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Local News Is Our Aim

THE ARCHER



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December 2004 No. 139 **20p**
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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Open at last

By Sheila Armstrong

Despite a last minute attempt to sabotage the official opening of the Artsdepot on 26 October, Prince Edward did do the royal thing and opened it as planned. Like it or loathe it, it's now open. On the preceding Saturday all areas were available for us locals to see, including the café, the bar and most importantly the box office, so *THE ARCHER* went along to look.

Low key event

Architects Ruddle Wilkinson have provided an attractive double-height central circulation space

with theatres, bars and other offices leading off it. The theatres are doubtless state of the art and the uncompromising colours (lime green, maroon



The new Artsdepot in North Finchley. Photo by Tony Roberts

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and black) used in some areas are reminiscent of the Lowry Theatre in Salford. In the foyer a continuously playing pianola provided a bit of atmosphere for what one local described as a rather low key event, suggesting that perhaps tours of the building; videos or something (anything) in the gallery; or short performances in the theatres would have livened things up.

Good vibes

As well as the theatres and gallery, Community Focus, the arts organisation for people of

all abilities, is based there. In their suite of rooms the community workers had put on exhibitions, videos and slides showing their work. And there were plenty of staff on hand to answer questions; they said they are pleased with their new headquarters. Wheel chair access around the building seemed to be generally good.

In January 2005 the Performing Arts Department of Barnet College will be transferring there and has its own suite including a dance studio. At the Open Day their students

acted as volunteer stewards throughout the building, all of them enthusiastic about the coming move. Quite a lot of locals turned up to see what was on offer and the café and bar were full. Hopefully the box office did good business and will continue to do so. The Artsdepot now needs all of us to go along to support their wide-ranging first season's programme. For more information go to www.artsdepot.co.uk, or get details from the box office on 020 8449 0048.

Stanley Road Field to be assessed

By Daphne Chamberlain

A Regional Facilities Manager for the Football Association is visiting Stanley Road Playing Field this month (*December*). He will be assessing whether it is eligible for grassroots development – i.e. pitch, lighting and clubhouse – under the terms of the Sport England Community Club Development Programme.

The visit has been arranged by Philip King, from The Walks Residents' Association. As reported in *THE ARCHER* last month, Mr King asked at the Finchley Forum whether

Barnet had made any move toward securing funding from Sport England for the field. He was told that a Council officer would contact him, but at the time of going to press he has

heard nothing from them.

At present, floodlights and changing facilities for the field are housed in the Herbert Wilmot Centre, which Councillor John Marshall has told us needs £250,000 to be made usable (see Letters Page).

If the field is considered suitable for development, the actual application must be made by Barnet, but meanwhile Mr King is setting the wheels in motion.

He has invited Councillor Alison Moore and *THE ARCHER* to be present at the assessment.

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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

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East Finchley Newspapers

CHAIR

Kevin Finn

COPY EDITOR

Tony Roberts

EDITORIAL TEAM

Features:

David Hobbs

News:

Daphne Chamberlain

Young Archer:

Diana Cormack

SUB EDITORS

Frances Loveday

Ann Bronkhorst

Pam Kent

PICTURE EDITOR

Erini Rodis

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Alison Roberts

Tony Roberts

ADVERTISING

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us with a meeting place.*

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

Your contributions

If you have a story for us, please
send it in to the above address.
Comments to THE ARCHER may be
published unless clearly marked
'Not for publication' within
the text, email or voicemail.

**14 December is the copy dead-
line for the January issue.**

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Barnet

Admin/Town Hall 020 8359 2000
Council Tax 020 8359 2608
Recycling & refuse 020 8359 4600
Primary Care Trust 020 8201 4700
Benefits Agency 020 8258 6500
Employment Service 020 8258 3900
Haringey Council 020 8489 0000

Leisure

Alexandra Palace 020 8365 2121
East Finchley Library 020 8883 2664
Muswell Hill Odeon 0870 505 0007
Phoenix Cinema 020 8444 6789
Tourist Info Service 0870 128 8080
Warner Cinema 020 8446 9933

Transport

BR Enquiries 0845 7484950
City Airport 020 7646 0088
London Transport 020 7222 1234
National Express 08705 808080
Heathrow Airport 0870 000 0123

Help & Advice

Childline 0800 1111
Disability Info Service 02084466935
E.F. Advice Service 020 8444 6265
Gingerbread 020 8445 4227
National Debt Line 0808 808 4000
NSPCC 0800 800500
Rape & Sexual Abuse 0208683 3300
Relate 020 8447 8101
Samaritans 08457 909090
Refuge Crisis Line 0870 599 5443

