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THE ARCHER

**GLH****CAR SERVICE**
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where sold*A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.*

Hospital Site Plans Approved

In a blow to local residents and protestors, Barnet Council has approved plans to build two large blocks of flats and a college building on the site of the National Neurological Hospital behind East Finchley Station.

Barnet Planning and Environment Committee approved the latest proposal from Octagon Developments at a packed meeting at Hendon Town Hall on 17 March. The old Neurological Hospital will be demolished and three blocks, one for Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute and the other two providing housing for 600 people, will be built. East Finchley's councillor Alison Moore was one of those in favour; three councillors opposed it.

Protesting Voices

A presentation was given to the meeting about the amended plan. Then four local residents spoke, some representing organised residents' groups

and all strongly opposed to the development.

Mr. Dickinson revealed that one of Barnet's own conservation officers believed that the integrity of the Conservation area would be damaged by the development and Mr Stein claimed that travel patterns, traffic and parking had been inadequately analysed in the Buchanan Traffic Assessment carried out for Octagon and stressed the need for a truly independent survey.

Mr. Joseph raised questions about the absence of affordable housing in the development and told the Committee, "It will not reflect well on your administration".

Councillors' Concerns

In response to committee members' questions, planning officers gave assurances about trees and acoustic screening. Critical questioning drew an admission of 'irregularities' in the Buchanan Traffic Assessment. One councillor was concerned about the already dangerous junction of The Bishop's Avenue with the A1000 but was told there are "few pedestrian accidents at present" and that the junction "would not behave very differently".

Finally the councillors voted to agree with "the overall balanced conclusion that the scheme is acceptable". Objectors now have to decide on their next course of action.



A thing of the past? Some cycle lanes might be removed under Barnet Council's transport policy. Photo by Tony Roberts

Collision Course

Barnet Council looks set to be on a collision course with Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, over the council's roads policy. Mr Livingstone, who has described the council's policy as being "recklessly anti-public transport, anti-pedestrian and anti-cycling", is threatening to block hundreds of thousands of pounds from Barnet's annual £5 million grant from Transport for London.

Brian Coleman, the councillor responsible for transport policy, says that his aim is to "get traffic moving on the

borough's principle roads and then no one rat-runs down side streets. "This approach has led to the removal of speed humps

and the ending of some bus and cycle lanes. Mr Livingstone, whose policy has been to promote public transport, feels that Barnet is becoming a "laboratory experiment for some ill thought-out policies", but Mr Coleman is unrepentant, commenting that TfL "stands for Taliban for London" and that neither TfL nor Mr Livingstone really understand "what happens in the suburbs".

According to a TfL spokesperson, payments for some road schemes were being withheld while it makes sure that the schemes "accord with the Mayor's transport strategy and TfL funding criteria. For example, Barnet has spent our money reconstructing speed tables. We need to check that they haven't, in fact, been removed."

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PO Box 3699
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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
Ann Bronkhorst*

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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**14 April is the copy deadline
for the May issue.**

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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

South Friern Reprieve

South Friern Library has received a six-month reprieve. At the Council meeting last month, it was decided to keep it open for another six months. After that, the situation will be reviewed again.

The library, which is in Colney Hatch Lane, between Muswell Hill and the North Circular, was refurbished only last year, but is now threatened with closure.

Mobile replacement

Totteridge Library has now been closed, and will be replaced by a mobile library service.

Cash Boost for Artsdepot

The new artsdepot at Tally Ho has received a big boost with the announcement of a £200,000 sponsorship deal with leading sportswear company Pentland.

The money will go towards fitting out the building, which is due to open this September. The main theatre will be called the Pentland Theatre after the Finchley-based sportswear company whose brands include Speedo, Kickers and Lacoste.

You Cannot be Serious!

A revised planning application for building on the Twyford Avenue site formerly occupied by Highgate Tennis Club has been submitted to Haringey Council. It envisages eight semi-detached and one detached house fronting Twyford Avenue with one tennis court and pavilion at the rear.

The applicants have reduced the number of houses from fourteen and lowered the eaves to match adjacent properties.

Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association reports that Surf Green, the neighbourhood group that led opposition to an earlier application which was

withdrawn, is urging residents to write to the council objecting to this new plan (HGY/2004/0178)

They can also attend a meeting of the Development Control Forum to discuss the application on Thursday 29 April at Alexandra Park School, Bidwell Gardens.

Missing Man Found Dead

Mr Vivian Darby, whom THE ARCHER reported last month had disappeared from his home in Chapel Court, has sadly passed away. He was found in cemetery grounds after an extensive search.

Mobile Scam

Police are warning mobile phone users about a legal but costly scam. 'Missed call' is announced and the following number comes up: 07090 20384 (the last three figures may vary). Do not reply, as your call will cost £50 a minute!

CRIME DIARY

Robbery

Two schoolgirls were robbed in East Finchley on 6 March. They had got off a 263 bus at Oak Lane when their bags were grabbed by a boy of about 15, who ran off towards the Grange Estate. He is described as 5ft 9ins tall, wearing a dark hooded top and dark tracksuit bottoms. If you have information contact Detective Constable Michael Townsend on 020 8733 4593.

Milk thefts

In Bedford Road during February and March there were several thefts of milk and other deliveries from doorsteps very early in the morning. It is thought that the thief watches and follows the milkman. Alert early risers in Bedford Road may be able to help Keith, the Arla milkman, to prevent more thefts by reporting anything suspicious.

Local Planning Applications

Viceroy Close, High Road, N2 -

Proposal: Erection of a three-/four-storey block to provide a total of ten self-contained flats with associated provision of off-street parking.

Leopold Service Station, 217 High Road, N2 -

Proposal: Redevelopment of petrol filling station to include a new single-storey building for retail sales, canopy over repositioned pump islands, repositioning of vehicular access from High Road and provision of 11 car parking spaces.

Land adjacent 373 High Road, N2 -

Proposal: Formation of new vehicular access from High Road.

1-5 Lincoln Parade, Lincoln Road, N2 -

Proposal: Erection of four three-bedroomed, three-storey town houses with integral garages following demolition of existing shopping parade and light industrial unit (Amended Application).

258 East End Road, N2 -

Proposal: Conversion of existing building into eight residential units including extension to existing side addition.

354A Long Lane, N2 -

Proposal: Construction of detached double garage to rear of property. Erection of single-storey side/rear conservatory extension.

Heinrich Stahl House, The Bishops Avenue, N2 -

Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 15 residential units in three buildings of part three and part four storeys with underground car parking for 24 cars and leisure facilities, following demolition of existing residential institution. Formation of new vehicular access onto The Bishops Avenue.



Three-fold Rise in Some CPZ Charges

By Kevin Finn

Barnet Council has announced that, with effect from March 2004, fees for Resident Parking Permits have changed from a flat rate per vehicle to an escalating charge based on the number of vehicles at a home.

