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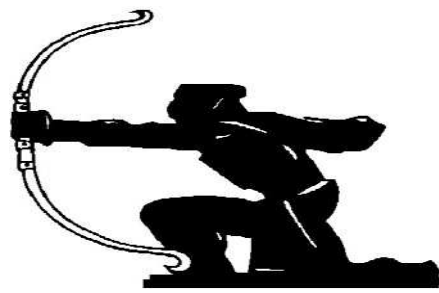
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Local News Is Our Aim

# THE ARCHER

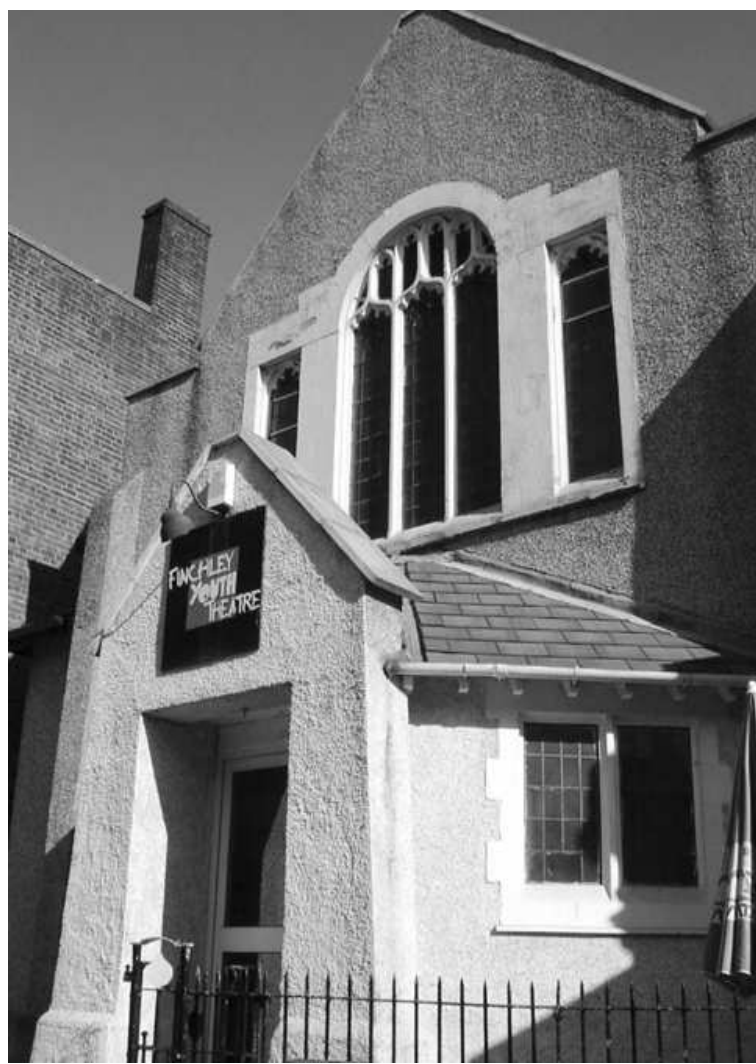


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*A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.*



East Finchley Youth Theatre - under threat of closure.  
Photo by Alison Roberts

## Youth Theatre Under Threat

By Sophie Leighton

Following a string of closures to youth clubs in Barnet, and with the future of the Wilmot Centre hanging in the balance, the council has now set its sights on youth theatre provision. At the cabinet meeting on 29 September, the merging of Finchley Youth Theatre with the new arts depot in North Finchley was proposed and a source close to the Finchley Youth Theatre was able to confirm that a feasibility study is about to be conducted.

### Rationalisation

The Finchley Youth Theatre premises on the High Road, which have recently undergone extensive refurbishment as a theatrical venue, would likely be commandeered for other – as yet unspecified – purposes. The Finchley Youth Theatre is not alone in facing this threat; the plan is also to absorb the Bull Youth Theatre in Barnet into the new 'depot'. The depot, due to open in Spring 2004, is fast emerging as a form of catch-all solution for 'rationalising' valuable resources including those that serve their immediate areas for age-groups without independent transport and who are more vulnerable on public transport at night.

### Local links

As well as providing a wide range of classes in drama and improvisation, dance and production skills such as sound, set and lighting for 11- to 18-years-olds, Finchley Youth Theatre has worked to develop links with local partners, including the Phoenix cinema for film and video projects. It seems that

it is precisely this work, currently facilitating creative collaboration between independent artistic centres to the benefit of all their local areas, that is at risk of being used as the pretext for an overall reduction of services in the borough.

### Book Now

Bookings are now being

taken at the Finchley Youth Theatre for the spring term classes and forthcoming productions are: Dust on Monday 1 December and The Ash Girl on Wednesday 10 December to 12 December – tickets and further details are available by calling in or on 020 8883 9957.

## When Closing Down Means Opening Up

By Diana Cormack

Council Victor Lyon has rescinded the Cabinet decision to close the Herbert Wilmot Centre, however the battle is not yet won: Councillor Peter Davis, Member for Community Development, will review the decision and report back to the Cabinet at a later date.

Sylvia Duthie, Chair of Holy Trinity School Governors, told *THE ARCHER* that the lack of consultation about the Wilmot Centre is unacceptable: The school would be greatly affected should any substantial redevelopment of the Stanley Road Playing Field take place.

At present the field can only be reached by a footpath which

runs behind the Wilmot Centre, alongside Holy Trinity School grounds to the narrow bridge over the Northern Line at the end of Stanley Road. The position of the Wilmot Centre is pivotal, for, should it be demolished, instant access from Eagan's Close to the Stanley Road site would be provided. So the previous decision to close the Centre as part of the Borough's youth service reorganisation plans came as no surprise to some.

Yet again, East Finchley seems to be the setting for a hidden agenda. In October *THE ARCHER* reported that Barnet has been showing interest in the Stanley Road Playing Field, obviously worth millions to any property developer. But the site is landlocked. Then we learn that the 'dilapidated' Herbert Wilmot Centre is to go.

Just as the present East Finchley library consultation does not make it clear that voting for a new library could also mean accepting the controversial Waitrose proposals, so selling off the Wilmot Centre could herald opening up the immediate area

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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 November is the copy deadline for the December issue.

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Transco Gas Emerg. 0800 111 999

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Com'ty Health Cncl 020 8349 4364  
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Employment Service 020 8258 3900  
**Haringey Council** 020 8489 0000

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E. Finchley Library 020 8883 2664  
Gt North Leisure Pk. 020 8343 9830  
Muswell Hill Odeon 0870 505 0007  
Phoenix Cinema 020 8883 2233  
Tourist Info Service 0870 126 4018  
Warner Cinema Village 020 8446 9933

\*Calls to 09065 numbers are charged at £1.50 per minute.

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Gingerbread 020 8445 4227  
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Health Information Service 0800 665544  
Homeopathic Helpline 09065 343404\*  
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### OAP's Advice

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Barnet OAPs Welfare 020 8441 4853  
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### Crime

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Edgware General 020 8952 2381  
Finchley Memorial 020 8349 6300  
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Contact East Finchley's  
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### Community Services

❖ Credit Union, Green Man Community Centre 020 8883 4916  
❖ Careers advice, Green Man, Community Centre 020 8883 4916  
❖ Toy library, Muswell Hill 020 8444 0244/ 8489 8774

## CRIME ROUNDUP

### Good Arrests

Over the last week, Barnet Police officers have made some good arrests. A total of nine people were arrested for robbery. Of those, two were charged. The remainder have been bailed pending further enquiries. Ten people were arrested for burglary; seven of those were charged, the remainder being bailed pending further enquiries. A drugs warrant was executed at an address in the borough and three people were arrested as a result.

Among those charged is Kris Booker aged 25 unemployed from Fallows Close, East Finchley. He was charged with burglary and appeared at Hendon Magistrates Court on 29 September 2003.

### Waitrose Fire

Barnet Police have confirmed that the fire at the Waitrose store in Finchley on 2 June 2003 was arson. Detective Sergeant Ted Salter said, "After a thorough investigation it has been established that the fire at Waitrose was started deliberately. No arrests have been made owing to insufficient evidence."

Waitrose staff, Barnet Police and the London Fire Brigade have worked in close partnership to establish all the

facts. The investigation continues in the hope that new evidence from members of the public will come to light.