Health Advice

AIDSline 020 8363 2141
Alcoholics Anonymous 08457697555
Barnet MENCAP 020 8203 6688
Cancer Support 020 8202 2211
Carers' Line 0808 808 7777
Drinkline 0800 917 8282
Drugs Helpline 0800 776600
Health Info Service 0800 665544
MIND 020 8343 5700
National Blood Ctr. 084577117711

OAP's Advice

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Contact (N2) 020 8444 1162
Help the Aged 0808 800 6565

Hospitals

Barnet General 020 8216 4000
Coppetts Wood 020 8883 9792
Finchley Memorial 020 8349 6300
Oak Lane Clinic 020 8346 9343
Royal Free 020 7794 0500
St Luke's 020 8219 1800
Whittington 020 7272 3070
Western Eye Hosp. 020 7886 6666

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❖ **Careers advice**, Green Man, Com-
munity Centre 020 8883 4916
❖ **Toy library**, Muswell Hill 020
8444 0244/ 8489 8774

High Road robbery

A 17-year-old was forced to hand over his wallet when a suspect pulled a knife on him on Friday 12 November at about 8pm, as he left the Off Licence in High Road, Finchley. Two males approached him, one holding what the victim described as a bread knife while the other spoke to him and demanded money.

Fearful for his safety, the victim handed over his wallet containing about £50 cash. The two suspects then ran off towards the North Circular Road.

The suspects are both described as about 17 years old. One was about 6ft tall wearing dark blue jeans, a zipped up black jacket and a black baseball cap. The other suspect had collar-length streaked hair, was about 5ft 10in. tall, athletic build and was wearing black trousers with a grey shell suit top and a baseball cap.

Anyone with any information is asked to ring DC Tyldesley on 0208 733 4593 or Crimestoppers on 0800555111.

Barnet link

Barnet Link is part of the Shared Care Network. This provides short respite breaks for families with children who have disabilities. Even if you can spare as little as a couple of hours' time to help once or twice a month, Barnet Link would like to hear from you. Please contact 020 8359 4249 or barnet.link@barnet.gov.uk.

Staying safe

Barnet is a relatively safe area, but the following advice is worth following wherever you are, even abroad when on holiday.

- Plan your journey, there and back. Tell someone about your plans or leave a note where someone will see it easily.
- Find out about trains or bus times so you don't have to wait alone for a long time.
- Where possible, travel with friends or arrange to be collected from where you are going by a family member or someone else you trust.
- Carry the phone number of a minicab company you've used before and know you can trust. Never get into a minicab that pulls alongside and offers you a lift if you haven't ordered one.
- If you're carrying a personal attack alarm, make sure you can find it straight away (for example, not at the bottom of your bag).
- Keep to well-lit roads and avoid short cuts through dark places, waste ground or where people might use hiding places like trees or bushes.

More time to pick up parcels

East Finchley Delivery Office will be opening on weekday evenings during the fortnight before Christmas, so that parcels can be picked up on the way home from work.

From Monday 13 to Friday 17 December, and from Monday 20 to Thursday 23 December, the office in Market Place will be open between 6 and 8pm.

Morning hours will remain the same, including Christmas Eve, Friday 24 December. For further information, call Andy Harris on 020 8883 2828.

Alert all local charities

Ladbroke's of 99 High Road have informed us that they have a Community charitable trust with a large sum of money that is available to local charities. If you are a registered charity please apply to the manager, Brian, for an application form

Local Planning Applications

166-168 High Road N2

Conversion of upper floors to provide three self-contained flats.

212 High Road N2

Erection of single storey rear extension to provide additional shop floor space, together with an external staircase to provide access to new first floor self-contained flat, and associated alterations to rear elevation of first floor.

240 High Road N2

Erection of first floor extension to accommodate a self-contained one-bedroom flat.

322 High Road N2

Erection of three-storey detached house with canopy between proposed building and existing workshop at 324 High Road. Associated provision of off-street parking accessed from High Road.

373 High Road N2

Erection of four-storey block to provide total of eight self-contained flats, with associated off-street parking and access from High Road.

65 Summerlee Avenue N2

Alterations to roof, including addition of side dormer window to facilitate loft conversion.

1st Floor Flat, 35 Park Hall Road N2

Alteration to roof, including rear dormer window to facilitate loft conversion.