Swingeing increases

The new fees mean that the charge for a first vehicle is increased to £35 p.a., an increase of over 16.5%. However, if a household has more than one vehicle the charges are yet greater. A second vehicle attracts an annual fee of £65 (a formidable 216.7% increase) whilst a third car attracts a massive 300% rise at £90 per year. Key workers such as District Nurses, Doctors, Social Workers, who must have a car to serve the community, do not get any relief from the new rates, according to Barnet Council's Parking Office. One

can question whether these fees are reasonable for residents and local taxpayers to be permitted to park near their home for the one hour per day that the CPZ affects.

Penalising the less well-off

Designed to discourage car ownership, this new scheme has the net effect of penalising the less well off. While affluent members of society may have a drive or garage and are unaffected, the shortage of affordable housing means multiple occupancy homes for the many. Even family homes need two bread-winners to

afford mortgage, and may have grown up offspring living at home. People who cannot afford to buy or rent their own home often live in house-shares or bed-sits. The first-come-first-served basis on which the charge is calculated means that the second and third people moving in are penalised.

Little alternative

Residents could join the long waiting-list to rent a garage, but this is about to get even longer as the Council prepares to demolish garages in Norfolk Close.

The CPZ was introduced to prevent commuters from outside the area clogging residential streets while they went into London. Now it seems to be a revenue-raising mechanism for Barnet Council. The Council has not yet disclosed what the charges for a fourth vehicle might be, nor has it responded to written enquires on some of the points raised in this article.



Another busy morning at East Finchley tube station. Photo by Bob Janes

'Situation Normal' on Northern Line

As most of us now know the Northern Line is now running normally, meaning the trains, rather than the commuters, cross over at Camden Town.

THE ARCHER has been given a report explaining the reasons for the derailment on 19 October 2003.

The report concludes that the derailment was caused by a rare combination of a design weakness in the points, plus a number of other factors. The report made recommendations, which include the introduction of new switchblade designs, improvement to engineering standards and further improvements to London Underground's emergency response arrangements.

Whereas some residents had started to like the certainty of all Barnet trains going to Charing Cross, for East Finchley

commuters to and from the City the arrangement had been far from ideal. A regular commuter told THE ARCHER that Monday 8 March 2004 was bliss – being able to travel directly from East Finchley to Moorgate. The platform crowding at Camden Town had been an accident waiting to happen.

Of course by 'normal' we really mean 'usual' rather than 'acceptable'; the delays, cancellations, terminations and incorrect indicators soon manifested themselves and now that the points are working again we hope renewed effort can be put into improving the service generally.

Spring Cleaning

Coldfall Wood (off Creighton Avenue) and Muswell Hill Playing Fields (north of the wood) are open spaces that may be less well known to East Finchley people than Cherry Tree Wood. But like Cherry Tree Wood there's a Friends group looking after these precious open spaces.

It meets regularly at the Vampire Sports Club, off Coppett's Road, providing a forum for the views and concerns of local residents and dog-walkers.

Occasional clean-ups of the fields and the wood are organised by teams of volunteers. The next one, for the field, is on Saturday 24 April, starting at 11am, and a Coldfall Wood clean-up is planned for 15 May. Details from Linda Allison on 020 8883 9205.

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The Mayor of Barnet sends a group of walkers on their way. Photo by Toni Morgan

North London Hospice 'Fun Walk' 2004

By Toni Morgan

The grey chill and drizzle of Sunday morning did nothing to dampen the spirits and enthusiasm of the many supporters of the North London Hospice who gathered at East Finchley station to take part in the 2004 Fun Walk.

The Mayor of Barnet launched the event and then set the first group of walkers on their way from Cherry Tree Wood through to Westminster. MP Rudis Vis was with them, as was Cllr John Marshall.

Other groups joined further on and by the time they reached Westminster they were about 1000 strong! There were walkers in fancy dress which brightened the

day, there were children in pushchairs, a number of dogs joined their owners to join in the fun and one four-year-old boy walked the whole 7.5 miles with his parents. When they reached Westminster he was rewarded by having his photo taken with the Mayoress of Westminster in all her finery! See next month's *ARCHER* to find out how much money was raised.

EFLA21 Soldiers On

The East Finchley Local Agenda 21 is to soldier on despite the Council's decision to withdraw from the partnership. In a letter to LA21 members, Councillor Brian Coleman gave notice that the Council will no longer be a formal partner and that Councillors who had been nominated to represent the council would cease to do so. Support by officers from the Waste and Sustainability team would also stop.

One local LA21 member said, "This decision cannot be for financial reasons as the running costs are minimal, but Agenda 21 represents an important outlet for local views". Another reported that it was obvious when meeting council officers on site visits to the area that they did not have a good knowledge of the local situation—something that LA21 can provide.

Undaunted

And at its last meeting, local members decided that the East Finchley LA21 would continue with its work despite the loss of the council's support.

The group's Chair, Cllr Colin Rogers, said, "We are not in the least daunted. In the past we have undertaken anything from traffic surveys and protests, to tree planting to public enquiry participation. LA21 is concerned with public participation in the environmental issues that lie at the heart of the community. Just

last week we planted 50 trees on the Grange estate. So long as there's a public to participate with, we will be here!"

AGM

The LA21's first 'independent' Annual General Meeting, to which all residents are invited, will take place at the Green Man Community Centre on Tuesday, 25 May at 7.00 pm. It will see the launch of a Waste and Recycling directory for East Finchley with tree planting at Strawberry Vale taking place earlier in the day.

LA21 started at the Rio

Earth Summit in 1992 as an agenda for the 21st Century for sustainable development, with the idea that to save the planet we need to act locally.

East Finchley LA21 has its own allotment where it is growing trees for planting throughout Barnet. It has a thriving traffic and transport group that has recently started a Bus Action Group—see last month's *ARCHER*. The traffic and transport group's next meeting is at 8.00pm on Wednesday 19 May at the Neighbourhood Centre in Church Lane.

Easter Eggcitement!

By Diana Cormack

Let Easter go to your heads this year and get your children to take part in a homemade hat competition. They could win a prize if you bring them along to join in the Easter Bonnet Parade to be held on Saturday 10 April.

There are also prizes to be won in an Easter Egg Hunt. Organised by Sippy Azizollah with the help

of Rosie Townsend, customer service manager at Budgens, the hat competition will take place from 10 to 11 am at the store on Viceroy Parade. The Easter Egg Hunt will be in Budgens between 10am and 5pm.

Both events are in aid of Lupus UK/North London Lupus for which Sippy is trying to raise £10,000 this year. Sadly, she did not make it through to the third round of the Michelob Ultra competition (see last month's *ARCHER*) but her Rainbow Quiz proved popular and she has held a successful Bring and Buy sale to add more to her total.

Sippy is grateful to all those who have helped her to raise over £500 since January and would like particularly to thank the landlord and customers of the Five Bells on East End Road for their great generosity.

If you want to help, you could do so by turning up on Easter Saturday and dropping some coins in the collection box.

