and maisonettes. Conversion of existing roofspace including addition of two dormer windows.



Constitutional Change

By Kevin Finn

On 9 September the East Finchley Constitutional Club appointed new managers to take care of the bar and members entertainment. A namesake of mine, Paul Finn, and his partner Julie Thackray were formally welcomed at a party on 15 November with plenty of food, music and drinks enjoyed by an enthusiastic gathering of club members and their guests.



Paul Finn and his partner Julie Thackray. Photo by Frank Tymkow.

Opening up

Paul, who lived in Finchley almost 30 years ago, says moving to East Finchley feels like returning home. Both he and Julie are keen to develop the club as an 'open-to-all' venue, and to encourage diversity amongst the club's growing membership. Regular entertainment and more trips away are amongst their new plans, and, in the New Year, Sunday lunches will be served.

Julie commented on loving the village atmosphere in East Finchley, and was particularly happy to be able to get their five-year-old son, Henry, quickly settled into Holy Trinity School, which young Henry, apparently, adores.

Let us hope that Paul, Julie and Henry have a happy and successful time living and working in East Finchley.

Development Trust: A Success

The East Finchley Community Development Trust held its first AGM on 4 November at the Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale. The Trust was set up by a coalition of organisations working in the N2 area and works to promote community development in East Finchley.

Its first project involved taking over the management of the annual East Finchley Community Festival this year, which proved to be the biggest in its 30-year history and was an enormous success. Another notable highlight was supporting the development of Finchley Credit Union, enabling it to increase its opening times from 5 to 25 hours per week. Other planned projects include the creation of a community garden and a project to promote financial literacy.

Working together

Trustee Martin O'Donnell said, "The Trust is about bringing community organisations together. As we have discovered in the last year, by working together we can achieve so much more. I urge all community organisations working in East Finchley to join us". Development Trusts are community-based organisations working for the sustainable regeneration of their areas through a mixture of environmental, cultural and

social initiatives. They are independent not-for-profit bodies, which are committed to the involvement of local people in the process of regeneration and are locally accountable. They are committed to mutuality, community involvement, the creation of common wealth, independence, self-sufficiency and sustainability. They aim to build the capacity of local communities and put people at the heart of what they do.

Members of East Finchley Community Development Trust include Barnet College, Friends of Cherry Tree Wood, Old Barn Community Centre, Green Man Community Centre, Finchley Credit Union, Neighbourhood Contact, East Finchley Advice Service, East Finchley Arts Festival, East Finchley Community Festival, Peabody Trust Housing Association, Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute and Local Agenda 21.

For further information contact Martin O'Donnell on 020 8883 4916 or 07919 381 585

CRIME ROUNDUP

Handbag snatch

A 79-year-old woman from Finchley had her handbag stolen on 8 November at 7.15pm as she was walking along Willow Walk, The Grange.

The assailant - described as a male wearing a hooded top - approached the victim from behind and grabbed the handbag with such force that the strap broke. He then made off into the Grange estate.

Mugging

A 15-year-old student had his MP3 personal stereo, worth £100, stolen on 7 November at 4.45pm as he was walking along Cherry Tree Road.

The suspect approached the victim, grabbed him around the neck and said, "Give me your walkman". When the victim refused, he began to punch the victim. The suspect then snatched the stereo and ran off along Cherry Tree Road. The suspect is described as a black male aged about 16. He was wearing a blue hooded top and black trousers.

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Photo by John Dearing

With a Song in Their Hearts

By Daphne Chamberlain

It was song and dance time in October at Fairacres Apartments for Jewish Blind and Disabled. The celebration was for the 16th anniversary of the social club that "brings the building to life every Monday".

That accolade came from Jason Oizin, Executive Director of the Jewish Blind and Disabled Association. MPRudi Vis said it gave him great pleasure to be at the club's birthday party once a year. Twice a year would make him even happier. "Let's go on from there", said Reuby Hyams, who runs the club with his wife, Rene.

Rene and Reuby both paid tribute to their team of helpers, and Rene took the plunge and made her first public speech. ("You should hear her rattle on at home," remarked her husband.)

Referring to the recent One World Week, Rudi Vis said that this area had much to be proud

of in the field of religious integration. Other guests adding their good wishes included the President of the League of Jewish Women, the editor of *In Contact*, and local councillor Kathy McGuirk.

The Monday Club has a varied programme of events, and you don't have to live at Fairacres to attend. For this birthday party the entertainer was Tony Arnold, who wowed his audience with his repertoire of songs, dances, high kicks and jokes. He had a word for everyone, and left them a suggested theme song for Fairacres – "It's just that little street where my old friends meet."

Café Delay

By Diana Cormack

The new café in Cherry Tree Wood remains closed despite the original operator, Eileen Cannon, being ready and willing to open up for business from the end of October. This is because Barnet Council has put the lease for the kiosk/café out for tender, though Eileen has been asked to submit her name along with any others.

While there may be good reasons for this, such as questions involving contracts and being seen to act fairly, it again makes a mockery of Barnet's claim to be "Putting the community first." If that were so, couldn't this have all been sorted out during the past year? Park users who have been waiting for a café to replace the one burned down by vandals in November 2002 face at least another 2-4 months without this particular amenity.

It's off

The plan to create a café out of the old pavilion opposite the children's playground has failed to materialise yet again, since the latest party to show an interest has pulled out. This has become such a regular occurrence that Barnet Council needs to be asking whether or not it is a feasible idea. The building is deteriorating – will it be left until it becomes so dangerous to the public that it has to be demolished? A few weeks ago a Barnet employee walking past the pavilion was heard to say, "That would be an ideal spot for a youth centre." Hollow laughter from the Herbert Wilmot Centre!

Park House: No Plans, therefore No Consultation!

At the Council meeting on 18 November, Leader of the Council Victor Lyon defended the library consultation.

Asked by Cllr Alison Moore whether the money would not have been better spent on a "full and open consultation", he said that it had been very full. The project, he said, had been mooted by the previous administration, and this Council had honoured its commitment to consult on library provision, "whether on the same site as it is, or – if the opportunity presented itself – in a different library".

The cost of the consultation was given as £16,423 – including delivery of questionnaires, analysis of response, and questioning of focus groups, schools and hard-to-reach groups.

Park Road site

It was reported that several companies have shown interest in acquiring the site, but not as a result of any marketing, and

their expressions of interest were not being considered at present. Marketing had been delayed because of other disposals, but various agents had been asked for quotes and had recently submitted them.