Land adjoining 4/4A Hertford Road N2

Erection of a single storey dwelling house with one off-street parking space to front. Formation of vehicular and pedestrian accesses to Hertford Road.

54 Hertford Road N2

Demolition of existing garage and formation of part single/part two-storey side extension.

24 Brendon Grove N2

Conversion of garage to

habitable room, including insertion of front window.

254 East End Road N2

Retention of ground floor as a two-bedroom self-contained flat.

23 Howard Walk N2

Conversion of garage to habitable room with associated external alterations. Extension to kitchen at rear. Construction of linking canopy between main house and garage building. Alterations to roof, including addition of rear dormer window and side conservation style rooflight. Replacement of first floor window.

27 Howard Walk N2

Single storey rear extension. Replacement door and windows on rear elevation.

37 Brim Hill N2

Conversion of garage into habitable room with replacement garage doors. French doors at rear. New door and window in place of door to rear wing. Replacement rear window. Addition of conservation rooflights to side and rear roof slopes.

71 Brim Hill N2

First floor rear extension, involving dormer window at first floor level and extension to cat-slide roof. Single storey rear extension to existing garage block and installation of new timber doors.

36a & 36b High Road N2

Conversion of existing two in number flats into two self-contained studio flats.

87 High Road N2

External illuminated fascia signs and three fascia vinyl overlays.

11 Fortis Green N2

Installation of internally illuminated fascia and projecting box signs.

13 Fortis Green N2

Insertion of window at ground floor level on front elevation.



Memorial Hospital ward threatened

Barnet Primary Care Trust states that it has increasingly, in recent years, been placing patients in a nursing home environment rather than in hospital and, finding that this type of placement has often proved preferable, they would now like to see all their continuing care patients benefiting from this arrangement.

According to figures in their consultation document entitled *Improving NHS Continuing Care Services*, issued in September for comments by mid January, only about 10% of such services are still met by hospital-based care, mainly in the 20 bed Dickens ward at Finchley Memorial Hospital, which is said to be out of date and not conducive to the best of patient care. They list four options: do nothing, refurbish Dickens ward (with a reduction to 12 beds, some patients going elsewhere), transfer services to another PCT, or transfer them to the private sector.

The preferred option is transferral to the private sector, a tender should be sought to provide 20 beds in a single, local, private care home or for blocks of places (say) five per home to give a spread and therefore choice of location. As a consequence of the proposal, Dickens ward would be closed, and staff on the ward would be redeployed within the trust,



Finchley Memorial Hospital. Photo by Tony Roberts

seconded to the private care home, or transferred to them under TUPE regulations. Other options for continuing care services are considered, and judged inferior. The document puts this all in the context of the population of Barnet who are 65 years or older, which is projected to fall by 9% over the next five years.

The PCT has advised *THE ARCHER* that the results of the consultation will not be available until after it has been completed next year.

Supporting the North London Hospice

By Diana Cormack

After thirteen years of trading, the North London Hospice Shop at 123 High Road has been revamped. Mary Boylan who has worked there since the start, first as a part-time volunteer and now as joint manageress, told *THE ARCHER* that the North London Hospice itself actually opened 14 months after the shop.

During those years, the charity shop has raised well over £1million but the time to pay attention to the premises was well overdue. There were problems with the walls and floor and some flooding had not helped the situation. But there were plenty of volunteers willing to help with the improvements, as well as to donate much of the shelving and internal equipment which has been installed.

In paying tribute to them all, joint manageress Eugenia von Piccardio gave maintenance man and driver Bob Donce and retail manager Michele Maroni particular praise, describing their work as "well beyond the call of duty." They freely gave of their time to the task, which necessitated the shop being closed for two weeks. Only the crucially important job of floor laying was left to the professionals.

With its pale yellow paintwork, the place looks lighter and bigger and the new hanging space makes it less cluttered. There are now two changing rooms for shoppers instead of one and the volunteer helpers haven't been forgotten, for they have been provided with a rest area at the back where they can make a cup of tea and put their feet up.

Despite suffering from Parkinson's Disease, one former volunteer, Bernie Stephens of Cherry Tree Road, decided to organise a pre-Christmas bric-a-brac sale in the Finchley Youth Theatre. With the help of long-term hospice supporter actress Carolyn Pickles (of Bedford Road and ITV's *Emmerdale*), plus family, friends and her carer, Bernie was delighted that the event raised over £400.

If you would like to help at the hospice shop, drop in for a chat or phone 8883 6493 for details.