GLA Transport Committee Chair Reports

By Daphne Chamberlain

Transport is a key issue in London, and last month Lynne Featherstone, Chair of the Transport Committee of the Greater London Association and Haringey Local Councillor, gave her report, summarised below, on progress (or otherwise) in the last four years. She was speaking at a meeting organised by Bus Watch West Haringey and the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association.

The Tube

Progress has been stifled by the PPA, and by London Underground's failure to admit to overcrowding. LU quotes the average number of users over a whole line, during the entire day. TfL are now working on evaluating conditions in peak periods, on the busiest stretches of a line.

Infrastructure is failing faster than rectifications can be made. Official policy now adopted is to plan line closures for a set period, using back-up buses in support.

Buses

Buses are a great success, expanding as never before. However, there is a widening gap between financial provision and cost. Bus companies retain too much profit, instead of ploughing it back into the system.

Most complaints received are about driver behaviour. Training schemes for new drivers have already been introduced, and Metroline is pioneering training for existing drivers.

The Committee is aware of design problems within buses.

The countdown system at stops does not work, but London may be switching to a different system, used successfully in Brighton.

Getting Home At Night

TfL is looking for companies to operate minibuses/shared cabs to take people home, both from local stations and from the centre of London.

Cross Rail

London has been waiting for Government funding for 12 years. If Paris has a crossrail, why can't we?

North London Line

It's on the list for upgrading, but too far down.

Cycling

A central strategy is needed.

Congestion Charge

"A stonking success". However, the Assembly have voted against a blanket extension to outer areas, recommending that congestion hotspots should be targeted individually.

Speed Humps

They may not necessarily reduce the number of accidents, but a survey (in Muswell Hill Road) showed a 60% reduction in serious injury.

Ms Featherstone said, "There are many things that need doing. Thank God we're on the road to do them."

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My Garden Makeover

By Sue Holliday

Charlie and Tommy they are not, as Gail so eloquently stated. Gail and Chris are the owners of Virginia Bush (see below), the company that did a makeover of my garden.

It all started because I wanted to have an area at the rear of the garden where I could sit and enjoy the last of the sun on a summer's evening.

Chris made a visit to assess what could be done and it all snowballed from there. I decided that the fence and back gate should be renewed and the lawn could do with an overhaul. Chris advised on other changes and with that I said, "Oh hell, lets revamp the whole thing." Oh boy, I did not realise what I was letting myself in for.

I never thought I could get emotional about a garden. The first day I returned from work to find only the trees and one shrub remaining. That was a shock, to see all my plants and shrubs packed into tubs and bags. The realisation of

the size of the space we had to work with made me realise how overgrown my garden was.

Chris and his team worked very hard in very hot weather to achieve a lovely result. His remit was to create a peaceful area where I can relax and enjoy the odd glass of wine. That was certainly achieved. Chris has very strong ideas of how a garden should look; he often nagged me about the number of pots I had on the patio.

All in all this was some experience. I now have a garden that looks good all year round and has colour and texture from the plants and shrubs that Chris insisted went in. I must admit at the first viewing I was not happy with some of the shrubs but now after several months I have to admit Chris's choice was right.

Garden Procrastinations

By Virginia Bush

Gardening is the last thing I thought I could be passionate about. My interest started in my early twenties, when I found myself labouring for a plants woman. To my amazement I was drawn into this world, and the more I was immersed the more I was hooked. Now I have a constant need to better my abilities and knowledge.

January is an odd month for gardening. There is nothing much happening, so get on with recovering from last month's exertions. Concentrate on getting over the shock of getting back to work. Good, that's January done.

February, mush, you lazy dogs, time to work! First, tidy that mess up in the garden. Mounds of soggy leaves in the nooks and crannies, bits of paper and the empty bottles (never heard of recycling?)

Nearly all lawns benefit from aeration; my favoured method is hollow tine aerating. You can buy a contraption resembling a garden fork from garden centres but being a lazy person I hire a machine like a large manual lawn mower. The lawn is pierced with hollow tubing to a depth of 10 to 15 cm at intervals of 25 cm and the soil core is removed. In theory the soil core pops out from the top of the tines when you push.

Once the whole area has been pierced, rake in sharp sand. It improves the drainage and the general condition of the soil, which benefits the lawn.

I have spent most of this week abusing people's lawns. I now push a small handful of sand into each hole with my thumb and forefinger, whilst 'squat waddling' along the lawn. I know that sounds a pain; the first 1000 were, but I got into the groove and the next 9000 flew by. It was very informative regarding the different 'feel' of lawns.

If your lawn is absolutely abysmal you're probably wasting your time. What you need is a new lawn, rotovating the whole area, adding grit/sand or good soil as needed. The cause has to be addressed rather than treating the problem.

That's all for the while, but hopefully I'll soon be droning on again...



Mary Gouldbourn and her doorstep (copy of Michaelangelo's David) Photo by Toni Morgan.

Best Foot Forward

By Daphne Chamberlain

Mary Gouldbourn, chiropodist and podiatrist, could have worked on the QE2. Instead she chose Cory's Pharmacy, where she has run her own practice for the last five years. With clients aged from 3 to 103, she still has plenty of variety in her working life.

"Immediately I started, I knew this was the career for me," she says. Her first choice had been textile design, but it didn't bring her the satisfaction her brother talked about getting from dentistry. Dentists, though, can't have two-way conversations, which is part of the pleasure of Mary's current work.

She likes a homely atmosphere. However, the lava lamp, paintings on the walls and classical music in the background, plus sugar-free lollipops for well-behaved youngest clients, shouldn't mask the fact that a visit to 'have your feet done' is an appointment with a professional.

State registered chiropodists take a full-time three-year degree course. This includes chemistry, anatomy, physiology, medical physics (covering X-rays and ultra-sound), pathology and general medicine. Mary studied at University College, London, and the London Foot Hospital in Fitzroy Square, which was the first foot hospital in Europe. She has seen hip and knee operations, and watched the work of orthopaedic, dermatological and vascular departments.

Walking the walk

Podiatrists are trained to study how people walk, to make corrective insoles and to carry out nail surgery, and at the moment she is investigating the use of homeopathy and acupuncture.

Chiropody (pronounced kiro-pody) is a Greek-based word, meaning 'hand on foot'. An acquaintance with a client's foot can reveal a lot about that person's health, sometimes being the first step towards treating medical conditions. Numbness or pins and needles

in the feet, for example, could possibly be a sign of diabetes.

"Don't be frightened to visit a chiropodist," is Mary's message. "Please don't tackle your own feet with razor-blades or scissors – and keep them out of very hot water, which weakens the skin. I do visit people who can't come out, and Cory's – a really nice, long-established pharmacy with a fantastic team of therapists – is open in the evenings."

The Cory Pharmacy is at 166, High Road. Please contact 020 8444 2123 to make an appointment.