### Motor Mania

Gopeds, motorised skateboards, buzz boards and citybugs have been used in the UK since about 1992. It has been the opinion of the Department of Transport, the DVLA and the Crown Prosecution Service that they are motor vehicles for the purposes of criminal law.

While being similar to a child's scooter, they are fitted with a 22cc engine or an electric motor with direct drive to the rear wheel. They are mechanically propelled and when used on a road classed as a motor vehicle. Barnet Police are concerned that many of these vehicles are being given to children as 'toys', when in effect they are anything but.

If you own or regularly use one or allow a child to use one of these machines, this is what you need to do if you want to use the vehicle on the road and stay within the law.

The driver/rider must be 16 years old or over, have a driving licence, insurance and "L" plates if they have a provisional licence, wear a crash helmet and not use the vehicle on a footway.

The vehicle must have an excise licence, two independent braking systems, registration mark, rear reflectors and a valid MOT test certificate after three years of first registration.

## Appeal for Fatal Accident Witnesses

Police at Alperton Traffic Garage are appealing for witnesses following a fatal collision. The incident happened at 1.59am on 6 October on the North Circular westbound between Colney Hatch Lane and Finchley High Rd.

A red VW Polo travelling westbound in the outside lane struck an abandoned pallette/crate causing damage to one of its wheels. The car then pulled over to the near side lane and the driver attempted to change the wheel. The female passenger remained in the vehicle.

While the driver was attending to the wheel an Orange Ford Transit van travelling in the near side lane was in collision with the Polo from behind. Ambulance services attended and the female passenger

was taken to the Royal Free Hospital suffering from head injuries. She subsequently died a short while later. The male driver of the Polo who is in his late thirties was also taken to the Royal Free suffering from serious injuries.

The male driver of the Ford Transit van who is in his late forties suffered shock. Did you witness the collision? Do you know how the pallette/crate was abandoned in the outside lane of the North Circular? The CIU at Alperton Traffic Garage is investigating and witnesses are asked to call 020 8246 9855

## Winter Warmers

East Finchley Contact has sent us some tips for winter.

### Free Safety Checks for Electric Blankets

Take them to your local fire station. They will be returned within two or three weeks. Call 020 8359 4917 /2606 for details.

### Fire Alarm Batteries

Fire stations will supply, fit and check them. Call 020 7587 4754 if you are a Finchley resident.

### Heating Grants

People over the age of 60 are eligible for grants of up to £2,500 to make their houses warmer. Find out more from the Warm Front Team on 0800 316 2814.

## Local Planning Applications

Holy Trinity C of E Primary School, Eagan's Close, Market Place  
- Part single, part two storey front extension.

Flat 1 at 13 Fortis Green  
- Ground floor rear extension and conversion of existing store to form additional bedroom.

214/216 High Road  
- Single storey rear extension to restaurant. New entrances for flats at first floor level.

41 Brackbury Road  
- Part single, part two storey rear extension.



Another unwelcome presence in the car park behind Viceroy Close - See this month's Soapbox on page 11. Photo by John Dearing.

## Council Rejects Car Park Flats

By John Dearing

With all the attention currently on the Waitrose proposal, it would be easy to forget that there has been another development application that would affect East Finchley in an adverse way. The proposal to build a four storey block of flats on the car park to the rear of Budgens has been around in various forms for the past three years. The net effect of this would be chaos in the car park and the adjoining part of East End Road, affecting everyone who uses that area and putting a blight on the lives of the Viceroy Close residents.

### Not a car park?

On 29 September 2003, the Planning Department finally announced that a meeting of Barnet Council had decided to reject the proposal. They said, "Inadequate information has been submitted concerning the impact on lorry movements, off-street parking for future and existing residents and town centre shoppers." Interestingly, this contradicts

the view of the owners of the car park (the aspiring developers, not Budgens) that it is an 'Access Area' not a car park. They also said, "the siting of the proposed building... would create an undue sense of enclosure to Viceroy Close"

### Appeal likely

Given the amounts of money involved, the nature of private developers, and promotion by the Deputy Prime

Minister of over-development in the South-East of England, it is likely that there will be an appeal. In the meantime, more and more potholes and fly-tipped rubbish will accumulate, with the owners doing nothing to maintain this central part of East Finchley.

Still, it is one small victory for local interests, and a stinging reversal for invasive development.

## Consultation Confusion Continues

By Daphne Chamberlain

As reported last month, some people have requested and received extra forms from Quality Fieldwork, the organisation running the survey on the future of East Finchley library.

Quality Fieldwork told me that they not only expected us to ask for other copies, but invited us to do so. Their covering letter carries no such invitation.

Barnet Council's Tricia Little commented that Quality Fieldwork must have been confused. She added, "We were originally going to invite young people to apply for their own forms."

### Will additional forms be counted?

The Council says no, because they will not carry serial numbers, although forms requested by unconnected people living in the same house would be valid. These should have been allocated code numbers, but Barnet has kept no record of people asking for additional forms.

### Why not send to everyone on the electoral roll?

Quality Fieldwork said that would not have ensured an accurate representation. Barnet Council said it would have been contrary to the data protection act.

### Street Survey

How about the 125 people interviewed outside the Underground station? Some had already filled in postal forms. Quality Fieldwork told me that the survey was so small it would not affect the result. However, Barnet said that the interviews should not have gone ahead at all if somebody had already answered the questionnaire.

Barnet confirmed that the

street survey was targeting 18-24s, and people from ethnic backgrounds, because "experience had shown them that these categories were hard to reach". So too, they said, were "people living in council houses".

Focus group consultations are to be set up in "deprived areas", and schools - both primary and secondary - will be consulted. I was told that monitoring of responses from various sections of the community is carried out throughout the period of the survey.

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## Mini Café Returns

By Diana Cormack

It could only be classed as a huge coincidence but, as the lorry bearing the building to replace the kiosk in Cherry Tree Wood made its way across the rock-hard field, the weather changed. Heavy rain heralding the end of the long, hot summer began to fall and continued to do so as the new café was carefully manoeuvred onto the site of the old one.

By the time it opens, almost a year will have passed since the previous one was destroyed by fire last November, but metal reinforced roof, doors and walls (hopefully treated with anti-graffiti coating) should help prevent it suffering a similar fate.

### Time for tea

Eileen Cannon, who is planning to hire the cafe again, is of course sorry to have missed being in business during one of the best summers for years, including a record breaking East Finchley Community Festival. She is, however, delighted with the present premises.

"The council has done the park proud," she said.

For the first few months Eileen plans to trade on a tearoom basis, selling drinks, cakes and sandwiches before re-introducing hot food next



The café returns. Photo by Toni Morgan

summer. As the area in front of the serving counter is now partially sheltered, customers will no longer have to run for cover in inclement weather.

At the time of writing Eileen was hoping to have a celebrity open the café on 31 October with a suitable Halloween theme.

## An Open and Shut Case?

By Diana Cormack

Despite the notices put up by Barnet Council announcing the night-time closure of Cherry Tree Wood, park users are still being kept in the dark. Apparently, the locking of Barnet's park gates has been contracted out, though this does not explain why our local gates are more often left open than not. Nor does it help the people who usually make their way via the park to East Finchley tube station and who suddenly find their way barred. There have been stories of this inconsistency causing commuters to climb over the gates.

### No consultation

The stated opening time is not early enough for the many people who need to walk their dogs, go jogging or get to work well before 8 am. Why didn't Barnet Council ("Putting the Community First") consult the park users before deciding on the opening and closing times? One could be forgiven for thinking they were sorted out to suit the company involved, but that obviously isn't working.

It has been suggested that, if the park is to be locked, entrusting the key to a resident living nearby (and willing to undertake the responsibility) might prove more reliable; and they would probably charge less for the service.

Perhaps by the time this article is published the system will be working. If not, you could air your views by phoning the organisers Green Spaces on 8359 7381.

## Christmas Shopping Bus to Brent Cross

East Finchley Contact is running a shopping bus to Brent Cross on Wednesday 19 November. If there is sufficient demand, another bus will run on Thursday 11 December.

The trip will cost £2.50. The bus will collect you from home (if you live in N2 or very close by), and will take you to the Brent Cross Mobility Centre, where you can borrow a wheelchair or power chair. If you need someone to push or escort you, Contact will try to arrange this. There should be at least two able-bodied volunteers on the outing. The bus will set off at about 10am and return by 2pm, allowing at least two hours at the shopping centre.

If you are interested, please book early.