Informed choice denied

Cllr Moore said that East Finchley residents want to make an informed choice about the use of the site. That choice has been denied by setting up a "flawed and limited consultation".

Cllr Lyon replied that there could be no consultation on use of land until a planning application has been received.

HGS Institute

The Institute has made an application for change of use for Park House. A short-term let to them can not be progressed until planning permission for this has been obtained.

Cherry Tree Wood AGM

The Friends of CTW AGM was attended by Noel Lynch from the GLA, local councillors Alison Moore and Colin Rogers, with Suresh Patel from Barnet Green Spaces plus Park Keeper Chris Ward, 10 members and seven of the committee.

The secretary presented her review and, with the assistance of Rachel Keen of Countryside Management Service, reported that Year 2 of the 5 Year plan had progressed well with some new trees planted and coppicing reintroduced to open up the woodland floor to more light thus enhancing regeneration. A charcoal burner may be brought in to help to reprocess some of the old wood. A volunteer Litter Pick Day in the summer

had been very successful and the millennium bench had only suffered a small amount of graffiti. An application for changing the bungalow into a 2-storey house with terrace had been withdrawn. There was also mention of the new *Walking for Life* venture (See page 10).

Question time issues included improvements to the children's playground, better rubbish bins and the erratic locking of the Wood's gates.

Light Fantastic

By John Dearing

In last month's edition we announced this year's Festive Lights in the High Road, courtesy of the local retailers and Barnet Council, and we are all looking forward to them bringing the festive spirit to East Finchley.

However, we were originally advised that the Council required them to be installed and switched on by 24 October, in time for Diwali, the Hindu festival of light, which is celebrated by many in the borough. Our initial announcement reflected this.

Just before going to press, we were informed that this was no longer the case, the lights would not be switched on until the end of November and our article had to be amended accordingly. Subsequently we learnt that the same had happened in Finchley town centre, except that they had

already started installing their lights, and they had to be taken down again.

Councillor Brian Coleman told us that when he had taken over responsibility for festive lights around the borough, he had learnt that a previous instruction to council officers regarding festive lights for Diwali had been misinterpreted as meaning that all participating town centres should switch on their Christmas lights towards the end of October. He felt that this was inappropriate and reorganised the provision of festive lights; as not all town centres are involved, it proved possible to provide lights specifically for Diwali in Burnt Oak Broadway. Elsewhere, Christmas lights would first be lit at the beginning of Advent, as is normally the case.

THE ARCHER is relieved to hear that Barnet Council has now got a grip on the situation.

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Rama Talwar takes a well earned rest. Photo by John Dearing

Check This Out

By Diana Cormack

Customers at Budgens on the High Road have been admiring the recent refurbishment, where modern shelving and checkout desks have helped to create a more spacious new look. But sadly one of its greatest attractions will no longer be seen about the store for, at the end of November, Rama Talwar is retiring.

Noregular customer will need to ask, "Who?" for Rama is well known amongst the shoppers of East Finchley for her ready smile and her friendly chat at the checkout. It was on 20 September 1980 that Rama, who lives in New Barnet, began working at the supermarket. Over the years she has seen many changes; she has watched children grow up

and people move on and now it is her turn.

The first thing Rama plans to do is to take a long holiday in India with her husband to visit family and friends. On her return she hopes to learn how to use a computer, with the promise of being given one by her son if she succeeds. Rama, who also has a daughter and a grandson,

may take up yoga too, but before she does anything she intends to have a good rest.

Though she will not miss the hard work at the till over the festive season, Rama will miss the many friends she has made in East Finchley. Being such a well-loved local character, Rama can be sure that her customers will miss her too.

Deafening Silence on Finchley Children's Music

By Sophie Leighton

The Finchley Children's Music Group, which has been in existence for 45 years and has over 160 children on its register, is now facing the bleak prospect of winding up its operations early next year if the proposed closure of the Wilmot Centre goes ahead. The existing arrangements in the Wilmot Centre and Holy Trinity school uniquely accommodate the specific rehearsal needs of their three choirs and all the efforts they have made so far suggest that there are unlikely to be any alternative affordable venues in reach of children in the borough. This charity receives no council grant and their use of the Wilmot Centre contributes at least £3,000 per annum to its upkeep.

Complaint

On 29 September, FCMG made a formal complaint to Barnet Council, stating that there had been no formal notification of the closure proposal, which they learned about only by chance. They had then been

asked by the Council simply to consult the local press for news. Since council leader Victor Lyon's announcement at the Forum meeting of a temporary stay of execution for the Wilmot Centre and a review by councillor Peter Davies, no consultation has taken place.

Sham?

Alison Moore, councillor for East Finchley ward and deputy leader of the Labour group, commented, "It's now clear that they had already decided to close the Centre regardless. Temporarily halting that plan and promising more consultation was a sham. It was all about preventing the youth and community groups speaking in opposition at the council meeting and keeping the issue out of the press when Ofsted were re-inspecting the Tory council's failing youth service. There has been no further

consultation with any of the groups. Cllr Davies will just bring the issue back to Cabinet when he thinks all the fuss has died down."

Stupidity?

Cllr. Monroe Palmer, leader of the Liberal Democrat group, commented, "I regard it as crass stupidity to close a youth centre without serious consideration of what it is used for. The Finchley Children's Music Group is clearly an asset to the Borough and one of which we should, as a borough, be proud."

FCMG are currently preparing for a production of a new children's opera *The Snow Queen*, to be performed in the new Arts Depot in Winter 2004, and are working on a CD in conjunction with another major charity. If the Centre is lost, these are just two of many youth projects and activities that will go to the wall.

Ann Owens Centre Fights Back

By Daphne Chamberlain

When Henry Cooper visited the Ann Owens Centre advocating flu jabs, his hosts were preparing to ward off a knockout blow. If Barnet Council carry out a plan to cut their grant to Age Concern by £100,000, the Centre would be seriously affected.

Assistant Manager Enid Branchdale told *THE ARCHER*, "The Trustees for Age Concern Barnet have appealed against the proposal, but it seems unlikely that there won't be cuts. We are proud of this Centre. We've worked hard to raise funds for it, and we don't know what is going to happen."

The Centre in Oak Lane was purpose-built in 1991 as a meeting-place for Finchley's senior citizens. Users who can't make their own way there are bussed in. The building, which has disabled access, is open every weekday from 9.30am to 4pm, with a cooked lunch for members every day except Wednesday.