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HISTORY

East Finchley's Religious Heritage

Part 2 – Baptists and Salvationists

By Ann Bronkhorst

East of the High Road two distinctive old church buildings have changed use in recent years: the Baptists' and the Salvationists' buildings in Creighton Avenue and Hertford Road. The two organisations are also linked by their earlier history.

Baptists on the move.

In 1889 the Baptists built a new chapel on the corner of Hertford Road and the High Road. Open fields lay to the north; Creighton Avenue did not exist until 1899. Their congregation rapidly outgrew the new chapel so in 1902 the Baptists built a larger church of flint, in a striking Gothic style, on the newly-made Creighton

Avenue. In the 1930s that church became their hall, with a new red-brick church next door.

About 14 years ago the 'Gothic' hall was sold for development as flats; with the proceeds an envelope of extra buildings was created around the church. Mr Webber, an Elder of the church, recalls that it was the height of the property



The former Salvationists' chapel Photo by Tony Roberts

boom so several developers were interested. A restrictive clause in the contract limited use of the building to living accommodation. The congregation supported the scheme; the church gained extra space and a unique Victorian building survived.

Salvationists on the move.

And the outgrown chapel in Hertford Road? The Baptists sold it to the Salvationists who ran a mission there for the next hundred years. Many local people remember the last Captains, Anna and Haris Giannaros, with affection. They organised religious and social activities ranging from Alpha courses to over-sixties lunch clubs (see *ARCHERS* for April 2000 and 2001). Anna says, "At least the building hasn't been knocked down and now it's a place for children."

The Nursery moves in.

That Victorian chapel has been transformed into Scribbles nursery, opening this spring. Sympathetically converted, it's now light-filled

and child-friendly. I was shown round recently by Mr J. Hallums, one of the owners, who is fascinated by the building's history. Much has been retained: the A-frame beams to doorways; sound timber in lengths unobtainable today; and London stock bricks which have all been re-used. Under the stage, however, lay a find that couldn't be re-used - the Baptists' massive walk-in font installed over a century ago.

Reminders of the past.

Happily the Baptists' and Salvationists' handsome buildings have not been demolished or masked by modern facades. Though used differently now they remind us of East Finchley's vigorous Nonconformist Christian past.

Ann will cover more church buildings in future issues. Holy Trinity, its church hall and Industrial School; the Congregational church; the Roman Catholic church and the convents; all have a story to tell.



The Baptists' Gothic Church (now flats) Photo by Tony Roberts

Looking Back...

In March 1973 the East Finchley Neighbourhood Association was one year old. The News Adviser (predecessor of *THE ARCHER*) reported EFNA's Birthday Dance, held at The Finchley Football Club, Summers Lane:

"The joint was jumping at our Birthday Dance, on Saturday 17th of March. 200 teenagers to pensioners, a cross-section of the community, appeared to be enjoying themselves immensely. A packed hall shook to Hard Rock, Olde Tyme Waltzes and Knees Up Mother Brown, amplified by the disco of Charles Wilkin. Miss Edith Gudgin at the cloakroom did fighting work absorbing an ever-mounting pile of coats that threatened to engulf her."

"Celebrating one year of EFNA, Chairman John Kendall cut a giant Birthday cake, supplied by Clark's Bakery of Market Place N.2., with a ceremonial sword. Harry Hooper and Bill Delamare, disguised as chefs, dispensed food, and towards eleven Harry attempted to quell the high spirits enough to present a pewter tankard to John Kendall in appreciation of his work as Chairman of this "lusty baby" Efn, and in particular his Herculean efforts during the Flyover campaign.

"In response, John Kendall said: "Never has a baby had so much influence" Looking forward to when it came of age, he said it would not just be the most influential baby in East Finchley, but perhaps the most influential of its kind in London and a model for all community associations.

"The Dance raised over £90 and we are thus able to buy the duplicator.

"The raffle, organized by the Fund Raising Group and drawn at the dance by the ample and delectable Sally Williams, made £51.65 - and this will help to pay for the Free Festival in June."

"Altogether, a happy and successful evening - we hopefully look for a repeat!"



The Baptists' current home Photo by Tony Roberts



Name That Photo

By Daphne Chamberlain

In the basement of Avenue House is part of an old wooden sewer, an ARP's tin hat, a Mayoress's diary/scrapbook, and hundreds of unidentified photos.

These are just some of the contents of The Finchley Society Archives. The basement room houses a comprehensive collection of material about the people and buildings of Finchley and Friern Barnet. There are official records, newspaper cuttings, postcards, slides, cassettes and artefacts. There are also many identified photos (including a picture of the visiting 1966 World Cup team). It is the mystery ones which are concerning the Society's archivists at the moment though.

Who's who?

"Every time we come in, there are more photos waiting for us," says Maggie Ferguson. "Often they are handed in by people clearing the house of a friend or relative." The

Finchley Society is grateful for these donations and hopes they will continue. After all, they are the pieces of social history which the Archives are there for. Often the photos are good quality and potentially interesting. All they need is an identity, which somebody – hopefully an *ARCHER* reader – may be able to supply.

Looking at them makes Maggie feel like a newcomer to Finchley. "I've only lived here since the 1970s, and I've only really felt part of the area since I retired," she admits. Other members of the team are Finchley born and bred, but they don't know all the answers either. Here's hoping some of you may help them out.

The Finchley Society Archi-

vists, who have co-operative links with Barnet Borough Archives and the Hendon and District Archaeological Society, welcome visitors between 10.30 and 12.30 on Monday mornings. They can be found at Avenue House, East End Road, N3, where they will receive donated materials and answer enquiries. The number to contact is 020 8343 3180. When the Archives are closed, you may leave a message.



Archivists at work, Derek and Barbara Warren and Maggie Ferguson Photo by Toni Morgan.

Wildlife Diary

By Linda Mitchell

I worried at the end of last year, during that spectacular autumn, that I might have tidied up too much in the garden. It is so important not to be too fussy. Otherwise the wildlife is at great risk, as their food and shelter are badly affected if we over-tidy.

But, throughout autumn and winter, the birds came constantly to feed. In September I saw five young starlings lined up on the TV aerial, all wearing their lovely new speckled coats. A pair of collared doves were regular visitors and one afternoon in mid-October I counted five mistle thrushes, two dunnocks, a woodpecker, three jays and a pure white pigeon. In November, a flock of eight parakeets came and perched in the apple tree. The sight of them in my garden still amazes me.

Signs of spring

The foxes appear less often now. I wonder if that's because of the introduction of the wheelie bins, which means there are not so many bin bags now to rummage through.

The woodmice have had a nibble at the potted bulbs in the greenhouse. I have noticed several butterfly chrysalises. Maybe I'll get to see one emerge.

I have not seen any sign of the hedgehog, although I imagine he is in hibernation amongst the leaves that I left at the back of the borders.

My strangest wildlife sighting was not in my garden, but hopping along Fordington Road late one night. A large rabbit! An escapee, I imagine.

It is lovely to hear the owl hooting at night, and by day the magpies are already flying about with twigs in their beaks.