## Festive Lights

By Lawrie Chivers  
Still the Best in Barnet, your local retailers are proud to support their community.

We are pleased to announce that this year the East Finchley festive light display will commence at the end of November and will continue to bring cheer to the High Road until January.



263 buses have a high frequency moment. Photo by Erini Rodis

## Buses – The Next Stop

By Daphne Chamberlain

Whether you think that London Buses do a good or a bad job of monitoring the frequency of our services, what they come up with is average. To be more explicit, intervals between buses are averaged. The difference between the average scheduled waiting time and the average actual waiting time gives an average excess waiting time.

If you're still with me, this is a simplified version of how high frequency buses (officially five or more an hour in each direction) are monitored. Low frequency buses, on the other hand, are assessed against times on the timetable.

### On target

The assessors' verdict is that the 263 is meeting its target. As we go to press, I am still waiting details of their monitoring system from London Buses – i.e. where the inspectors stand, at exactly what time, and how long they are there.

Why do so many of us think

that, after an initial improvement, the 263 service has worsened again? Metroline's Martin Fisher suggested that there might be problems with the change of garage. Moving the 263 from Potters Bar to Holloway has resulted in a shortage of drivers. There is also a lack of supervisors, though some are being trained.

### On the buses

On-bus computerised traffic monitors, currently being pioneered on some routes, should be installed for every service by 2005, but Martin Fisher admitted that they might not suit every route.

He also told *THE ARCHER* that Barnet is less co-operative than other boroughs. Our Council liaises less on specific traffic problems, and appears to be against bus lanes and built-out bus stops.

Meanwhile, we all have a vested interest in keeping our services up to scratch. Metroline works to an incentive scheme, and we have to use the buses. The Agenda 21 Traffic Group is holding a follow-up meeting to the one in the library, but this time in the Neighbourhood Centre, Church Lane, at 8pm on Wednesday 19 November. Everyone is welcome.

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Alderman Alfred Thomas Pike. Image courtesy Avenue House.

# Finchley Celebrates the Big 70

By Daphne Chamberlain

In October 1933, when Barnet was the country cousin up the road, Finchley became a borough. That lasted only until 1965, when they both joined up with Hendon to become our present LBB. Still, there was a lot of local identity bound up in those 30 years, celebrated last month by the Finchley Society on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the granting of the Borough Charter. Anyone presuming that was just a paper transaction should have seen the Society's Avenue House exhibition.

## Charter Day

At the time, Alderman Pike, who led the bid for borough status, wrote, "It is of course necessary that the honour bestowed upon Finchley shall be celebrated appropriately, and it is desired that in addition to official celebrations, arrangements be made to give a tea and entertainment for the school children in the district, a supper for the aged and infirm, and to provide some benefit to the families of the unemployed. Celebrations shall not be a charge on the rates, and I am therefore asking some of the residents for donations."

His plea was successful, and East Finchley hosted the supper for the aged and infirm, in the Congregational church on the site of Budgen's. There was also

a fair on the corner of Summers Lane and the High Road (known as the Gun Site), junior football at Summers Lane, a youth rally in Victoria Park, celebrations at Avenue House, a road walk race, and a water carnival at the original Lido (nothing like its Warner Village replacement).

VIPs, including royalty, lunched at Christ's College and had dinner and a ball at King Edward Hall (junction of Regent's Park Road and Hendon Lane). At the handing over of the Charter, a messenger was dispatched to George V.

## Historic Films

Thanks to films made by the Finchley Cine Society, exhibition visitors saw most of these events

on video. Norman Burgess, who watched the Charter procession as a child, provided the commentary. Still photos, plus subsequent history of the Borough of Finchley, were presented by Finchley Society archivists Maggie Ferguson and Derek Warren, and Alderman Pike's grandson lent memorabilia from Charter Day.

## Chain of office

At a (non-public) evening reception, Barnet's mayor wore the chain of office of the mayor of Finchley. It was brought from the Town Hall archives with Finchley's mace—both generally harder to see than the Crown Jewels.

The Finchley Society can be contacted on 020 8883 2633 or [www.finchleysociety.org.uk](http://www.finchleysociety.org.uk).

# Forum Fury Postpones Wilmot Decision

By Daphne Chamberlain

The Herbert Wilmot Centre has a stay of execution, thanks to the recent Finchley Forum meeting which was dominated by angry users of the Centre.

The internationally known Finchley Children's Music Group said they had found out about the closure in casual conversation, when it was suggested they could use the Finchley Youth Theatre. They had then explained that the Theatre was occupied when they would need it. Furthermore, the Youth Theatre's own location is now uncertain.

The After School Club had not been consulted, and no alternative provision had been made for them. They were supported by Holy Trinity School, who said that many of their children—often from one-parent families—attended the Club.

## Foul Play?

Stanley Road Playing Field Association accused the Coun-

cil of neglecting and failing to repair the Centre after running down youth services that had been there before. (The Centre houses the field's floodlight controls, showers and changing-rooms.) They alleged that Barnet had removed equipment necessary for the upkeep of the field, and had refused to extend their lease some years ago. This is claimed to have lost them a potential £250,000 grant from the Lottery.

It was also noted that official sources had referred to the closure of the Centre as "imminent" before the Cabinet meeting.

Barnet's Deputy Chief Executive Brian Reynolds said he had understood that Wilmot

Centre users had been offered alternative accommodation, and that closure was part of Barnet's policy of bringing services to youth, rather than being tied to a fixed site. The future of Stanley Field was still being considered.

## Something going on

Forum Chair Cllr Leslie Sussman expressed concern, adding, "There is something going on here which does not gel". He said he would make a report to the Cabinet Overview Meeting. A few days later, Cllr Lyon announced his decision to rescind the closure.

The next Forum meeting will be at 6.30pm on Wednesday 3 December at Trinity Church, 15, Nether Street, N12.

## Caption Calamity

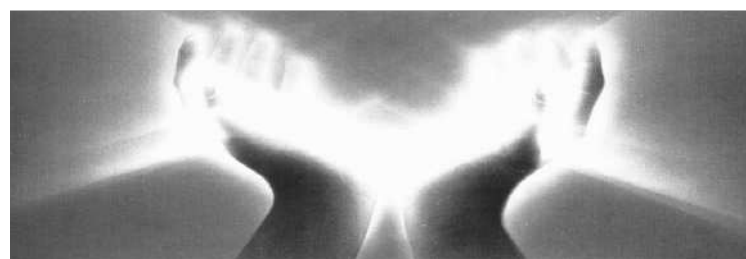
In last month's ARCHER, we inadvertently made two errors:

On page 5 our Yogastory referred to 'Sally' Rose and her daughter 'Summer'. The names should have read 'Sallie' and 'Sunnah'.

On the next page we failed to credit

the photograph of Church Lane. This photograph was provided by kind permission of Clive Smith of Memories Picture Library in Hendon.

We offer our sincere apologies to those concerned for any embarrassment or offence caused.



## The Power of Healing Isabel Douglas Health & Beauty Centre

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Although Yoga is relatively new to the West, it has a long and venerable tradition in the East. It is thought to date back to at least 3000BC and has been practised in India to promote physical and spiritual health and well being for millennia.

Yoga was originally popularised in the West during the 1960's. For a while, Yoga and Meditation remained a mystery to the West but more and more people are taking Yoga as a physical activity. The fact is that Yoga is a suitable form of exercise and relaxation for people of all ages and abilities. Beginners are not expected to perform the full postures straight away, modified versions are still very beneficial and often essential if the practitioner is explaining health problems.

For those in the know, Yoga is not simply a series of poses but a whole way of life, encompassing diet, massage, relaxation and meditation. As well as being a great way to stay in shape, it also promotes the body's natural healing powers and can be used by anyone to treat a wide range of health problems.