Hard hit

Well-established activities include classes in craft, needlework and art, dancing, exercises for all abilities, and Bingo. *THE ARCHER* has featured several of these sessions and the people who run them—often themselves users of the Centre.

Some senior citizens simply chat or play cards, but they can enjoy talks, entertainments, outings and holidays. There are frequent visits from a hairdresser, a chiropodist and a pensions advisor, and people with specific problems can be put in touch with help agencies. The Centre also

houses the Age Concern Barnet Handy Person Scheme, Ageing-Well and Trans-Age Action, which have separate funding.

Age Concern Barnet has other centres in Friern Barnet and Hendon, which are also facing an uncertain future.

Ann Owens, who died in 1993, was the Organising Secretary of what was then Finchley Age Concern, which grew out of the Finchley Old Peoples' Welfare Committee. The Centre was her idea, and she helped raise the money to build it.

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Aspirational Youth

By Sam Grove

In a monthly column, Samuel Grove, with the help of his peers, takes a light-hearted look at youth culture. As we are approaching the New Year he examines ambition.

In an age of brazen hedonism 18-24 year olds, in the prime of life, have the reputation for living solely in the now. However a good deal of our time is spent thinking about the future. Standing at a crossroads of my life I am often caught worrying about the long-term consequences of my mistakes. A considerable source of anxiety, one resident observes, is that ambition at this age is such an ambivalent entity. On the one hand he wants to become a poster child of a social revolution. On the other he has quasi-erotic fantasies of making lots of money and then remorselessly burning it in front of poor people.

But are these visions diametrically opposed? The fascination with being a poster child is indicative of a generation that are individualistic and power

obsessed. Like vultures they cynically and ruthlessly hunt down the combined kudos of status and eminence at the expense of their fellow man and woman. In this vicious zero sum game, the winners flaunt their victories in front of the losers, who are themselves merely trying to survive day to day against the twin cancers of intolerable abuse and bitter ostracism in what has become an abhorrent and tortuous hell, where there is no truth, only manipulation and lies.

The very few that are fortunate exploit a world of vulgar opulence, while the rest of us are left, floundering helplessly in a fuming rotting pit of self loathing and terminal envy.

Next month we investigate the latest fads in health and fitness.



Matilda and Barney the Bear. Photo by John Dearing

A Bear Necessity?

By Diana Cormack

When seven-year-old Matilda Donnachie saw the photo of Barney the Bear in the September *ARCHER*, she knew she just had to have him. The RSPCA had been trying to find the big, brown teddy a home for months. Previously he had been won in a competition to name him and he had been won in a raffle, but each time the winners were put off by his size. Not so Matilda – after all, she didn't have another bear of his build in her collection of forty-three cuddlies!

A search in her moneybox revealed a total of £18.50, but Matilda wasn't sure if this would be enough to give to the local

clinic in exchange for Barney. Luckily, her ten-year-old sister Alice chipped in with an extra £2.00 and Barney came to

live with them in Hertford Road, after what the RSPCA called "a very generous donation."

While all the family adore him, mother Margaret says that Barney is definitely the last bear they will give houseroom to!

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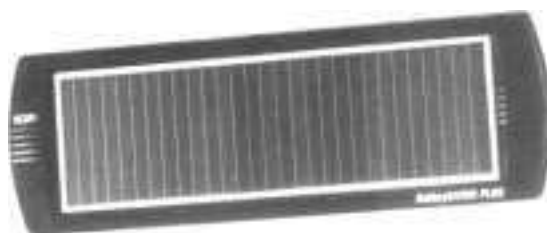
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Whetstone Hot Turkey?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Barnet Farmers' Market is surviving – perhaps. “It will continue to trade as long as farmers and customers want it to,” Cheryl Cohen of London Farmers' Markets told THE ARCHER.

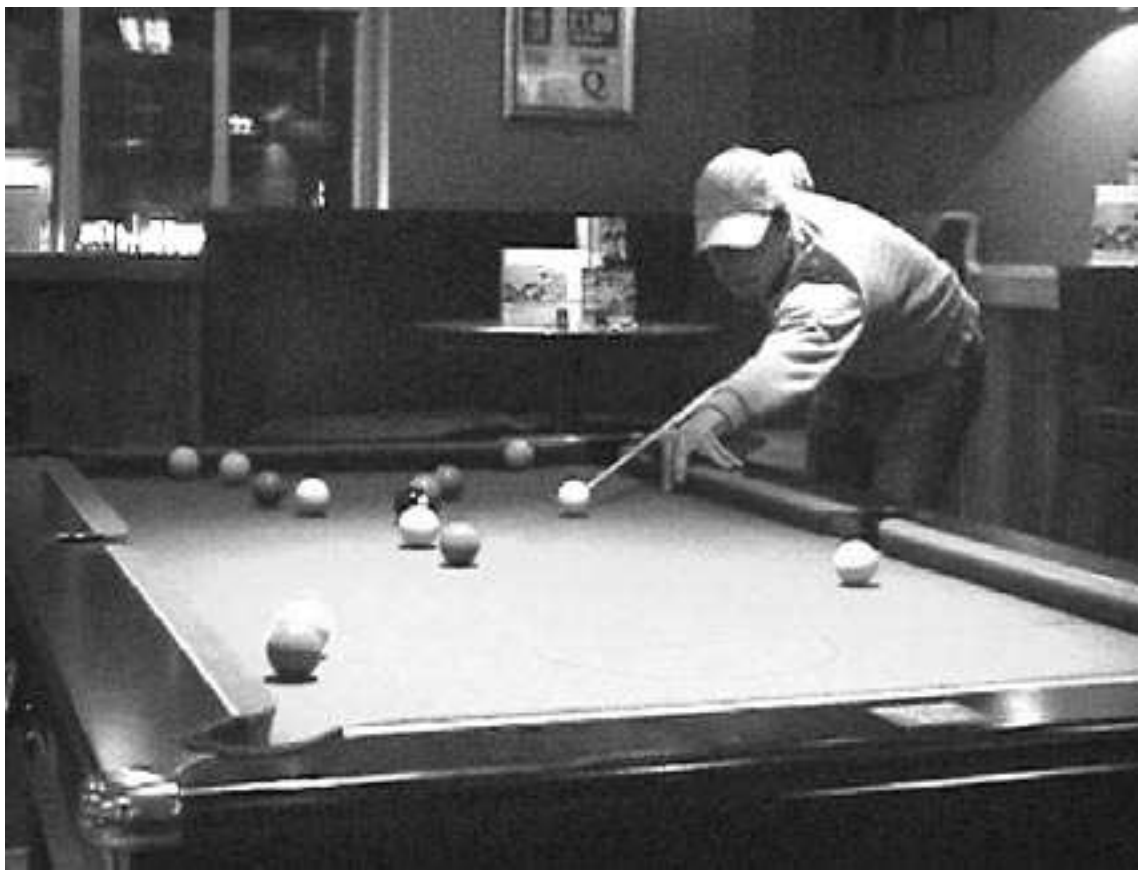
Like traders in general, the Whetstone stallholders are emphasising Christmas appeal. So if you're interested in free-range turkeys and handmade mince pies, you could go north up the High Road on a Friday.