A visit to the Brownies

By Mary Atkinson

of East Finchley RSPCA
The 4th East Finchley Brownie Pack are working to gain badges in Animal Welfare, so last month their leaders, Barn Owl and Snowy Owl, asked the local branch of the RSPCA to come along to a meeting and tell the girls about the work we do.

Anne Lewis and I went along with a plentiful supply of magazines and leaflets to hand out. I began by talking about how our Inspector responds to calls made to our helpline about animals in distress. Then they heard about our Clinic in Park Road, raising money to subsidise it (don't forget our Christmas Fayre on 11 December at the Clinic) and the home checking we do to place unwanted animals in new homes.

I finished with the happy story of a stray kitten who found shelter in a house near mine. I put up FOUND notices in the neighbourhood and a day later it was reunited with its owner.

Then Anne took over and distributed the literature she had brought and answered lots of questions from the girls.

They also talked about their pets and how they looked after them. They gave us a Brownie 'Thank You' for coming along, we wished them luck in their work for a new badge and said goodbye at the end of a happy evening. The Brownies have since given the local RSPCA a donation of £20.

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The willow trees in Edmunds Walk. Photo by John Dearing

The first cut is the deepest

Some people in Edmunds Walk were so shocked by the treatment meted out by Barnet Council workers to one of the three willow trees in their road that they persuaded the men to stop and go away.

The trees in question have been there for well over twenty years and no notification about their being pruned was given.

One resident, who contacted *THE ARCHER*, used words like *butchered* and *massacred* to describe the tree in question.

"Everyone who goes by looks at it in horror," she said. "It has spoiled the beauty of our little cul de sac."

Readers can judge from the photograph, taken in early October. The other two trees were pruned properly a month later.

Bus Watch visit Metroline

By Daphne Chamberlain
East Finchley Bus Watch visited Metroline's Wembley Park HQ last month. Following the group's monitoring of the 263 and 143, the routes' operators were anxious to show them their £10 million investment in bus control.

A pilot scheme in conjunction with Transport for London, the computer-run project shows HQ the position of every bus running on selected routes. HQ supervisors see at a glance

whether buses are running to time, and also the intervals between them. They communicate with the drivers by text (scroll-down for drivers).

Portions of the chart are visible in bus cabins, and the screen can also be downloaded to en-route supervisors, via mobiles.

In London, this scheme operates mainly in Central and North-West areas, although the 82 uses it. Metroline are waiting for the go-ahead from Transport for London before introducing it to other garages.

The 263 and 143 are still dependent on traditional controls, but Bus Watch were told that supervisors are allocated to varying places, "from 7am to late", and are also on duty at Potters Bar garage from 4.15am to 2.30am the following day. Bus Watch members discussed with supervisors the best way to continue their own monitoring in future.

What else can be done?

Meanwhile, as Metroline pointed out, traffic congestion in outer London continues to rise. In addition, not even the most sophisticated technology can prevent occasional breakdowns in service.

What else can be done? "Put on another bus – or re-route an existing service" is what many Bus Watch members believe. They maintain that one route along a busy main road, particularly with the rise in population on the High Road, is not enough. This is an argument that the Group will be taking to Transport for London.

Tube trains in safe hands

The future of the Underground is currently being tested on a 900-yard stretch of track in East Finchley. A new system has been fitted to a train which will take over from the driver, and control its speed, braking and accelerating automatically.

It will allow trains to travel at up to 60 mph, with the gap to the next train reduced from 700 yards to as little as 280 yards, allowing many more trains onto the same amount of track in safety. This will go a long way to reducing overcrowding on the network.

Computerised speed control

The system works by using an antenna installed on each train that detects cable loops between the tracks. With this, it accurately calculates the position of the train and relays this information to management computers located at stations. These then calculate the optimum safe speed for the trains, which run a constant distance apart, and brake if they are in any danger of encroaching on the minimum distance to the train in front. If the signal between the track and the train fails, the system will apply the emergency brakes. The driver will continue to manage the doors of the train, and cope

with emergencies. A similar system is already operating on the driverless Docklands Light Railway, although the maximum speed is much lower.

More trains in seven years' time

The system is designed by the Canadian firm Alcatel and is planned initially for the Jubilee Line in 2009 with the Northern Line following in 2011. The number of trains will be increased from 18 to 26 per hour between Camden and Finchley Central, and from 14 to 20 per hour between Finchley Central and High Barnet.