Well, spring is certainly around the corner. Let's hope we all enjoy a good time in our gardens this year.

RSPCA News

Spring is here, so pet-owners are reminded to check that their animals' vaccinations are up to date. Friendly meetings in the woods can spread disease, so come along to the Clinic for a check up and a booster.

Also time to pick up a flea spray, as these pests will be looking for their summer hosts. The RSPCA Clinic is in Park Road, N2 and is open on Monday and Thursday evenings from 6 to 7.30 pm (not Bank Holidays).

Current charges are:

- Consultation: £5 with proof of benefit book, £10 others.
 - Vaccinations: From £10 for rabbits to £15 for cats, enteritis, leukaemia and dog booster.
 - Micro chipping: £10
- Saturday 24 April at Fel-

lowship House, Willifield Way, NW11 from 2pm is the Easter Fair. Star attraction is an Easter Cake made by one of the members who is a professional patissiere. Raffle tickets are 25p each or 5 for £1, on sale at the Clinic or at the fair.

Last but not least, the local RSPCA are looking for new blood on their committee. If you are a member of the RSPCA, or intend to join, and are interested in all aspects of animal welfare, please consider joining their friendly group of volunteers. For more information telephone 020 8444 2329



One of many historical photos which The Finchley Society need help in identifying. Do you recognise anyone in this picture? Do you know which firm was going on an outing - and maybe even when and where? If so, please contact The Finchley Society Archives on 020 8343 3180. Photo from The Finchley Society archives

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PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

By Diana Cormack

Holy Trinity School

Chess Club

The under nines chess team performed very well at the National Schools Team Championships held in Ilford. They missed out on a place in the National Finals by just half a point.

Book Week

World Book Day was celebrated with a Book Fair and during the week the children were involved in a range of activities to improve their speaking and listening skills. These included a visiting storyteller, Evelyn Donar from the Anna Scher Theatre, who enchanted the whole school; different age groups mixing to talk about books they had chosen for each other; designing book covers and a posters competition.

Educational Visits

Year 1 went behind the scenes at Sainsbury's, North Finchley to see how things work. This included having a go on the tills; their maths topic this term is money.

Year 4 visited The Royal Institution of Great Britain for a science lecture on magnetism. They also went to the Tower of London, where part of their time was spent investigating the demise of Sir Simon Lord Lovat Fraser, the ancestor of one of the children.

Barnet Dance Festival

A team of six girls, called Holy Trinity Cha Cha, performed mixed modern and Latin American dances they had made up together with their teacher Melissa Cadwell. This took place at the Chicken Shed Theatre.



Martin Junior children in traditional waistcoats for their Greek dance with teacher Chrysoulla Nicolaou, photo courtesy of Martin Schools

Martin Schools

Art Exhibition – Canaletto

Everyone who visited the exhibition was highly impressed by the quality and variety of work on display (see page 10).

Open Afternoon

Existing and prospective parents were given the opportunity to see the schools at work. A special theme was the development of writing as children progress from nursery to Year 6, emphasising the quality of their written work.

Awards for All

The many extra curricular sporting activities have received a tremendous boost from lottery sports funding. The money provides extra equipment and three coaches to lead multi-sports sessions from March until October. By the end of the project, 180 local children will have had the chance to play basketball, rugby or hockey in the school playground or on the field.

World Book Day

Year 6 took a special assembly that day and children in the school dressed up as literary characters.

Barnet Dance Festival

Twelve children from Year 3 (pictured above), in traditional Greek costume, were one of the youngest groups to perform in front of a large audience. They presented their Circle Dance with absolute precision. Five former pupils, now at secondary school, also took part and are continuing their dance skills, fostered at Martin School, on to GCSE level.

Magic Lantern

Year 5 learned a lot from the ever-popular Magic Lantern visit, which focused on their Tudor history project and set the scene for the work they are doing this term.

YOUNG ARCHER



Ella and her friends selling the cakes Photo by Julie Taylor

Home Made Success

By Diana Cormack

For a long time seven-year-old Ella Taylor of Bedford Road, East Finchley had been trying to think of a way to raise money for Marie Curie Cancer Care. Ella loves swimming and thought about a sponsored swim or maybe a sponsored run. She discussed other ideas with her friends, but the solution came when Ella was telling her neighbour about it, for she remembered a successful fund raising event from her own childhood.

Here is what Ella wrote for *THE ARCHER* about what she did:

"I decided to have a cake stall to raise money for Marie Curie because my grandma Sybil was looked after there and was treated so well.

Marie Curie sent me daffodil badges to sell for the daffodil appeal. We also had banners and posters. They were very pleased that I was doing the sale.

I chose to have three friends to help me make the cakes and sell them. They are called Isla, Rosie and Annie. Zack and Molly, my sister, helped too. I designed leaflets and posters and dropped them in to the people we know in the area.

The cake sale was a great success. Lots of people came and every cake was bought. We raised £75 and then received more donations for daffodils, raising a total of £100."

People in the neighbourhood were all very impressed with Ella's efforts. Ella, who is in Year 2 at Martin Infant School, is already considering other ways of raising money for such a good

cause. Congratulations Ella, you have done really well!

If you know of any young

people who help others in some way, please let *YOUNG ARCHER* know.

The Stone Mason's Yard

Children in Martin Schools produced some fantastic work when they studied this painting of Venice by Canaletto. Three Year 6 children wrote these lovely poems:

The Light on the Spires

The spires all did glow
And the golden windows shone
Dull were the columns of great brick
In shadow hid the roofs
Dark and light of all combined
And the sea was in the sky
Over the spires of Venice.

By Emily

A Mythical Picture

It's Dusty, Bright,
Magical Colours,
Foggy Sky,
Tall Towers,
Bleached Ruby Roofs,
Gold Tin Chimneys;
That is Venice...

By Frances

Images

Bleached sky,
Paned windows,
Darkened wood,
Dulled atmosphere,
Shining chimneys,
Strong colours.
It glows.

By Oliver

East Finchley Baptist Church

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



Happy Birthday, Will!

By Daphne Chamberlain

“One man in his time plays many parts... He has his exits and his entrances... “ We used to think that this great Englishman had his exit and his entrance on the same day - 23 April, St George’s Day, but now historians are not so sure.

He certainly died on 23 April – in 1616, “his fifty-third year”, which means he was born on or before that date in 1564. He was baptised on 26 April, and baptism was usually three days after birth. Usually, but not always, though I still like to think that in his case it was. (Mind you, I could be biased, as the 23rd was my father’s birthday.)

Fellow astrology fans must agree he was a typical Taurean – good-humoured, drawn to the arts, and fond of the good things of life. To anyone raising a sceptical eyebrow, I’d say we actually know a great deal about Shakespeare – and nobody else wrote those plays!

The memory be green

As you might expect, Stratford is the place to be to celebrate his birthday. Every year, on the closest weekend

to the 23rd, there are parades, street entertainments, dancing, marathons and half-marathons, concerts, civic receptions, special performances by the Royal Shakespeare Company, and floral tributes on his grave.