Looking at the long term, Cheryl said, “We are aware that there are fewer stalls, and are looking for another meat producer.”

In October, Deputy London Mayor Jenny Jones launched a Green Party report called Building Bridges between

Farmers and London Shoppers. At present there are 30 farmers' markets in London, but the report suggests that there should be one every weekend in every major shopping area. It says that, despite a surge in demand, some markets are facing difficulties and need support from local authorities, the Government and consumers.

Barnet's market is at Whetstone High Road (opposite Waitrose) every Friday, from 11 am. To get the best offers, be there early.



Pool at the Bald Faced Stag. Photo by Erini Rodis

EF ID

By Diana Cormack

Most of us consider ourselves lucky to be living in East Finchley and are happy to tell others what we like about the place, but now we can even show people where we come from. Actually, it might not be that obvious at first, as demonstrated by my brother in law, who lives in Harpenden.

“What's that sticker on your car bumper?” he asked, having followed us back to our house for many miles. Of course, I knew he couldn't mean the GB sticker and he felt a bit of a fool when I told him what the EF stood for.

Many people in my road have asked about it, so I am pretty certain that there are lots of locals who would like to have one too. They were ‘invented’ by Gerard Donnachie, who lives in Hertford Road and works in advertising. He produced them months ago as a way of raising money at a Holy Trinity School Fair, which is still their purpose. For a while they were on sale at Tony's Continental Store and, as I write, you can get them for £1 each at Chivers Bros. A1 Motor Store, 113 High Road.

The letters are in black on an oval, white background (someone has suggested adding the archer symbol to it). It's certainly different and is the sort of thing you could slip inside a birthday or Christmas card.



EF car sticker. Photo by Erini Rodis

The Pain and The Glory

By Sam Grove

For the past few months the Bald Faced Stag has hosted what many insiders are calling the most prestigious pool competition in East Finchley. This is an intense and fiercely competitive tournament with as many as 32 participants. There are even rumours circling around the jukebox that it is slowly but surely being hijacked by professional players.

One guy I played in the first round some time ago had apparently represented Jamaica. I gave him quite a scare before ultimately losing by six balls. If there were any lingering doubts about how seriously the competition is taken, one had only to glance at the expressions etched on the faces of many of the contenders. One man just sat there, in between games, virtually motionless, occasionally sipping at a glass of water. Why not beer, you might ask. “Sam, pool is a game of many variables. The winner is the one who can take care of the most.” Variables, it seemed, contrived to knock him out in the second round. The fact that he probably

anticipated such a fall was little consolation. “The balls didn't break well. I wasn't able to play my attacking game,” he said, more to himself than anyone else. “Do you think you'll be back next week?” I enquired, as he slowly and meticulously packed his graphite snooker cue safely back into its velvet case. After a long and resigned sigh he conceded he would be – in a voice which indicated he probably didn't want to, but fate (or perhaps doom) would conspire to make it inevitable.

If you want to chance your arm against East Finchley's best, arrive at the Bald Faced Stag from 8pm onwards every Sunday.

Musicians, Can You Help?

Our local Air Cadet Squadron is appealing for help from any musicians who could and would give of their time and musical knowledge to help young cadets to learn and play musical instruments (bass drum, tenor drum, side drum, trumpet, bugle, trombone, etc.)

In years gone by they had a band to be proud of and would like to do so again.

The “393” (Finchley) Squadron, Air Training Corps, is for boys and girls from 13 years of age. It meets on Tuesdays and Fridays from 7.30 to 10 pm in the squadron headquarters at the junction of the High Road and North

Circular Road (near the Warner Village).

For more information, whether you wish to join as a cadet or to help with the music, please telephone 020 8444 9861.

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celebrate the opening of their outdoor classroom.

PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

By Diana Cormack

Holy Trinity

Work will begin in early January on an extension at the front of the school, to house a new library and SEN area.

Fund raising events for the new building include a group of mothers who took part in the Flora Light 5 km run in Hyde Park and raised £1,145.30; selling donated items on the ebay website; the school's own lottery scheme.

Athlete Joice Maduaka, the British 100m champion in three separate seasons, came to present the prestigious Activemark Gold Award granted to the school by Sport England last term (see August *ARCHER*). Pupils were thrilled to be shown her medals and to hear about her training sessions with Lynford Christie. Joice really inspired her audience and spent a lot of time answering their many questions.

The Christmas Fair is on Saturday 6 December from noon to 2.30pm.

Martin Schools

A portfolio has been sent to the National Gallery showing work inspired by Canaletto in their *Take One Picture* scheme for schools. Junior children have been building gondolas, painting in acrylic, studying philosophy and architecture, looking at patterns and texture and exploring textiles and music in response to the painting *The Stonemason's Yard*.

To support the school's Gifted and Talented Programme Mr Jackson has coordinated a newsletter to celebrate achievement and inspire children to excel in academic subjects, sport, art and music.

The deputy mayor is to present senior staff with a certificate at the Barnet Education Business Partnership Gold Award Ceremony for the school's "on-going support for education business activities delivered." Two children who completed the maths trail created by the school's Mr Jackson at the Long Lane Fire Station will also be there to help the Station Commander describe what they did on their visit.

The recently formed football team has begun the season with a resounding win over Coppetts Wood and a defeat by Tudor Primary but with a wonderful display of sportsmanship in both matches.

Many clubs are being run to support and enhance learning in the juniors. There is a long established French club; for musicians there is a recorder group and a newly founded orchestra; for sports enthusiasts there is netball, football or gymnastics; those with creative talents can join the art or sewing club.

A stunning firework display took place on the school field on Bonfire Night.