Dr. Siv Bhamra, the project manager of Tube Lines, said that the chosen system had already been installed successfully on metro networks in Hong Kong, Ankara, Vancouver and San Francisco: "We have spent £1 million building this test track and we will carry out a huge testing programme to ensure that the system is working properly before we move to passenger operations."

Shopping bus: new service

East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact has announced a development in their shopping bus scheme. Thanks to a one-year funding from Finchley Charities, they have restarted the Thursday bus, to run alongside the existing Friday service.

The Shopping Bus Scheme is a free service for elderly or disabled people who are still mobile enough to board a minibus and do their shopping, but are not able to carry heavy shopping home again or to afford a regular taxi.

Once registered, people are phoned each week by Dolores, the Contact Shopping Bus Co-ordinator, who offers places and makes sure the bus is always full. (On average, shoppers go once a fortnight.)

The Friday bus, which will concentrate on the N2 area east of East End Road, picks up shoppers from their homes between 12 noon and 12.30pm, arriving at Tesco's, Colney Hatch Lane, around 1pm. About an hour is allocated for shopping and/or having lunch.

The Thursday bus, which is intended for shoppers from East End Road and also the N3 area, runs one hour later.

For further details, please call 020 8444 1162.

Protect your car!

Car crime is often one of the easiest crimes to commit as cars are left for long periods in car parks while people commute to work. To avoid becoming a victim of car crime Barnet police are offering the following advice:

- Lock the doors and windows when you leave the car – for any length of time, no matter how brief.
- Don't leave anything on display – even a jacket can seem like an appealing target for a thief. Remove the stereo if you can. Also tuck in wing mirrors and put down the aerial to discourage vandals.
- Never store your car's documents in the car.
- A Thatcham-approved immobiliser or steering lock can help secure older vehicles.
- Think about having windows etched with the car's vehicle registration number and make a note of its chassis number.
- Keep your car keys in a safe place, even when in your house, so that someone breaking in cannot steal your car too.

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Sippy surrounded by her photos of local supporting businesses. Photo Toni Morgan

Fundraiser Sippy thanks East Finchley

By Diana Cormack

For the third time this year, Budgen's generous support has enabled Sippy Azizollah to raise even more money for Lupus UK/ North London Lupus.

Hallowe'en Spirit

Not only did the High Road store provide a hamper to be raffled at Hallowe'en, they also supplied food for customers, such as pizza slices, vegetarian spring rolls, cakes and spooky biscuits. One Indian lady employee even heated up her homemade samosas and pakora on the premises. Sippy was delighted with the team spirit of the staff, who did all they could to help and who added to the atmosphere by dressing up in suitably scary outfits.

As well as the hamper,

there were prizes of a bottle of champagne, chocolate biscuits and cuddly toys, all courtesy of Budgen's.

Sippy told *THE ARCHER* that she was "again knocked out by their generosity and by that of East Finchley residents." As well as buying raffle tickets, people threw handfuls of loose change into her collection bucket. At the end of the event another £402 had been raised.

Birthday bonanza

The final event of the year that Sippy has devoted to fund raising for Lupus UK was a party in Martin School hall for her birthday on 12 November,

prepared by school keeper John Mitchell and decorated by volunteers from the Woodcraft Folk. Many local shops, restaurants and businesses generously provided a wide range of substantial prizes as well as some great food. These traders, along with friends and family (who also brought along food and drink) helped that particular event to raise over £1,000

Sippy has asked *THE ARCHER* to express her gratitude to everyone who has helped in her fundraising ventures. When she has the final total, Sippy will let us know.

Cllr Palmer turns the page

By Daphne Chamberlain

Councillor Suzette Palmer has been quoted recently as saying that East Finchley Library was jerry-built, and East Finchley people didn't deserve a library after rejecting the Waitrose development proposal. Did she mean this? *THE ARCHER* had a word with her.

"I must admit," she said, "I felt you had turned down a gift horse, but believe me, I am passionate about libraries. They were my responsibility in the previous administration, and I fought tooth and nail to ensure that no library was closed in this borough."

Admitting that she didn't know East Finchley very well, Cllr Palmer was surprised to hear the importance placed by many residents locally on keeping the library in the locality. She conceded that the "jerry-built" remark – a description originally by a Council officer – was unjustified, particularly in the light of the library's Grade 2 listing by English Heritage. The listing, though, she considered "a bad mistake",

on the grounds that any refurbishment must wait for English Heritage approval and will cost much more.