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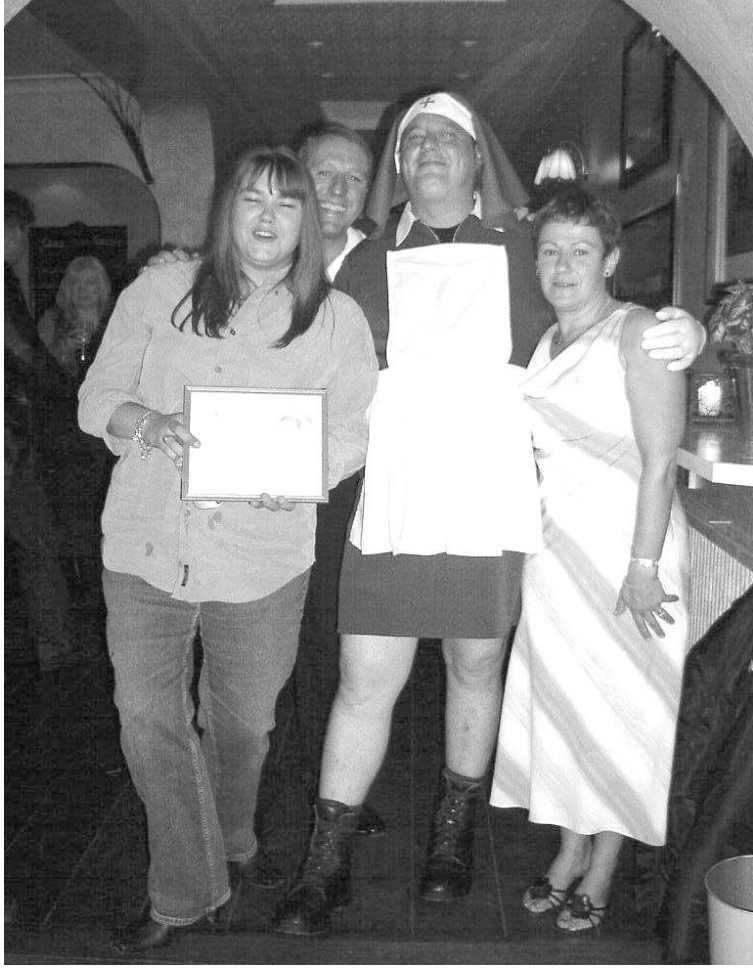
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EST 35 Years

GARDEN SUNDRIES PLANTS



Nicky (left) and Nurse Lee Green with Kieran and Margaret Madden. Photo by Sue Holliday.

## Helping with London's Midwife Crisis

On the evening of Saturday 27 September lots of people gathered at Maddens. Many had mixed feelings of sadness and good wishes for Nicky, who was leaving her job as a barmaid after 10 years. Everybody will miss her feisty devil-may-care attitude. She told me that she has always enjoyed working at Maddens & Welch Brothers (as it was previously called), as there was very little, if any, trouble in the pub.

Nicky is moving on to what some may say are better things: she is studying to be a midwife. She told me that the studies are hard work (and she will miss the money) but she is really enjoying it and knows the sacrifices will be worth it in the end. Nicky and her partner Mark have two children – some may say that that in itself is enough work. Anyway, having completed a one-year access course she now has a further three years of study.

### The best of luck

Early in the evening Nicky sat in the rear of the pub having a good gossip with friends Angie and Siobhan. Later they joined the others in the main bar, where her presentation was made to her by an unusual nurse. This was not a real nurse but one of the regulars, Lee Green, who, with a great sense of fun, dressed up in a nurse's uniform. There were lots of unmentionable comments on Lee's legs.

All in all everybody had fun and wished Nicky the best of luck, and hoped to see her soon on the other side of the bar.



Cartoon by Maddens regular, Carole Gouge

## Dilemma of Lost Youth

By Samuel Grove

Every new generation of 13–16-year-olds are seemingly accompanied by a new supposed crisis surrounding their behaviour. Given the potential imminent closure of the Herbert Wilmot and Drama Centre, the issues surrounding their activities could become even more apparent.

By this age it has become inconceivable to remain at home on a Friday or Saturday night (unless it is free). For mature looking 15-year-olds (usually girls) there is a world of pubs, clubs and grown up misdemeanours. For the rest, according to one resident, there is not much to do short of hiding in parks, smoking soft drugs.

### Identity crisis

There is the option of purchasing a fake ID and taking it to the pub. A friend of the resident (who looked a young 14-year-old) tried this at his local and promptly got laughed at by the whole bar staff – luckily he had prepared for this contingency and announced that his appearance was due to a medical condition. For this he received a formal apology and a drink on the house. However not all can rely on such quick thinking.

### On the fringes

This leaves them little option but to loiter on street corners, thereby entrenching their position on the fringes of our community.

## Love in a Cold Climate

By Samuel Grove

Last month *THE ARCHER* looked at courses and careers for 18–24-year-olds, this month we look at their love lives.

My first objective was to get an insight into relationships, so I approached a local couple who are friends of mine. After six years I was confident that they could provide me with some light and amusing anecdotes or observations about long-term relationships. This, however, was ruled out by Michael's very first contribution; "Me and Emily are not going to get married." Apparently this was the first time he had dropped this bombshell. As the interview fast descended into a war zone I turned my attention to single life.

Having just come out of a 2½-year relationship I'm particularly aware of the significance of being single. The major change is that you begin

to see yourself as a commodity, a product that you must promote to the female market. This had come as a bit of a shock to the system, particularly as my sales skills are limited. My hypothesis seems to be born out by the fact that blokes that are successful with girls usually buy FHM, have *only* a passing interest in football, listen to trance and get their haircut at Toni & Guy. Player hating? Perhaps. I suppose plugging for a populist approach widens your net. Certainly, admitting that you are unemployed, live with your parents and have an unsavoury (and somewhat degrading) curiosity in the wilder outreaches of human sexuality – limits your appeal.

## KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

### The Grumps

Welcome to the wild and wonderful world of television where everyone has the attention span of a gnat and last week's 'old hat' becomes next week's 'new sensation'. Welcome to the delights of teenage shagging on TV. Welcome to BBC2's new Friday night sensation, 'Old Farts Moaning'. Welcome to surreality TV.

Let's start with the teen shag show or 'Teen Big Brother' as those trendy young things at Channel 4, desperate for new thrills, have called it. Eight under-20s in the Big Brother house, one bedroom, free condoms, high hormones and the only surprise is that it took longer than 24 hours for anything to happen. Naturally, your average parent is probably pausing to panic and lecture their son or daughter about the perils of sex, television and transitory fame. Naturally, they have forgotten that everyone under 20 is, and always has been, interested in sex; they've probably even forgotten that they heard the same warning/lecture/total rubbish from their own parents. But there is nothing more sanctimonious than the one-time wild hippy-punk-beat who's discovered mortgages, gardening, the school run and Ikea. Which brings me neatly to 'Old Farts Moaning'...

Some trendy young thing in television has just discovered the obvious. Men of 'a certain age' moan. So, what's new? When I was growing up there was always a forty-something git in tweeds complaining that he 'hadn't fought in the war' for me to lounge around getting stoned. Now it's a forty-something git in chinos moaning that he didn't get stoned at Woodstock so that kids today can send text messages and shag on TV.

Wrong! The grumps who complain about texting, ecstasy, music and fashion, did get stoned, chant "Hey, Hey LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?" and grow their hair just so that their kids can text, listen to Eminem and do enough drugs to make me jealous. Every rebellion raises the stakes so that the next teen rebels start from where the last lot left off.

I've got a few moans of my own. To those forty-something gits in their huge SUVs (stupid ugly vehicles) double-parking outside Budgens and moaning about 'kids today'. Get a life, please!

PS If you don't know what "Hey, Hey LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?" is all about, ask the grumpy old git in chinos – just don't expect to escape without a lecture.

## When the Landmine Fell

By Daphne Chamberlain

Dorothy Jerrome, 98, has given us permission to reproduce this letter which she received from her mother, Mrs Ditcham, during World War II. In it, Mrs Ditcham describes the landmine explosion in the High Road which changed the face of East Finchley. We will continue our History of the High Road series shortly, with a look at 1926.

November 16<sup>th</sup>, 1940

My dear Dorothy,

After some really quiet nights, it was awful last night. The guns were very heavy, and there were lots of white lights in the sky. When I looked out of the back door, before going to bed, I was just shutting the door when a tremendous crash came. I saw what looked like an enormous display of fireworks, which seemed to be at the top of Leicester Road.

It was a landmine, which hit a whole block of shops and houses opposite Bradshaws\*. All gone as far back as one can see. Every shop window on the other side is smashed, Finchley Press ruined, Gibbs, Co-op Stores, United Dairies. Both sides of the road as far as the corner of Fortis Green Road. Such a mess. I felt quite upset and shaky when I saw all that devastation this morning.

I do not know yet how many people were killed. I have heard it may be as many as 30. Another bomb fell near Ossulton Road, and that smashed shop windows right down to the station. We had a quiet night last night! I slept well and so did the cats.