The infant school is delighted to have been chosen for a return visit by the Iroko Theatre Group, which now has Arts Council Funding, for a three-day residency. As an extension to Black History month they will be performing African dance, drama and music and will hold a special assembly. Children throughout the school will be involved in workshops.

The National Gallery's *Take One Picture* work is well under way. A visiting sculptor has helped the children to make a 3D image of the painting *The Stonemason's Yard* by Canaletto in the playground. They have also been making models to go inside the buildings depicted.

Martin Schools' Christmas Bazaar is on Saturday 6 December from 12 noon to 3 pm.

The Great Outdoors

By Diana Cormack

Children in the reception class at Holy Trinity School are now able to spend part of their learning time out of doors, thanks to the completion of the outdoor classroom.

Before the official opening Sally Barnes, formerly Early Learning Advisory Inspector for Barnet, told parents how important outdoor play is in the development process. Educationalists now believe that it is better for nursery pupils, who have ready access to a playground, to come into an infant school scenario similar to that which they have grown used to. They also say that these youngsters need to be able to move around rather than sit at

desks for hours on end because physical activity stimulates and develops different parts of the brain and so helps the learning process.

Children learn an amazing amount through outdoor play and through experimenting with their environment. However, the play has to be structured by the careful planning of the class teacher so that the activities available and the equipment provided reflect or continue with other

work undertaken indoors. Each infant classroom has a door leading directly into the outside area, which is safely fenced in.

Future plans are for some sort of cover to keep off the rain, but that would have spoilt the fun on the opening day because each child had a labelled balloon to set free. Just think how much learning will be involved when the children find out about where the balloons eventually end up!

First in the Country for Holy Trinity

By Diana Cormack

Teachers and students who need advice and training in physical education are coming to East Finchley to visit the country's first sports academy for the primary age group. The *On Your Marks* Sporting Academy is the brainchild of Duncan Mills, head teacher of Holy Trinity CE Primary School, Eagans Close, which received high praise from OFSTED last year for its excellent after-school clubs and sports activities. It is also one of the few schools to receive Sport England's top grading, the Activemark Gold Award, for promoting sporting activities to children.

Going it alone

Based on these achievements as well as his own studies and years of involvement with sport for younger children, Duncan decided to realise his dream of sharing this good practice. Whilst secondary schools are given funding to attain special status in a chosen field, primary schools are not, so Duncan decided to go it alone and set up the sports status on his own initiative. The Sports Foundation has helped financially and the school has been able to buy a set of footballs, new netball

posts and gymnastic mats, but one of Duncan's aims is for there to be enough equipment for each pupil to use individually.

Sharing expertise

At present, this remarkable head teacher is running programmes at the school for students from places of learning like The Institute of Education and the University of Hertfordshire as well as for Barnet's own newly qualified teachers' induction course. Other schools are seeking his expertise in such things as setting up after-school sports clubs and organising

sporting events.

But whatever their need, in the long run they are helping the pupils at Holy Trinity, for all the money Duncan earns through instructing others is to be ploughed back into his school to provide more equipment and facilities.

Heartening

At a time when childhood obesity and inertia is making worrying news, it is heartening to report that a local school is giving the whole country a lead in the teaching of physical activities.

YOUNG ARCHER

Garden of Wishes

The children in Martin Infant School have each planted a crocus bulb in large pots in the playground. Little cards with their wishes written on have been stuck on sticks which are dotted in between the bulbs.

Some of the wishes are for things like money, holidays, health and happiness. Some are a bit different. Here are a few of them:

I wish that Cherry Tree Woods was better with big swings. *By Ella*

I wish that East Finchley didn't have traffic jams. *By Jade*

I wish people wouldn't dig up the roads. *By John*

I wish there were no robbers. *By William*

I wish that old people had a very good living at their homes. *By Hannah*

I wish that everybody was rich and had plenty of food. *By Jamie*

I wish everyone could be my friend. *By Aaliyah*

I wish I had a fairy. *By Shamina*

Chess Club Appeal

The Barnet Knights Chess Club, based at Moss Hall School, Nether Street, N3 has a serious shortage of members and is in danger of closing down. The club is run during term time by volunteers on Mondays from 5.30-7.30 pm for beginners and improvers and from 7.30-9.30 pm for more advanced players.

Contact Laurie Winston for further details on 8959 8376 or visit www.barnetknights.co.uk.

Christmas is Coming

By Diana Cormack

Can't believe it's on the way
Hope it won't be long!
Rush to write my present list
Is Santa feeling strong?
Shall we have a Christmas tree
To decorate with lights?
Might exchange my stocking for
A giant pair of tights!
Super Santa Claus!!



Local pressure group Warning on Waitrose canvasses public opinion at a stall by Viceroy Parade on 15 November. Photo by John Dearing.

12 Things You Didn't Know About...

Each month *THE ARCHER* profiles an eminent member of the community with 12 quick fire questions.

- **Name:** Lawrie Chivers
- **Date of Birth:** 4/9/1939
- **Star Sign?** Virgo... I am not a virgin – I have two wonderful sons.
- **Occupation?** Purveyor of widgets, gismos, interactive winding pumps for motorcars for half of my life.
- **Highlight?** 6ft 7ins – Love every inch of it.
- **Lowlight?** 1 year in hospital at the age of 9 with a kidney infection. Alexander Fleming saved my life with the discovery of penicillin a few years earlier. In those days they wouldn't allow your family to visit you in hospital so I didn't have any contact with them for that year.
- **What is your brother's [Roger] worst habit?** Can't think of any. I love my bruvva!
- **If you could have chosen another profession what would it be?** Farmer. I love the country. I was evacuated to Derby near the end of the war- one of the best years of my life.
- **Who is the most famous person you have met?** Margaret Thatcher. I didn't agree with some of her ideas but she put her mouth where her skirt was. What you saw was what you got.
- **Favourite song?** Bohemian Rhapsody
- **Christmas: Time to wind down or get wound up?** I like Christmas. I get a lot of pleasure seeing kids enjoy it – so I guess wound up.
- **New Year's resolution?** Give up smoking. It stunts your growth.

Christmas

By Michael Solomons

Snowflakes fall from high above,
Bells begin to chime.
They ring out for peace and love.
It is Christmas time.

Children playing in the snow,
Fires are burning bright.
Holly and the mistletoe
Make a lovely sight.

As we trim the Christmas tree
We hear carols sung.
Happiness for you and me.
Christmas has begun.

Decorations everywhere,
Colours all around;
Joy and laughter fill the air,
Love is to be found.