Check it out

According to the Internet, this year Michael Rosen will lead workshops for schools, while their elders will enjoy “bawdy ballads, not suitable for children”. Tim Pigott-Smith – a former pupil at Will’s old school, the King Edward VI Grammar School – will propose a toast to the theatre. You can check this out at www.englishhistory.info/Shakespeare/shakespeares-birthday.html.

Taken nationally though, we still don’t rival the Scots with their Burns Night, which is a shame. Will loved a party.

Archaeological Find on Stanley Field

By David Hobbs

It appears that East Finchley could have been the site of a major prehistoric settlement and temple complex. According to local archaeologist, Charles Dawson, initial surveys indicate that there are substantial remains; possibly of a pre-Roman sacred site that Mr Dawson believes could cast a light on the earliest settlements in East Finchley.

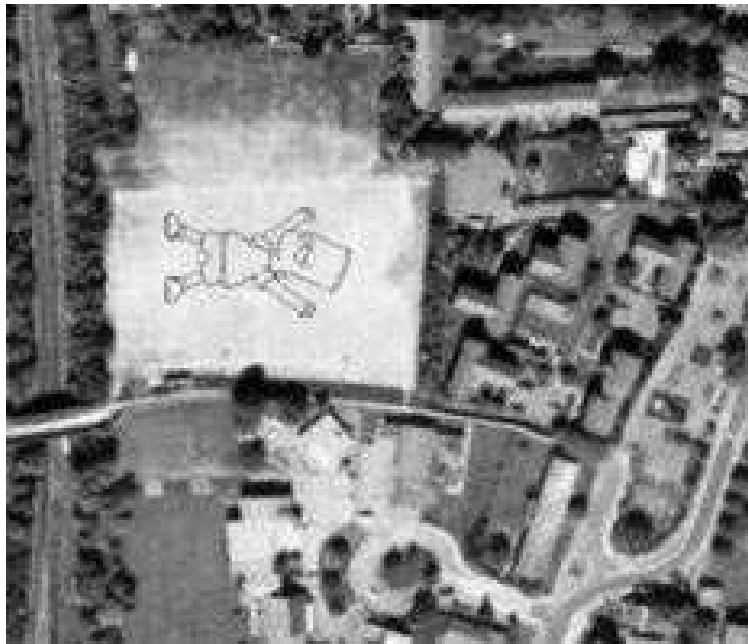
Mr Dawson hopes that he has finally found a complete settlement of one of Northern Europe’s most mysterious tribes, the Bjartf Sjmpif. They were almost unique amongst pre-Roman groups in developing a written language not dissimilar to early English although in Sjmpif both j and f are silent.

Irony

What attracted Mr Dawson to the possibility of East Finchley being the site of a Bjartf Sjmpif settlement was an aerial photograph of Stanley Field, which appears to show the outline of the tribe’s major deity, Bjartf. This, he claims is typical of the tribe’s most important settlements.

Confident

Although he has yet to carry out a proper geophysical survey using ground-penetrating radar, Mr Dawson is confident that a proper



The aerial view of Stanley Fields showing the magnetic resonance scan of the artifact - the Northern Line runs up the left hand side and Prospect ring can be seen at the bottom. Photo by Prof. Brainstorm

archaeological survey will confirm his suspicions. Asked about the possible significance

of the site, Mr Dawson told *THE ARCHER* that “this could be as significant as Piltdown”.

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Every Day has its Dog

In the world of the prawn and avocado sandwich there’s been no cooler team to support than Manchester United. Only they can combine history, sentimentality and comedy with a mind-numbing ability to win anything and everything on a regular basis. But not this year, because this year the bubble is bursting.

They are unlikely to win the Premiership, they are out of the Champions League and have only the FA Cup to look forward to. This might equal success for most clubs, but for the mighty Man U this is major league failure. As the tears fall and Fergie cries into his bank account I can’t avoid having a quiet snigger and thinking about history.

What comes around goes around and no one is on top forever, a lesson Liverpool learnt in the nineties. Once they were a sure fire bet to win most things, and for most of the eighties they did. Then it went avocado pear shaped as Fergie and his boys took over as top dogs. For true Liverpool fans nothing the team does will be good enough unless they get at least two trophies a year, but unlike us poor saps who support Spurs they haven’t got used to losing...yet.

So now it’s Arsenal’s turn to rule what is left of the roost. They may not have the prawn cocktail power of Man U and can’t use tragedy and sentimentality as an excuse, but, and I hate saying this, they play darned good football.

As the old saying doesn’t go, every day has its dog and this year is Fergie’s. Last time Man U had a dog day they went from European Cup winners to relegation in about five years and spent the next 20 crawling back to the top. Last time it began with a great manager retiring, this time it’s starting before Fergie goes off to spend more time with his money, but the message is the same, no one ever stays at the top forever.

Let’s Celebrate St George’s Day – the Patron Saint of Archers

By Daphne Chamberlain

George is also the patron saint of England, of course, – and of Germany, Greece, Lithuania, Portugal, Georgia, cavalymen, horses, saddlers, farmers, Boy Scouts and butchers. His day is 23 April.

“St George’s Day is the horses’ holiday”, say the Finns, while the Russians believe that “there is no spring without George”. His day must have been welcomed by Estonian children, traditionally forbidden to sit on the ground before then. In eastern European countries, and part of Germany, 23 April was the start of spring, and in the Baltic the beginning of the economic year.

He had his hour of glory here in 1415, when 23 April was designated a great Feast Day, to be observed like Christmas Day. That was the year of the archers, who won the battle of Agincourt for Henry V. “Cry God for Harry, England and St George!” as Shakespeare put it.

The red cross

George had only just become England’s patron saint, taking over from Edward the Confessor. Richard I, though, had put his Crusaders under George’s protection over 200 years before, adopting the martyr’s red cross on a white background for their uniform.

George’s Feast Day, which had begun in a simple form in 1222, went out of existence in 1778, becoming merely a devotional day for English Catholics. This may be one reason why there are no traditions and customs associated with it here, although, in recent years, the St George’s Day Society has been bringing it back into prominence.

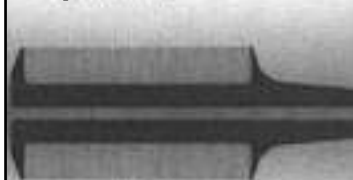
Who was George, anyway?

He is thought to have been a Roman cavalryman, martyred in 303AD for protesting against the persecution of the Christians. The dragon can’t be traced, but George became popular throughout Europe and Asia for defending the poor and helpless, and for protecting animals. So he seems a top man to have on your side.

Labrador and Newfoundland mark 23 April with provincial holidays, and the Isle of Man holds a parade. Let’s wear a red rose or two in East Finchley for the patron saint of archers!

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 ❖ **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.