Your loving mother.

\* Bradshaws, a small department store, was on the site now occupied by Mulberry Court, the newly built retirement flats. The landmine fell where Chapel Court stands today.



(L-R) Florist team Barbro, Barry, Kathy, Jane, Julie and Alison (Natalie is absent). Photo by Erini Rodis.

## Business Blossoms in Church Lane

By Erini Rodis

**Church Lane flower shop Jennie Mann was re-launched in a flurry of celebrations in September, after being transformed into a designer flower shop.**

"The flowers are the same," explain owners Kathy and Barry Stewart, "but the packaging is altered; romantic hand-ties are wrapped in tissue and glassware and vases are imported from Germany, Belgium and Poland which is renowned for its hand-cut crystal."

### Standards

A loyal team of florists works behind the scenes, to standards high enough to keep a regular clientele from Hampstead Garden Suburb, Highgate and Muswell Hill; so what's the secret of their success? The fact that a buyer goes to Covent Garden every day for fresh supplies of *amarillus*, *bella donna* and exotic *orchids* probably helps: "We're not all carnations and daffodils," reminds Kathy, "anything that's different, we go for!"

Traditional bouquets of roses are displayed alongside semi-edible arrangements (including berries, lemons, apples and pineapples), outdoor patio tubs of peppers, ornamental cabbages, heather and cyclamen dressed with feathers and roses made of balsa wood...

The *piece de resistance*, however, is the double-walled, square wax candle arrange-

ment, with fresh roses filling the watery cavity. It is a simple, but deliciously visual concept.

### Growing success

Kathy's career began in Wigmore Street as a teenager in the sixties, before moving on to *Beryl Williams* in Hampstead, where she met and worked with the original owner of the store. Jennie Mann herself has been

in East Finchley for 14 years and sold the shop to Barry and Kathy upon her retirement last year.

The wonderful thing is that whether you're a scientist, an incurable romantic or an artistic in search of a muse, there is something for you in this little shop. Just pop along or give Kathy a call on 8365 2284.

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# East Finchley: Birthplace of the National Trust?

By Ann Bronkhorst

**On 28 September a dozen enthusiasts from the Finchley Society and the Octavia Hill Society explored a lost rural Finchley, retracing the footsteps of a remarkable Victorian who was Henrietta Barnett's friend; she coined the term 'Green Belt', campaigned for housing reform; and founded the National Trust.**

"The idea of Finchley... it all rises up so very bright" wrote Octavia Hill. She'd grown up in East Finchley, loving its meadows and woods. Later, living in central London, she longed "to be in the midst of beauty" so in October 1853 she walked from Tottenham Court Road to Finchley and on to Mill Hill, revisiting her childhood haunts.

### Air and joy

The commemorative walk began at the site of *Brownswells*, the family home, between Oak Lane and Sylvester Road. One day the Long Lane pasture nearby may be dedicated to Octavia's memory. In the 1840s, when the A1000 was still a dirt track, she played on Finchley Common, jumping over Strawberry Vale brook. The Common - or The Waste - was a swathe of recently deforested land rich in streams and ponds. Today the Glebelands Nature Reserve preserves some of that landscape. Guided through it by Dr. Natelson we could understand Octavia's

conviction that open spaces bring "the healthy gift of air and joy of plants and flowers" into urban lives.

Few of the farms she knew have survived. At 70 Queen's Avenue a plaque commemorates Cobley's Farm where Dickens, a family friend, stayed. Courthouse Farm where Octavia paused for breakfast has gone though Courthouse Road remains. Burtonhole Lane (and Farm) still exist but without "the deep cart ruts" she describes.

The 'Finchley marathon' ended at Avenue House, home of the Finchley Society, which, like other civic amenity societies, originated in Octavia's environmental campaigning. Organisers Peter Clayton, founder of the Octavia Hill Society, Oliver Natelson and Betty and Norman Burgess had devised a fascinating 150th anniversary tribute to a woman whose ideas still influence our lives.

For further information visit [www.octaviahillmuseum.org](http://www.octaviahillmuseum.org) or telephone 01945 476 358.

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Councillor Hillan visits and sees children working on a mosaic for a new garden

## Piece Work

As a starting point for a new garden in their field, pupils at Holy Trinity School, Eagan's Close, made a mosaic. Each class was able to vote to choose the theme and Noah's Ark won. The children from nursery through to Year 6 were involved in putting the pieces together over a period of three days.

During that time Councillor Lynne Hillan, Barnet Borough Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Lifelong Learning, visited the school and is pictured watching them at work.

## YOUNG ARCHER

### School Journey Success

Children in Martin Junior School start their final year with a school journey to the Pestalozzi Village (once a very famous place) near Hastings. During that week the ten and eleven-year-olds learn a lot about themselves and how to get on with others as well as educational things. Here are some of their thoughts before and after the visit.

#### School Journey 2003

We go on School Journey to get to know everyone better including the teachers and to stay for a week away from home. We go to have new experiences, to visit places and to make new friends.

We stay in a place called Pestalozzi Village which was built in 1957 for children from poor countries like Africa, Asia and Tibet to be educated and stay in. But now mainly teenagers come.

I hope that I will come away

from School Journey with some good memories. I also hope it will be good fun and I'll have some good experiences.

By Alice Pearson

#### Reflections on School Journey

I think School Journey is a once in a lifetime experience. The people at Pestalozzi were really nice and calm. The food there is great.

Monday we spent a long time on the coach but got off at Bodiam Castle. Tuesday we went for a seven-mile hike. On Wednesday we went to Pevensey Castle. My friend Alice had a great interest in stone fireplaces. I learned from my experiences that it's OK when you're away from your family for a week. Some of my best memories are going to the battlefield in Hast-

ings with Mr Pickering talking to us in such detail about the Battle of Hastings.

I really enjoyed it because it was really, really fun.

By Oliver Harrison

#### School Journey

School Journey was a fun experience that I will never forget. Pestalozzi Village was very hospitable and very friendly.

I will always remember going to Drusilla's Zoo. It was also fun to see the castles and the Battle of Hastings. I now know more historical facts and more things about a castle. I have also learned that everyone has a different view. I will probably never go on a trip like this again but I have really enjoyed going on Year 6 School Journey.

By Emily Goshorn

### Jokes

**Pat:** On our last school trip the bus got a puncture.

**Chris:** How did it happen?

**Pat:** There was a fork in the road.

**Mum:** Did you enjoy your school trip?

**Alex:** Oh yes. We're going again tomorrow.

**Mum:** Why?

**Alex:** Search party.

**Bill:** Did you go on the school trip?

**Sid:** Yeah.

**Bill:** What was the best bit?

**Sid:** Going home!

### Award for Holy Trinity

Holy Trinity School are to receive recognition for the high standards achieved by the children in the form of a Quality Mark from the Basic Skills Council. The award recognises achievement in the basic skills required for numeracy and literacy.

The work of the school was assessed against ten standards in areas such as supporting children who are underachieving, working with parents and planning for

continuous improvement.

#### Visit

Later in the term a representative of the Basic Skills Council will be visiting the school to present the award.

### Helping Themselves?

By Diana Cormack

Britain is probably the country with the most charity shops on its streets, with millions of pounds being raised each year. Some people often have personal reasons for choosing a particular charity to donate their goods to, while others may be inspired by whatever bag or leaflet happens to come through the letterbox. But most do care that their cast off clothing or unused gifts and houseware will actually benefit a needy cause.

#### Not a charity

However, East Finchley was recently leafleted by a company, the like of which has featured in a TV report pointing out that people were being misled. Their advice was to read the wording very carefully, for the small print can often reveal that you are not dealing with a charity. Although mention may be made of the third world and garments being "sold and worn again" it appears that this is a profit-making scheme (some might say scam) and that the organisers are only in it to help themselves.

So before you let them have the shirt off your back, don't read just the large red and black print, concentrate on the rest. It may be that you don't much care what happens to your things. On the other hand, you might feel that a genuine charity appeal is more deserving.

### PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

By Diana Cormack

#### Holy Trinity

The successful start to the academic year was underlined with national accreditation when the school received the Basic Skills Award.

Two new class teachers, Miss Kirk and Miss Stevenson, and a part-time music specialist Mr Mycroft, have been welcomed to the school. Two harvest assemblies resulted in a substantial collection of food which was donated to the Homeless Trust in North Finchley.