I just wish these happy days
Were to last and last;
And this good cheer would
always stay
After Christmas has passed.

So once more we thank the Lord
And go on our way.
It is Him we've all adored
On this Christmas Day.

Praises we sing all the time.
Let our troubles end.
Make this world of ours sublime.
Let us help a friend.

And when Christmas comes again,
I pray we shall find
Love to all our fellow men,
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KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Plastic Cutlery

Gazing at the sky as the last ever Concorde swooped into land I realised that it was only 100 years since two blokes in America invented air travel. Just think, 100 years to get from string and sealing wax to the end of an era. Because Concorde was the end of an era, an era of the rich flying in expensive seclusion, eating cordon bleu cuisine and sipping champagne while the rest of us made do with airline food and plastic cutlery.

Once flying had got over the dangerous 'experimental' phase and assorted confections of string and sealing wax had crossed the Channel, the Atlantic and the Pacific, or more often ended up in the Channel, Atlantic or Pacific, flying entered the realm of the rich. Pre-war, just about the only people who flew were seriously loaded. Post war, just about the only people who flew were loaded. They expected bone china and caviar and champagne and they got it. For the rest of us, unless we got dragged into the army and sent to far off places to kill people, overseas was, well foreign. When the first jet airliner appeared in 1952 it was for the rich flying long distances at great expense, while little boys got no closer to aircraft than the viewing platform at Heathrow. I guess it was inevitable that when some bright spark thought about supersonic flight he thought about the rich drinking champagne at 100,000 feet so what they decided we needed was futuristic white elegance. That was about 1958, about the time Boeing launched the 707.

By the early sixties things were starting to change. You started to get package tours to Spain, a unique chance to be crammed into a converted hanger at Luton before being crammed onto a junk heap marvel bound for Barcelona. As the 60s progressed the delays got longer, the holidays cheaper and, seeing as flying is meant to be safer than crossing the road, the London cabbies started getting paid to keep the statistics favourable.

Against the trend

Just at the wrong moment, when more people were saving up to fly to more places, like Ibiza and Crete, Concorde, offering elegance for the rich, made its first flight. The optimists said wow and golly and gosh and isn't it beautiful and soon we'll all be flying like that. The realists looked the other way. Why? Because the future of air travel was never going to be high speed, high priced elegance, it was going to be low priced, fairly slow, cramped, but cheap. It was going to be the flying equivalent of the rush hour double-decker; it was going to be the Jumbo. Somehow, somewhere, the great white elegance became the great white elephant and we didn't go from string and sealing wax to breakfast in London and a second breakfast in New York. Instead we got DVT, plastic food, queues, breakfast in London, dinner in New York and luggage in New Mexico. I think it's called progress.

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- ❖ **Symphonic Wind Orchestra** of North London, Contact Caroline Egan 020 8340 2706

Clubs & Social

- ❖ **All Saints Beer and Wine Circle** Call Richard Baldwin 020 8883 7081
- ❖ **Bingo**, Green Man Community Centre, 020 8883 4916
- ❖ **Contact Lunch Club** at the Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book a place. Every Thursday. 12.30-2pm
- ❖ **East Finchley National Childbirth Trust**, Contact Sophie Spence 020 8444 1890
- ❖ **East Finchley Writers** meet weekly at the Old White Lion. Contact Lillian on 020 8444 1793.
- ❖ **Fairacres Monday Club** for Jewish people, Rene & Reuby Hyams, 020 8883 0448 or Sylvia Lee 8958 7878
- ❖ **Finchley Philatelic Society**, Contact Brian Merryweather 8444 3251
- ❖ **Friendly Rubber Bridge** at The Old Barn, 020 8349 4613
- ❖ **Haringey Recorded Music Society**, informal meetings locally. Call David Mouldon on 020 83611696.
- ❖ **North London Bridge Club**, Muswell Hill, 020 8348 3495
- ❖ **Muswell Hill and Highgate Pensioners' Action Group** Call Bob Cottingham on 8444 7635.
- ❖ **Muswell Hill Synagogue**, Tetherdown, 020 8883 5925
- ❖ **Muswell Hill Tetherdown Bridge**, 020 8883 4390
- ❖ **Old Barn pre-school club**, 020 8349 4613/1961
- ❖ **Parent & Toddler Group**, Green Man Centre, Julia 8444 2276
- ❖ **Probus Lunch Club** for retired professional and business people, Details Eric Dalton 8340 0822.

The RSPCA in December

This year, please, please think very carefully before you give any animal as a Christmas present.

If you do, please make sure the recipient is fully aware of the hours of care and time they will need and the likely costs that may arise.

Each January our animal homes are filled with unwanted gifts. Our staff have to care for bewildered, upset puppies and kittens taken from their mothers, overwhelmed with attention, then abandoned. Most eventually find good homes - but please don't put them through this trauma.

Microchipping Offer

During December and January we have a special offer for owners of cats, dogs and rabbits: Microchipping is available at the bargain price of £10. Just come along any Monday or Thursday evening between 6pm and 7.30pm to the clinic in Park Road.

If a dog or cat gets lost it often loses its collar as well so, with a microchip, identification is assured. We are at present looking after a black and white adult male cat with no nametag or microchip. Has any reader lost him?

Accountant wanted

THE ARCHER found a cleaner for the Clinic and a home for Barney the Bear; now can it be three in a row? We badly need a qualified accountant to carry out the annual audit of our straightforward and meticulously prepared accounts. The gentleman who did this for many years for a nominal fee has had to give up due to failing eyesight. We hope, through this column, to find as kind and benevolent a successor. Please telephone Caroline or David Broome on 020 8444 2329.

What a Pantomime

The Guild Players present *'The Wonderful Story of Mother Goose'* by Norman Robbins on 10-13 December at 7.45 pm (plus 3pm matinee on Sat 13), Finchley Methodist Church Hall, Ballards Lane, N3. Tickets are £6. To book call 020 8346 6337 or visit www.guildplayers.org.uk



Trans Age Volunteers working with children. Photo courtesy of the Trans Age project

Vital Supporting Role for Older People

The chance to help children is being offered to older people by Age Concern, whose Trans Age project has been recruiting and training older volunteers all over the UK since 1995. The Barnet branch of Age Concern at the Ann Owens Centre in Oak Lane, is looking for volunteers aged 50 and over to work with children who need extra help, in both primary schools and family centres.