Martin Schools' Masterpieces

By Diana Cormack

Martin Infant and Junior Schools' involvement in the National Gallery's *Take One Picture* project has been an outstanding success. This year, schools were asked to focus on *The Stonemason's Yard* by Canaletto.

Before embarking on the task, teachers received in-service training from colleagues who had been on a course at the gallery, enabling them to plan for related activities covering all aspects of the school curriculum and involving pupils from nursery through to Year 6. Those who visited an exhibition held at the school could only marvel at what the children had produced – it was stunning!

Artist in Residence, sculptor David Aronsohn, pointed out two particular pieces to me. One was a large mixed media 3D model made by the infant school using materials like tissue paper, fabric, card, wood, clay, foam, etc. From the front, it was an adult's view of the scene; at the back, little model rooms showed the life the children imagined was going on behind those house fronts. It was a brilliant idea, brilliantly executed.

Then and now

The other was equally impressive. Year 2 pupils had been given cameras to take their own photos of buildings in East Finchley. These photos were used to make a contemporary version of Canaletto's picture, thus equating then and now,

making it so relevant to the children.

The Sewing Club, run by school secretary Helen Barney, produced another remarkable piece of work. Junior children used a variety of textiles to depict a wonderful Venetian scene, complete with gondolas in the foreground, designed and built by Year 6 using willow. Other designs by Year 6 were meticulous architecturally correct plans for buildings in the painting. Drawn to scale, they were inspired by the enthusiasm of class teacher Paul Hall, who worked in an architects firm before coming into teaching.

Manifold experiences

Music, poetry, painting, sculpture, even building walls, are among the many educational experiences offered to the children during this exciting project. If only this vibrant exhibition could go on show somewhere else in East Finchley for people to admire what everyone in Martin Schools has succeeded in producing. As one parent, Helen Casiki commented, "There's an energy about this school. It feels as if it's got life in the walls."

Open Houses, Open Eyes

Have you ever wondered who it is that lives in your neighbourhood? Perhaps you would relish the opportunity to peer into their world and find out what it is they do for a living? Or perhaps you are a craftsman who would like to expose your work to your local community?

To coincide with the East Finchley Festival in July, local artists and craftspeople have gathered to organise the opening of East Finchley's very first Open House Art Week. The East Finchley Open, as they have named it, aims to enable and facilitate artists and craftspeople based in East Finchley, to show and sell their work by opening up their houses to the public. Yet for it to be a real success, they need more artists and craftsmen from East Finchley to sign up!

Their idea of an open house art week stemmed from both Oxford and Cambridge, who have these successful events each year. As they had many inquiries from other local areas, The East Finchley Open committee were going to include a wider group of artists and craftspeople. However as Tark Butler, a local painter who specialises in figurative work, told me, "For at least the first year, we wanted artists to live

within walking distance of East Finchley, to evoke a sense of community."

There are already around ten artists and craftsmen who have signed up to exhibit their work, including Photographers such as Eti Wade, Sculptors such as David Aronsohn, and Painters such as Tark Butler. They all hope that this scheme will be successful in informing local people about local artists. However, for this idea to reach its potential, The East Finchley Open needs more of these committed artists and craftspeople, willing to show their work to the public. So, whether you are a part-time or full-time artist or craftsman, who focuses on anything from pottery to jewellery to oil painting – as long as you are dedicated to the project and have work to display, then please contact them!

Please contact Adam Justice- Mills on 07970 838188, or by email: efo@e-fish.demon.co.uk



Helen Barney with the Venetian Scene by the Sewing Club and Year 6 Photo by Diana Cormack.

Spring News from the Phoenix

The Phoenix's new manager, Paul Homer, reports that the seat campaign is to be relaunched. Half the necessary funds have been raised for the new seats, and installation is scheduled for late June. The new seats have provisionally been chosen – these will probably be traditional-style red seats.

The Phoenix has also just received a £5000 grant from Barnet Council, to be match-funded, which is specifically for improving disabled access equipment and it will be used to provide 'soft subtitling' for the hard of hearing.

The family-based film events – especially the *Bringing up baby* screenings on Tuesday

mornings – are still proving very popular.

There is also a plan to increase the number of weekend film events based around talks from directors. Coming up in late April are three films made by the late British documentary filmmaker, Jill Craigie, which will be introduced by her former husband Michael Foot.

New Public Speaking Club

By Don Hunter

A new public speaking club for people who want to improve their presentation skills has started in East Finchley.

Meetings of Northern Lights Speakers' Club will be held every other Monday at 7.30pm at the Old White Lion, Great North Road, next to East Finchley station.

The club is part of the non-profit organisation Toastmasters

International, which has a network of 10,000 public speaking clubs around the world. Membership costs £72 a year plus a £15 joining fee but there is no obligation to join at the first meeting. For more information call Don Hunter on 07941 388073.

What's On...

E-mail your listings to the-archer@lineone.net

Muswell Hill Bowling Club, The Green, Kings Avenue, Muswell Hill. Outdoor season starts 24 April, club open daily from 2pm. Free instruction and loan of equipment available. Phone 020 8883 1178 for details.

18-24 April: Incognito Theatre, Friern Barnet, presents *Run for your Wife* by Ray Cooney. In the best traditions of farce, Run for Your Wife involves a cabbie who smoothly maintains a life of covert bigamy – his two wives located rather too close for comfort – until his chivalrous attempt to save a little old lady from a mugging lands him in jail and then in hospital. Unfortunately both wives get wind of the accident... All performances start at 8pm except Sunday 18th (6pm). Additional matinee performance at 3pm on Sat 24th. Tickets: £6-8. Incognito is a club theatre. Non-members should add 50p per booking (not ticket) for temporary or £5 for annual associate membership. Call the box office 020 8361 8310 or email Graham.Sawtell@btopenworld.com. See www.incognitoteatre.com for further details.

Sunday 25 April: Cromwell Hall Residents' Association are holding their annual **'Garage Sale' in Abbots Gardens** from 11am to 2 pm. Residents will set up their 'Stalls' in their front gardens up and down the road. Bring your friends and family and enjoy going round the stalls to see what bargains there are to be found.



Letters to The Editor

Planning confusion

Dear Editor

I received a letter from Barnet Planning Team giving me the opportunity to make comments on the proposed redevelopment of the Leopold petrol filling station at 217 High Road. The proposal is for redevelopment of the service station to include a new single storey building for retail sales, canopy over repositioned pump islands, repositioning of vehicular access from High Road and provision for 11 car-parking spaces.

The accompanying guidelines on how to comment on planning applications opened with 'Your council is committed to consulting neighbours and other parties who could be directly affected by planning applications.....' This surprised me because, to my knowledge, none of my neighbours have been consulted. On further investigation I was unable to find any public notices posted in the vicinity of the petrol station and when I actually enquired at the petrol station the staff had no knowledge of such notice.

I am concerned at this proposal because (1) this site is already a busy, dangerous junction subject to heavy traffic plus the additional hazard of it being in close proximity to a school and (2) If the 'retail sales building' is part of a major chain it would have serious impact on the livelihood of the small independent shops in the area and this, in turn, would have an adverse effect on the character of the area.