Some children who need extra help are now receiving valuable support from two volunteer reading helpers. Many Barnet schools are finding that VRHs can make a significant difference to a child's progress. If you could commit to short sessions a couple of times a week, phone 7372 7523 between 9am - 5pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays for details.

The new outdoor classroom for the reception class is now complete and is proving popular throughout the infant department.

Planning permission to build an extension at the front of the school to house a library and special needs area has been applied for.

#### Martin Schools

Both schools are taking part in the annual National Gallery project *Take One Picture*.

This year British schools have been asked to focus on *The Stonemason's Yard* by Canaletto. Each class has selected a different aspect of the painting and produced work encompassing the entire curriculum.

A gazebo with landscaped seating area has been built on the playing field to be used as an outdoor classroom for science observation, nature studies and artwork.

Martin Junior School held the first part of its biannual Book Fair. In conjunction with Scholastic Books, the staff and PTA raised double the usual amount, with total sales being over £1200. This means that they can choose over £600 worth of books for the school.

Sport has kicked off with not only lunchtime and after school football clubs, but also training from experts in lesson time. Coaches from Spurs spent one week training Years 3 and 4, have spent three mornings with Year 5 and a weekly slot with Year 6 to improve their football skills.

Year 6 stayed at the Pestalozzi Village in Sedlesham near Hastings for the annual school journey (see *YOUNG ARCHER*). As well as learning the skills of living away from home, children experienced history and geography at first hand. They produced wonderful writing and art work based on their visit.

The Infant School has an allotment where work will be supervised and maintained by caretaker John Mitchell. Children will be able to grow flowers from seed, transplant sunflowers and beans from pots in the classroom and observe the cycle of growing vegetables throughout the year.

Two of the balloons in last term's Great Balloon Race touched down in Belgium!

Nursery children were able to inspect a fire engine when the Fire Department came to visit.

The usual spectacular firework display will take place on the school field on Wednesday 5 November. Food will be on sale. For further details and tickets phone 8883 7404 or 8883 1455.

A date for your diary - Christmas Bazaar Saturday 6 December 12noon-3pm





## 12 Things You Didn't Know About...

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

- **Name:** John Pickering
- **Date of Birth:** 12/10 (no year given)
- **Star Sign?** Libra- typically level and balanced- so I'm told.
- **How long have you worked at Martin School?** Some would say too long.
- **Who is the best teacher you have worked with?** Always the one I'm working with at the moment.
- **What is your greatest achievement?** Teaching children about the Battle of Hastings.
- **What is your greatest regret?** Inflicting the Battle of Hastings on so many children.
- **What is your favourite film?** 'It's A Wonderful Life'
- **Worst vice?** Talking too much
- **If you were an animal what would you be?** A wise owl or a headless chicken depending on the circumstances
- **Michael Owen or David Beckham?** Victoria, if not David
- **In the event of your demise would you rather be forgotten or loathed?** Better to be remembered than forgotten whatever the reason

John Pickering is Deputy Head at Martin School and lives with his wife Helen and two children Matthew (12) and Esther (10) in High Barnet.

## A Blooming Good Idea

By Diana Cormack

Some readers may have noticed a blue plaque that has appeared on a house at the Muswell Hill end of Southern Road. However, don't bother trying to work out who might have lived there, because this has nothing to do with people but plenty to do with plants.

Members of the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association have long been concerned about the number of gardens concreted over to serve as car parks. Wishing to preserve the village atmosphere of the locality, they hit upon an idea which they hope will halt this trend, while at the same time giving pleasure to neighbours and passers-by. The area was leafleted and notices appeared in the library and press, inviting people to take part in a front garden competition.

None of this could have happened without Alexandra Park Garden Centre's offer to sponsor the prizes and to hold the prize giving ceremony. Muswell Hill and District Horticultural Society helped by providing the judging free of charge. This was in May, when association chairman John Hajdu accompanied the judge round the thirty



Anna Pollock and son. Photo by Toni Morgan

gardens involved. These were narrowed down to ten, which later received a further unannounced visit.

### Prized plots

At the ceremony in June the final seven were given a year's free membership of the Horticultural Society, plus the judge's considered opinion on their individual gardens. The second and third prize winners also received money. First prize went to Anna Pollock, who became the proud owner of the blue plaque now displayed on the front of her home. Brazilian born Anna has

always loved gardening and spends much time researching and buying plants. But with a young son to look after, she needs and much appreciates the help and advice of her gardener Chris Liddle, of Western Road.

John Hajdu wishes to hold the competition again next year and perhaps extend the area to the High Road, dependant on finding funding. For information about the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association phone him on 8883 8114 or visit [www.muswellhillandfortisgreenassociation.co.uk](http://www.muswellhillandfortisgreenassociation.co.uk).

## Local Athletes Take on Big Apple Challenge for Macmillan

Local athletes, Rob Farmer, 28, and Mary Finigan, 26, from East Finchley are taking on the world's most popular marathon to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Relief, as part of team Macmillan.

Rob and Mary will be travelling to the USA early in November to run the 26.2 miles of the New York Marathon. They will be among the 30,000 people taking part, with over 100 running for team Macmillan alone.

Rob, who plays for local cricket club N2CC, says, "This is the first time I've done a marathon. I can't wait - to experience the fitness challenge of a lifetime in the city that never sleeps. And to be part of Team Macmillan, surrounded by people, who like me, want to help make a real difference to people living with cancer - that will keep my energy and spirits high, all the way"

### If you'd like to help...

Last year, team Macmillan raised over £200,000 through the event and this year hopes to better that total. The money raised will help fund specialist Macmillan nurses and doctors who deliver the best in cancer care, build vitally needed

treatment centres, give financial help to those who need it most and provide a range of cancer information both locally and nationally.

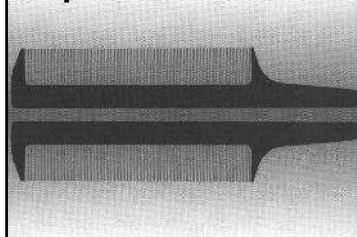
To support Rob and Mary in their fundraising, log onto their website [www.justgiving.com/runbobbyrun](http://www.justgiving.com/runbobbyrun) or send a cheque



Mary Finigan and Robert Farmer running Baronsmere Road

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- ❖ **Counselling and psychotherapy service** at the Green Man Centre. For details phone 8440 4174
- ❖ **London Cycling Campaign** (Barnet), has monthly meetings & rides. Call 020 8440 9080.
- ❖ **Step/Aerobics classes**, Sundays at Bar XL. Phone 0789 0033 968.
- ❖ **Tae Kwon Do** at The Green Man Thursdays 7-9pm 07949 612 706
- ❖ **Tai Chi** at the Green Man on Mondays 1.30-3pm
- ❖ **Tennis Club** off Southern Road. Call 020 8440 6953
- ❖ **Yoga & Meditation** classes at Holy Trinity Church, 020 8444 7217

## Dance, Drama, Art & Music

- ❖ **Adult Line Dancing**. Call Footloose 020 8440 8530/8216 5633.
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- ❖ **Barnet Schools Music Centre** call 020 8359 3111 for details.
- ❖ **Broadway & West end Musical Singing Workshop** call Idit Gold 020 8449 0011.
- ❖ **Club Dramatika** drama club for kids. Call Vicky 020 8883 1554
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- ❖ **Columbian party dancing** classes, Call Nelsy 020 8444 2012
- ❖ **Incognito Theatre workshops**, Colney Hatch Lane, 020 8883 0911
- ❖ **Finchley Jazz Club**, Monday 3 & 17 November at Wilf Slack Cricket Pavilion, East End Rd, N3.
- ❖ **Over 60s come dancing** at Ann Owens Centre 020 8346 8736
- ❖ **Private drum tuition**, beginners welcome. Contact Eddie 8444 8376
- ❖ **Pottery Class** at The Green Man, Call Celia Holmes 020 8349 9315
- ❖ **Learn to sing** at Finchley Methodist Church. Call 020 8883 4070 for info.
- ❖ **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 Ann Sullivan, 020 8442 1941
- ❖ **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
- ❖ **Hampstead Social Group**, membership late 30's-late 40's Call David Morris, 020 8455 0477
- ❖ **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.
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- ❖ **Parent & Toddler Group**, Green Man Centre, Julia 8444 2276
- ❖ **Probus Lunch Club** for retired professional and business people, Details Eric Dalton 8340 0822

## Singing with Joy

By Dee Conway

**Highgate Choral Society celebrates its 125th birthday this month – making it one of Britain's oldest choirs and London's second-oldest choir.**

It consists of 200 singers from all over north London, 16 of whom live in East Finchley. Having already sung in some of the top choral venues of Europe (Paris's Notre Dame, Brussels Cathedral and St Mark's Basilica in Venice), Highgate Choral Society is seeking to celebrate its longevity with an extra special concert in St Paul's Cathedral, London.