Tracey Evans, project manager of Trans Age said the project aims to create "supportive relationships" between elderly people and children who may have lost contact with their extended families through conflicts such as the divorce of their parents. She added, "Many children need individual atten-

tion. Older people, with their life experience and skills, can help these children in many ways."

The volunteers will start training on 14 January with a view to taking one or two sessions a week. Volunteers are carefully matched to an individual child or group of children and are supported by the Project Manager.

They will help children with literacy and numeracy, and in other areas in which they may have special skills or interests such as gardening or cooking.

Anyone who is interested in becoming a volunteer can contact Tracey at Age Concern on (020) 8346 0542, before 11 December or after 5 January.

A Walk on the Mild Side

By Diana Cormack

Are you one of those people who, like me, feel you should get out and get some exercise, but hate the idea of gyms and sweat and swimming pools? If so, you might be interested in a project being run by the borough of Barnet.

Walk for Life is a local scheme encouraging residents of the borough to walk by developing a programme of free volunteered walks. It is part of a national campaign, spearheaded by the Walking the Way to Health Initiative to promote health walking. By the year 2005 they hope to encourage one million people to walk regularly.

Rather less than that number turned up for the first Cherry Tree Wood walk, so borough coordinator Simon Barnett had no problems introducing us to our volunteer leaders, park keeper Chris Ward and Park Hall Road

resident Pat Orr. Both had been on a short training course and carried rucksacks well equipped for every eventuality. We filled in forms about our general health then, after an informative introduction by Chris, we set off.

The pace was gentle at first as we made a complete circuit of the park, then along Fordington Road on our way towards Highgate Wood. It quickened up there, but certainly not enough to disturb my conversation with a young lady of eighteen who is hoping to become a volunteer leader. On our approach back to Cherry Tree Wood we slackened

off and, after an hour of walking together through beautiful autumnal scenery, enjoyed a refreshing cup of tea courtesy of Chris.

Walking is said to improve your health, relieve stress and help you to sleep better. If you would like to join in, the walks take place on the first two Mondays of the month from 10-11 am (hopefully next year it will be every Monday). Meet outside the new café and take a step in the right direction! For more details contact Simon on 8359 7816 or at simon.barnett@barnet.gov.uk. Visit www.whi.org.uk to find more borough walks.

All Saints' Church, Durham Road, East Finchley Church of England

**Sunday masses at 8.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m.
Weekday masses at 10.00 a.m.
Prayer requests are gladly accepted.**

**The Parish has a flourishing social life.
Contact the Vicar, Fr Christopher Hardy,
on 020 8883 9315.**

**All Saints' also has a strong musical tradition and an enthusiastic choir of both adults and children.
Experienced singers are always welcome.
Contact Geoffrey Hanson on 020 8444 9214.**

<http://www.allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk>

East Finchley Baptist Church

Just off the High Road in Creighton Avenue

Sundays at 11.00am & 6.30pm

**For more information please contact the Church
Office – Tel: 8883 1544 (Minister: Simon Dyke)**

Christmas Carol Services

Sunday 21st December

11.00am – All Ages in Together

(the Christmas story re-told by our children & young people)

6.30pm – Carols by Candlelight

Visitors Always Welcome



Letters to The Editor

Gross over-population
Dear Sir,

The fourth set of amendments to the proposed development of the hospital site are at Barnet Council. The developers will not talk to the neighbours who had formed a NOGO committee in July 2002 to object to the original proposed development and subsequent amendments submitted over the last fifteen months.

A great deal of work and financial expenditure has gone into providing cogent argument why we object to the gross over-population of a conservation area which is the eastern gateway to the Suburb, and trust that the wise heads in Council will accept the force of our reasoning.

Roger and Wendy Sheridan
Address supplied.

Barnet Consultation
letter misleads...

Dear Editor

Barnet's fourth consultation letter of 14 November regarding the Neurological Hospital has the same reference number as the July and October set, namely C00070H/02. Despite the same number these plans are different. The developers have been forced to listen to objectors, but the Public are regrettably still being misled as defined below. These plans are described by the Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association and Trust as 'overdeveloped'.

The 14 November consultation letter says that "two separate sets of amended plans have been received, the first involving amendments affecting the whole site, the second involved a reduction in height of the northern part

of the educational building to two storey." This implies the whole northern end is now two storey and that the whole of the northern 'part' has been reduced in height. Both are untrue! It is more correct to say that 'less than half the northern end of the educational building is now two storey and the classroom block is still only 20 metres from a residential home'. Barnet's Mr Pearson has agreed that the 14 Nov letter wording is misleading but can do nothing about it.

The application consists of 27 flats in two large four-storey blocks, and a 47,000 sq. ft. three storey building (plus "atrium tower") for the HGS Institute. In these latest plans a small part of the top storey of the proposed Institute Building (amounting to 15% of this floor) is removed, and the positioning of the three buildings is altered slightly but the Institute classroom block is still an objectionably abusive 20 metres from a residential home. After studying the plans, we conclude that they are still completely unacceptable, and do not meet in any way the fundamental objections that applied to Octagon's three previous sets of plans.

What will unavoidably affect all East Finchley residents is that the Institute still provides only 30 on-site car parking spots for almost 550 pupils and teachers who will come and go many times in the day and into the night all year round for the various classes. This will cause local traffic chaos and parking problems for miles around as the average 240 cars try to park wherever they can.

Please send your objections again specifically about the traffic, congestion and parking problems and the overdevelop-

ment that all East Finchley locals have not been consulted on, and which is a well kept secret, to: Mr Robin Pearson, Barnet Planning Dept, 1255 High Rd, London N20 0EJ.

Charles Adams
STOP
Edmunds Walk, N2
www.actiongroups.co.uk

Cuckoo commuters
Dear Editor

I wish to report a sighting of East Finchley's first genetically modified denizens of the Controlled Parking Zone. Genus Cuckoo can be seen driving their cars to Ingram Road from as far away as Lincoln Road – the better to access the tube station, you understand. Car drivers who have been overtaken by this syndrome seem to value their internal combustion exercises more than their cardio vascular system.

This will hardly seem credible to most residents, as surely it takes longer to drive than to walk that distance.

Help is in sight for the afflicted however. All that is needed is to ask the council to provide a minicab service from their front door to their car. I'm sure Barnet's Tory car champions will oblige.

In the meantime, please ask local residents to write when they next see these exercise-averse autophiles, so that the Council doesn't have to spend time dealing with them. Your ward councillors can more profitably represent East Finchley by dealing with opportunistic developers, venal landlords and tree planters.