Hazel Burnett
address supplied

Save our conservation area

Dear Editor

I am writing to express my concerns about the plans to build a large building for the Garden Suburb Institute and two large blocks of flats on the site of the National Hospital for Neurology, just behind East Finchley Station.

Traffic will increase on our already congested local streets and create even more pressure on overburdened on-street parking areas, not to mention increased noise and pollution and the felling of fine trees.

Michaela Fellner
Cherry Tree Rd, N2

Send your correspondence to:
"Letters Page", The Archer, PO
Box 3699, London N2 8JA.
(Due to space restrictions, letters
over 200 words will be edited)

Post Office Protest

Dear Sir,

It was heartening to see such an excellent turn-out of local residents at Avenue House today, 4 March to meet with Post Office Ltd officials and explain why the main Finchley Church End Post Office should be saved from closure.

However, it was disheartening to speak to the post office representatives, such as Jackie Illsley and George Hooper, who gave the impression that they hadn't come to consult with us but to explain why they had already decided to close Finchley Church End Post Office. Certainly, this was the view of the Postwatch representative who was present. She was disturbed that Ms Illsley kept stressing that it was a 'purely commercial decision' and that the Finchley Church End Post Office was 'losing money'.

Of course, not even Postwatch has been shown the accounts which prove this. So the suspicion is that Post Office Ltd is just going through the motions. It implies that public opinion doesn't matter to the people who run our post offices. Ms Illsley told me that the Government had given the Post Office the authority to go ahead with closures in branches like Finchley. I stressed that this is hardly something to reassure the elderly and mothers with children as they struggle on to buses up to North Finchley in heavy traffic to visit their 'local' post office once Finchley Church End Post Office is closed. 2000 names on a petition saved Hampstead's South End Green sub-post office from closure.

Post Office Ltd must have received at least double that number of letters and names on petitions to save the Crown Post Office of Finchley Church End. So we mustn't give up hope, but we must be suspicious of the process which we have all just gone through.

Yours sincerely,
Andrew Mennear
212 Ballards Lane, N3

Parking Fears at Thomas More

Dear Editor

I read with interest the article by Sophie Leighton and although I am a tenant living in Cecilia Close (on the same estate but off Hamilton Road), I am concerned that not all tenants on the estate have been informed about the proposed building on the Thomas More Centre car park as the entire estate is experiencing car parking problems which may escalate further.

As parking spaces are not pre-allocated on the entire estate, if the prefabricated building is erected on the car park site, there is nothing to prevent staff and visitors to Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute parking wherever they want to on the estate and thus depriving tenants even further of lack of a parking space.

I have lived on the estate for more than 20 years and have seen it gradually deteriorate.

Yours sincerely
Betti Blatman
Cecilia Close, N2

Postal walks cut

Dear Editor,

It has come to my attention that the postal service intends to cut eight of the 28 walks in the area of East Finchley. This reduction in public service spells disaster not just for residents of the area but also for those unfortunate posties who will be burdened with the extra work.

In an age when people are increasingly getting several pounds of junk mail a year it is outrageous that postmen and women are expected to do more work for the same pay. The postal service should think about the real cost to their workers of these money saving measures before implementing them.

Noel Lynch
Green Party Member of the
London Assembly
City Hall,
London SE1

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.



Rush Hour

By Sam Groves

The dominant characteristic of our culture industry is 'speed'. For a long time we have conflated progression with acceleration. Every new gadget and gismo that is unleashed onto the market is, one way or another, selling us *this* product.

Advances that at one time were inconceivable have failed to satisfy our appetite. If anything, our desire for speed has itself gained pace. So much so that we are now at a time when information is more accessible than it has ever been. At a touch of a button or a click of the mouse we can [more or less] get hold of anyone or anything we want. For the discerning consumer there is a virtually infinite potential.

Wasted

It is ironic, then, that our compulsive attachment to speed means that these facilities are wasted on the majority of us. News, music, film is worth nothing unless it is heard *in time*, unless the consumer is given the opportunity to be among the first crop to "discover" it. We are only interested as long as it is fast, loud and shocking. People favour the immediate hit over media that requires any investment of thought or patience. The result? An industry that churns out the same signs, sounds and images because they are the most familiar and therefore will grab our attention the quickest. The apotheosis of this trend can be found on Sky Digital. A service that promises genuine choice and quality yet continually resorts to replaying episodes of *Beadles About* and *Gladiators* (although anyone that has seen *Shadow*, armed with a peudal stick, go to work on a man may beg to differ)

Refuge in the bland

At the same time this lack of curiosity and imagination indicates a certain ambivalence towards the fast and furious environment we have cast around us. Desperate to retreat to an enclosed space that is predictable and controllable we continually fall back on the media we understand; taking refuge in the bland, the repetitive and the pedestrian. We may tolerate the semblance of diversity but only on condition that it tastes the same and we can eat it with a knife and fork. The tragedy is that at a time when our world has more windows than ever, most of us choose to keep the curtains drawn.

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An Evening to Remember

By Helen Drake

On Saturday 28 February, All Saints Church, Durham Road was the atmospheric setting of a special fundraising Concert by The Ellerdale Piano Trio and the venue of a contemporary art exhibition, organised by Martin Schools PTA. Catrin Dillon, Chair of the PTA committee, declared the evening "a resounding success", raising over £800 for the school.

Art Exhibition

With the snow starting to fall outside on what was a beautiful clear evening, guests gathered at the church for a drinks reception and a chance to mingle and view the exhibition, organised in conjunction with 'East Finchley Open', a new initiative by artists and craftspeople living and working in East Finchley and the Barnet area. "We want to increase the visibility of local artists and are hoping to organise a group show of some kind to coincide with the East Finchley Festival", said David Aronsohn who co-ordinated the exhibition. All artists gave a percentage of their sales to the school.

Enthusiastic audience

Sarah Down (piano), Martin Smith (violin) and Melanie Woodcock (cello) received an enthusiastic welcome from the audience that included several children who had been brought along by their parents to

experience their first classical concert. Martin Smith acted as a genial compère for the evening, introducing each piece of music with snippets of information about the composers and amusing anecdotes.

Surprise

As part of the carefully selected musical programme The Ellerdale Trio had chosen Bergerettes by Boshuslav Martinu, as it is a particular favourite in their concert repertoire. At the end of the concert the Trio surprised everyone by returning to play *Spiegel im Spiegel* by Arvo Pärt, an ethereal piece of music which suited the mood of the evening perfectly.

Sarah Down

Although a familiar face at Martin Schools where she leads the singing and plays the piano for the nursery children each week, Sarah Down is a much in demand professional pianist and a founder member of The Ellerdale Trio. "We couldn't have done this without Sarah," said Catrin Dillon, "and we're extremely grateful to her."



The Ellerdale Trio Photos by Michael Cronshaw and Helen Drake



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