### Cathedral spectacular

Some 200 HCS singers and 100 members of the New London Orchestra will perform the Requiem by Berlioz under the baton of Ronald Corp with Mark Le Brocq as tenor soloist. The orchestra includes 16 timpani and 4 brass bands placed around the Dome area of the cathedral to create the authentic effect that the composer originally intended. For a local choir from London to present an event of this spectacular scale is unprecedented.

It is also noteworthy that in the year of the bicentenary of Berlioz's birth, this is the only London performance of this monumental and rarely-performed work. So far half the tickets within St Paul's Cathedral have already been sold. For more information visit [www.hcschoir.com](http://www.hcschoir.com).



Highgate Choral Society in concert. Photo by Dee Conway

## Disney Preview at the Phoenix

By Sophie Leighton

**Parents and children massed outside the Phoenix on Sunday 12 October for an exclusive preview of the new Disney film *Holes*, based on the Newbery Award-winning book by Louis Sachar. It took over half an hour to get everyone through the doors as they collected their pre-booked tickets and goody bags.**

A man in an orange boiler suit and baseball cap was handing out paper lizards to children as they went in and various corporate branded items were on sale behind the desk. Refreshments were provided in the foyer and there was a lucky dip in one corner.

### Dick and Dom

Anthony Tasgal, one of the trustees, gave a talk encourag-

ing people to sponsor the new seat campaign. The surprise celebrity guests were Dick and Dom (in 'da bungalow') from the Saturday morning BBC programme for 8-12-year-olds, and one Disney employee was dressed as Chip, one of the characters in the film. Dick and Dom played a sequence with strong audience participation and a film was then played

back to the children of their reactions.

### Sitting pretty

The Phoenix made a profit of around £2,000 from the event, which will give it a boost. And this event has almost certainly attracted plenty of new young filmgoers for the wide range of films and activities on offer at the Saturday morning Freddie's clubs.

## Revival of Muswell Hill Festival?

**At a joint meeting of the organisers of the Muswell Hill Festival and the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association last month, it was clear that if a festival is to be held again at least ten committed people will be needed to make it work.**

A major issue discussed was whether a Muswell Hill Festival was wanted, and if so, in what form? In recent years, the Festival has been strung along the Fortis Green Road end of Muswell Hill Broadway, but difficulties with closing the road and rerouting of buses led to it being a non-event this year.

### Off road

New venues being considered are the Fortismere School playing fields, The Grove at Alexandra Palace, the Palm Court, the ice rink end of the palace itself and the site of the old racecourse where funfairs are held.

If the event was to be held on an open space rather than a highway, it could take the form of a county show with stalls and features put on by local organi-

sations, horse rides, a donkey derby and events for children and adults not possible on a main road. It is more likely, however that a smaller, more intimate affair would result.

On the question of funding, the National Lottery and commercial sponsorship may assist, but there was also a tentative suggestion that a joint event with the Hornsey Trust, which is planning a similar event next year, could be considered.

## Arnie Dies

**Last month we profiled the magnificent beast at Gus's hairdressers.**

It is sad, therefore, to learn that as his picture was being distributed around East Finchley, Arnie the Iguana passed away. Our sympathies go to all who knew this well loved creature.

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

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

**Come along to the RSPCA Christmas Fair**  
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### East Finchley Baptist Church

just off the High Road in Creighton Avenue N2  
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**Visitors always welcome**



Letters to The Editor

**Ignorant**

**Dear Editor,**  
Having read the letters submitted by Pete Eiseman-Reynard about Brian Sewell's critique of stained glass in East Finchley, I felt that I must comment. I doubt the man has ever really explored stained glass and its history in North London.

As I am a professional stained glass artist and an East Finchley resident, I find these comments abhorrent. I design, manufacture, repair and restore stained glass, from 17<sup>th</sup> century windows to modern projects, and can assure you that the windows I have seen in East Finchley compare favourably with those elsewhere in this country in quality, value and design. In fact, I have seen some rather unusual and exceptional windows that would put the shoddy critique of this man to shame.

East Finchley can be proud of its heritage in stained glass. Don't be dismayed by the ignorance of someone claiming to know it all!

**Ruth Levine**  
Long Lane, N2.

**Barnet bias?**

**Dear Editor**  
Council Leader Victor Lyon continually points to the reputation and independence of the Research Company hired to run the library services consultation as if this were in itself a guarantee of a full and fair process (October ARCHER page 1). But everything hinges on how Barnet briefed them in the first place. Barnet had already stated that the outsize commercial development necessary for the creation of a new library space opposite East Finchley Station would not be mentioned. Refurbishment of the current library is only included as an option because residents forced it back onto the agenda. But the strong negative slant in the exhibition and throughout the questionnaire, which gives library users no opportunity to list its good points, shows Barnet is clearly biased against this option.

This exercise asks residents to make an important choice based on incomplete and misleading information – a choice

many would make differently, if they knew the full facts. The findings are therefore invalidated, as they cannot be guaranteed to feed back a true reflection of local opinion – the whole point of the exercise. It is Barnet's brief that is responsible for this, and Victor Lyon should acknowledge the Council's role in the design of the consultation.

Why, after such a swingeing Council Tax increase, has our money been wasted on such a shabby and apparently cynical exercise? The obvious conclusion is that it would further the Waitrose superstore application, which some elements at Barnet clearly want very much.

(Name and address supplied)

**Learning's blessed abode**

**Dear Sir**  
I am both shocked and saddened to read of the demise of the Finchley County School. Shocked because it has not achieved listed status and saddened because a building of such character nears demolition.

I attended the school from September 1931 until July 1936 and, although I was far from being a brilliant scholar, I treasure the memory of those years. I made friends there and loved the sports activities and I remember taking every opportunity to climb the ropes during gymnasium lessons!

Over the years when I have passed by the building in bus or cab I have looked up at the windows of what were, in my time, the physics lab, the chemistry lab and the geography room (also used for our sewing lessons). On return journeys I have looked at the art room projecting from the rear of the building. I spent many a fruitless hour there trying to put on paper what my eyes were supposed to see!

I have great affection and appreciation for this building and Finchley will be all the poorer when it has been replaced by faceless flats. But always, whenever I pass the site, I shall hear in my head and heart the refrain of our school song: 'All hail to learning's blessed abode and to our friends and comrades hail'

**Yours faithfully**  
**Miss G E Dale**  
Leopold Road, N2.

**Not the first time**

**Dear Archer**  
I thoroughly endorse Peter Eiseman-Reynard's criticisms of Brian Sewell's cheap gibes at East Finchley (September 2003).

It is not the first time that Sewell has made East Finchley the butt of his patronising and misplaced sense of his own superiority. I can recall, when I was Councillor for the area, taking him to task for a similar outburst, and my letter was published in *The Evening Standard*.

Such childish insults to our community must be discouraged.  
**John Davies,**  
Manor Park Road, N2.

OBITUARY

**Catherine Devlin Hamilton**

Catherine Hamilton was a valued member of *THE ARCHER* team, distributing the paper to the Great North Road area for several years, and she is sadly missed by us all.



Catherine Hamilton. Photo courtesy of Bill Hamilton.

In September 1955, Catherine was born in Catrine, a small town in Ayrshire, Scotland. She attended Catrine junior school where, with encouragement from her favourite teacher she achieved excellent academic results. From there she was admitted into the top stream at Cumnock Academy, and became Captain of her House and of the Hockey Team, and President of both the Sailing Club and the History Society.

Catherine went to Glasgow University, (MA Hons 2.1 Politics and Economics 1978) and City University, London (MSc Information Science 1979). She entered her chosen field of information science in the early days of computerisation. Her specialist area was text retrieval systems, and latterly she worked on the organisation of music information on the Internet. She worked for Solon Consultants, BRS, Whitaker and most recently for Muze, making it possible to search the internet and identify a vendor of music. She was widely respected and very well liked by her colleagues. She was a very active member of the Institute of Information Scientists and became a Fellow of the Institute in 1989.