Yours sincerely
Colin Rogers
Ward Councillor, East Finchley

OBITUARY

Joan Killingback

19/12/1920 - 12/08/2003

By Daphne Chamberlain

Joan Killingback, born Joan Jarvis, who died in August, lived all her life in East Finchley; for the last 59 years in Chambers Gardens.

She was born in an Oak Lane house called *The Grange*, where her father was the caretaker. The Grange housed Simms Motor Units, and her mother sold tea and cakes to the factory workers in a small canteen in the garden.

At the junction of Oak Lane and the High Road was a hollow tree, known as *Turpin's Oak*. When, in recent years, the remains of a tree was put by the North Circular and given the same name, Mrs Killingback was not the only local to be indignant. She sent protests to newspapers, including *THE ARCHER*, identifying the impostor as the "Beehive Tree", which had come from a nearby garden.

I met Mrs Killingback several times after this, and she made valuable contributions to our local history pages. She had a sharp mind and, although unable to get out much in her later years, remained keenly interested in current events as well.

She was a striking-looking woman, with clear blue eyes and a fresh complexion which always put me in mind of the country.

In fact, the East Finchley of her childhood did have a rural element. Mrs Killingback remembered seeing flocks of sheep walking along the High Road to market, as well as "Mr Jarman's trotters" – trotting horses kept by a neighbour in another of the big houses in Oak Lane.

When her father-in-law, Maurice Killingback,



Joan Killingback in 1987.

Photo supplied by Sheila Fleming.

and her husband, Arthur, ran their butcher's shop in the Market Place between the World Wars, they bought pigs in Prospect Place and grazed goats in the cemetery off Strawberry Vale. After World War 2, the Killingbacks opened another shop on the corner of Church Lane and Long Lane, which was there until 1969.

Mrs Killingback went to North Road (now Martin) and Tollington Schools, and worked for BT until she was married. After that, her main concern was bringing up her five children, and she was a long-time member of the Mothers' Union.

A sufferer with arthritis and diabetes, she had a fatal heart attack in the heat of last summer. We send our sympathy to her family.

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.

**Public-Private****Partnerships - A Pupil Protests**

By Hannah Eiseman-Renyard

I attend Fortismere School, and discovered only this term that it's in a public-private partnership (PPP) and apparently has been for three years. Under the twenty-five-year contract, Jarvis Plc. do all maintenance, repairs and improvements for free and in return they can rent out the school outside of school hours for profit. But if it's as reasonable as it sounds, why was this done in such a way that many of the pupils didn't know?

Screw-ups

Compared to some cases of Islington PPP schools where Jarvis have interfered with cleaning staff's pay and teachers' contracts, their screw-ups around Fortismere are pretty minor. They have lost all the attachments to the blinds, so teachers resort to pinning them up with drawing pins; re-built the between-wings walkway with steep earth banks either side and no drainage, so it becomes a slippery mud-chute in wet weather; inexplicably changed a Sixth Form boys' toilet into a girls'; built a bridge which slopes; as well as a large road down the middle of school to a new car park, so teachers now have to drive further past (or over) pupils to park.

What's in it for them?

It's the last few years of the contract that worry me. Currently Jarvis are refurbishing the school, so that they can rent it out. Currently it's worth their while to make improvements, but come the final years of the contract, there won't be time to recoup the 'investment' of any needed repairs or improvements. As one teacher said, "Whenever private companies put themselves forward, you have to ask what's in it for them." When there's no longer much in it for them, we'll be in serious trouble.

Christmas Church Services

St. Marys Catholic Church,
279 High Road
Christmas Eve - 6.30pm
Children's Mass at Christmas,
9.30pm Carols, 10pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day - Mass at 8.30am, 10am & 11.30am
Boxing Day - Mass 10am

Holy Trinity Church,
Church Lane
Sunday 21 December - 6pm
Carol Service by Candlelight
Christmas Eve - 6pm Nativity Play: Blessing of the Crib, 11.30pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day - 10am Parish Communion

All Saints' Church,
Durham Road
Sunday 21 December - 6.30pm
Christmas Carol Service
Christmas Eve - 3pm
Children's Christmas Service, 11.30pm Midnight Mass of Christmas
Christmas Day - 8am Mass of the Dawn, 10am Mass of Christmas Day

East Finchley Baptist Church,
Creighton Avenue
Sunday 21st December - Christmas Carol Services, 11am - All Ages in Together, 6.30pm
Carols by Candlelight
Christmas Day - 10.30am
Christmas Morning Service



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Rugby fans celebrate outside Maddens Ale House. Photo by Fiona Anderson

Local Team Wins!

By Sue Holliday

Well done Martin and your team. England is proud of you. Yes, I am talking about the English Rugby team who raised everybody's spirits and made us proud to be English, when they lifted the Rugby World Cup in Australia on Saturday 22 November. It will be a date most people will remember; England has not held a field sport world trophy since 1966. In a way it was won in a similar manner, extra time and down to the wire.

The tension in Maddens was electric; some people could not look and others were biting their nails. At full time some people had to go outside to get fresh air. They walked out to a very quiet High Road with hardly any traffic – most people must have been glued to their television sets.

Back inside for extra time the tension was even greater. Kieran and Margaret Madden kindly provided food but hardly anybody could eat. Seconds before the final whistle Jonny scored that wonderful drop goal. Then the place just erupted with everybody on their

feet shouting and screaming. Very shortly after that the champagne bottles popped to the strains of "We are the champions," the singing lasting for some time.

One lone Australian, and brave supporter, was also in attendance. A visitor to East Finchley, the previous night he'd seen that Maddens was screening the match. He did mention that as he walked in he was rather put off by the sea of white shirts. However – this is where Rugby differs from Football – he shook people's hands and said well done. He also put up with a lot of banter from some of the regulars, but it was

all handled in a friendly and sporting manner. Long may that attitude last; may Rugby never have the problems that Football does. He stayed for some time after the final whistle and I think he left feeling he had made some new friends.

We would like to say thank you to Keiran and Margaret for their hospitality and extended hours during this very special World Cup. Also a special thank you to Angie for all the sleep she has missed by opening the pub early.

Stop press: Maddens has won second prize in the Barnet in Bloom competition.

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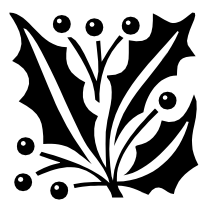
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