Catherine always lived in North London: Muswell Hill,

Crouch End and, from 1998, East Finchley. Although she intended to return to Scotland, she loved London, readily making friends wherever she went. She was a keen swimmer and swam for many years in Park Road Public Pool. In recent years she ran regularly and her usual circuit was Great North Road, Cherry Tree Wood Park, Woodside Avenue, Bancroft Avenue. She enjoyed the Phoenix Cinema. She also tended her small garden area with great care and affection.

Catherine died suddenly from a heart attack at her home in East Finchley on 14 August. Because of her seeming good health her death came as a great shock to us all. Her funeral took place in her hometown of Catrine but was attended by many from the South. She is survived by her mother Annie, brother Billy, sister in law Liz and nephew and niece Michael and Judith, all of whom live in Ayrshire.

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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.



**Mobile Mast**

**Outrage**

By John Dearing  
**On Thursday 25 September, I, a resident of Viceroy Close, awoke to find scaffolding being erected in front of my windows. The following Sunday, at 8.45 am, builders crashing around on the roof not only awoke me from my Sunday morning lie-in, but exposed to me the sight of an enormous mobile crane, squatting in the car park. Very soon, sections of the O2 network mobile phone masts were being hoisted onto the roof, and installed on the side of the building. The roaring of the diesel engines and the shouting and banging of the builders carried on for most of the day.**

**Out of control**

The following day, on calling the freeholders' agents (Messrs Brickman Yale of Whetstone) to protest at this outrage, I was told, "Sorry, we didn't know when they were coming", implying that they knew about this all along, but offered leaseholders no advance notice, let alone any kind of consultation; nor did the Council planning department know anything at all about it. Not that it is likely that they would have done anything – as witnessed by the fact that when Hutchisons installed masts as reported in *THE ARCHER* June 2002, they inspected the site and declared it "outside of planning controls."

**Protest storm**

Clearly O2 had learnt from the previous year, when they stirred up a storm of protest when applying for planning permission, particularly as the proposed array was just across the road from the Bobath centre for children with cerebral palsy. O2 swiftly withdrew their application, but this year it would appear they decided to sneak in on Sunday morning without warning and install their equipment before residents and people concerned at the irresponsible and uncontrolled spread of these masts, could do anything about it.

They are vandals, defacing the building with their vile masts and base stations and the result will be even more of their filthy microwave radiation to fry the brains of residents.

The real villain of the piece is the freehold company, Greentree Estates, who bought the block of flats in 2000. Since then they have tried everything they can to maximise their profits, selling the car park off to developers and inviting in the mobile companies from which they get fat rents. No doubt we can expect further outrages when the other three mobile networks arrive, depressing the value of our flats and leaving our flat block looking like a steel mesh Christmas tree.

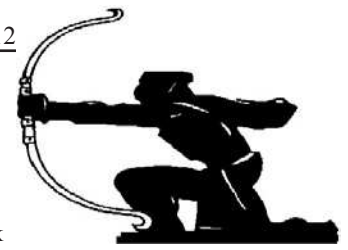


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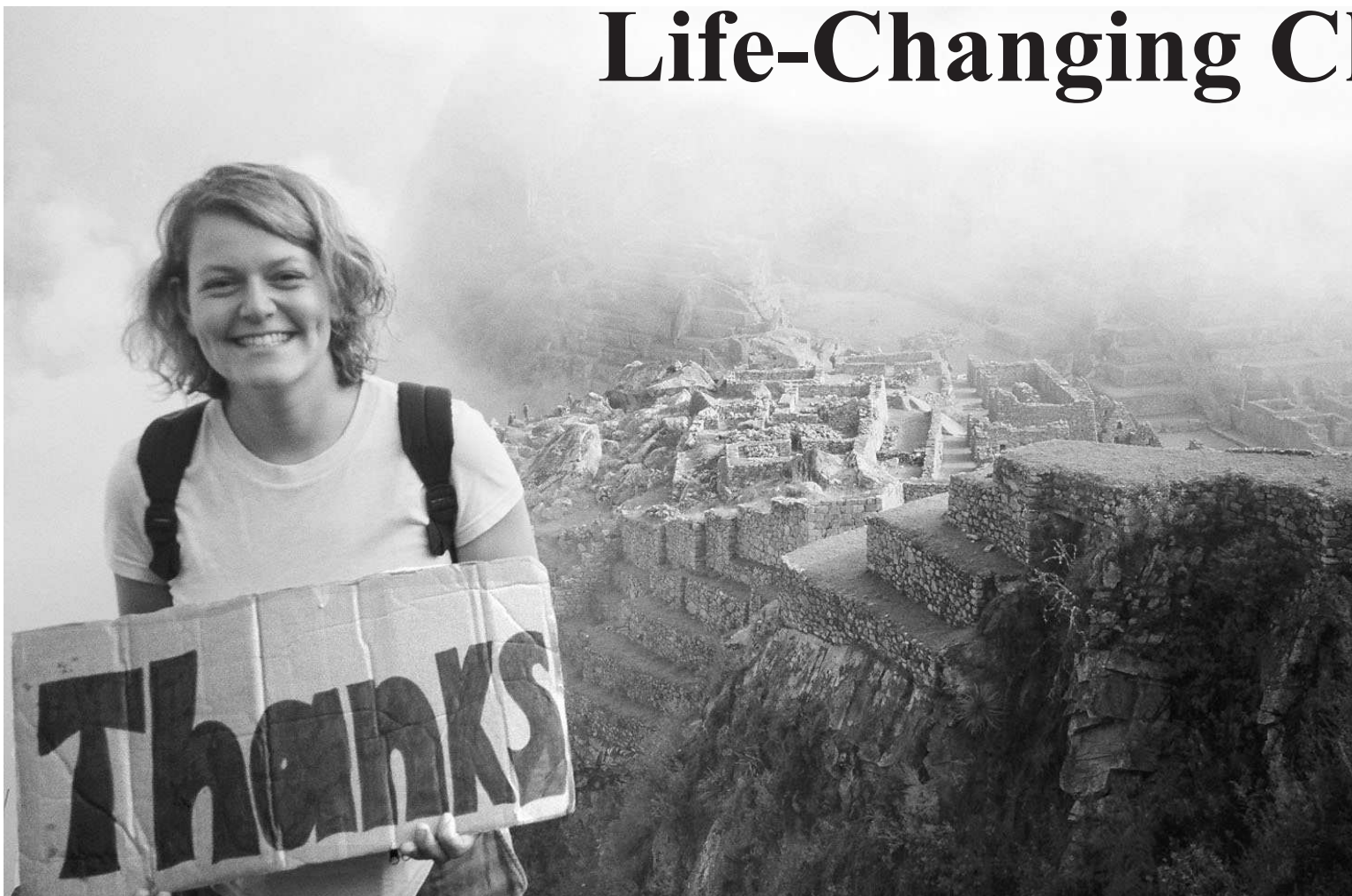
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## Life-Changing Challenge



By Rachel Domingo

**In August 2003, I undertook the Machu Picchu Peru Challenge in aid of the UCLH Charitable Foundation. It was a trek in memory of my mother, Diana, and a challenge that very much involved East Finchley.**

My mother was a District Nurse at Oak Lane Clinic. Sadly she died of cancer last year after a long illness, through which she was able to continue to work, owing to the immense support provided by the nurses she worked with.

The trek was amazing – a life enhancing experience that I will never forget, and although emotional at times, it was a privilege to be able to participate in memory of my mum who was with me the whole time.

Rachel Domingo 'on top of the world'.

### Thank you

The purpose of this article is really to say thank you. I worked as an SEN assistant at Martin Infant School during my gap year and I would like to say a huge thank you to all the staff there. My mum was very ill during that time and the support I received whilst I was there was very special to me and even more so now it continues. I'd also like to thank the parents there that knew me, particularly the

Atkinson family. The PTA managed to raise over £200 for me at a cake sale.

I also need to say an extra big thank you to the District Nurses at Oak Lane Clinic. They remain special people to myself and my family. Their love and support of my mum extended to us throughout her illness, after her death and during my trek training. The memorial garden at the clinic is testament to

their dedication.

I managed to raise over £7,500 for the foundation to help other cancer patients and their families. I have faced possibly one of the hardest challenges of my life in dealing with my mother's death. However, the kindness from people I have encountered, not least from East Finchley, has moved and strengthened me. My mum would have been so touched.

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