Right to feel angry

What did she feel about East Finchley being offered a refurbishment option which doesn't appear to be materialising? "Unfair", she said, "People have a right to feel angry."

Installing a lift was not vital, she thought, as the meeting room on the upper floor is not part of statutory library provision. However, she did place great importance on finding out how the library can meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act in the most cost-efficient manner – which is an aim of the East Finchley Library Users' Group.

Footnote:

Cllr Palmer later had a constructive meeting with the Library Users' Group committee. She reportedly commented on the absence of library provision in Barnet's current budget consultation, emphasised the value of rallying a number of supporters, and agreed that the next step should be to ask Pam Usher, Council officer with overall responsibility for library provision, for a public meeting.

Though no longer in power herself, she pledged support "to the death" to protect libraries.

The campaign group now has 97 members and there is a sign-up list in Tony's Continental.

Vacancy

The Archer team is looking for a volunteer to take part in the processing of contributors' text to make it suitable for setting on pages.

Applicants must have basic computer skills, but training will be provided.

The job would involve a few hours each month at regular intervals.

For information please contact Tony on 8883 5954, email the-archer@lineone.net, or come along to a Saturday meeting at 11am at Madden's Ale House, 130 High Road.

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Photo by Jonathan Blackstaffe

The most exciting team in north London?

By Jonathan Blackstaffe

Just a short ride north from East Finchley tube station to the end of the Northern Line is Underhill, home of Barnet FC. Although if the football team's current form continues throughout the season, Underhill might be re-named Over-the-moon.

In the years that followed the departure of two of the biggest characters ever to throw their weight around lower league football – former chairman Stan Flashman and manager Barry Fry – Barnet FC seemed in terminal decline. That was until this season when manager Paul Fairclough and his young side turned the Conference division into their own personal springboard.

With a record that would keep even Arsenal happy and playing the sort of football their fellow north Londoners seemed to have copyrighted, there is now a definite buzz about the Bees. The team plays all-action attacking football which has resulted in goals flying in at a rate that even Kevin Keegan would love.

These days, a visit to Underhill is an exciting affair, and somewhat like travelling in a time machine back to an earlier era. The majority of the fans still stand. Most of the players are English. And the pitch even has a tendency to water-logging in one corner, an amusing sight which has all but disappeared from football with the advent of such new-fangled technology as drainage.

The day your faithful reporter went was miserable – rain was falling in sheets, driven by an icy wind blowing in straight off the cold, empty expanse that is London's Green Belt. Still, 2,501 supporters turned up, attracted by a successful side, a genuinely community-focused club and reasonably priced tickets.

The serious fans stood under cover in the East Terrace and sang with all the joy and tunefulness of a contestant on the X Factor. The hardier folk

huddled under umbrellas on the green seating of the South Stand, giving it the appearance of a field of giant mushrooms. And the many families reclined in the comfort of the Main Stand.

All were rewarded with yet another exciting performance as their team beat York City 4-0.

Everyone went home happy. But then, at Barnet these days, the crowd always goes home happy.

100 not out

By Daphne Chamberlain

East Finchley's Dorothy Ditcham celebrated her 100th birthday at the end of October – amid general disbelief. "It seems extraordinary to me too!" she said, laughing heartily.



Dorothy Ditcham on her 100th birthday with Twiggy

Photo by Daphne Chamberlain

"She giggles a lot," said neighbour Margaret McAlister. "Dorothy always laughs, even when things go wrong. She's my

role-model – our local legend."

Dorothy herself has never had a role-model: "I've never wanted to be anyone but myself. I've done a lot of interesting things and met a lot of interesting people, and I had a marvellous husband."

Forced to give up chicken farming 80 years ago because carrying heavy buckets had strained her heart, Dorothy turned her talents in other directions, including 50 years in the WVS. More recently, still active and energetic, she has been supplying *THE ARCHER* with information about East Finchley, which she has known since her family moved here in 1911.

Dorothy retains her interest in her garden, and enjoys reading (preferably accompanied by some chocolates and her beautiful cat, Twiggy).

Does Dorothy have a message for the people of East Finchley? – "Just keep laughing."

Do it yourself

Among her birthday cards was one from the Queen. To arrange a birthday or special anniversary message from the Queen contact Buckingham Palace Anniversaries Office – tel. 020 7930 4832 or write to Anniversaries Office, Buckingham Palace, SW1A 1AA. They will send an application form, which must be returned to the Palace three weeks before the required date. In the case of a 100th birthday, a copy of the birth certificate should be returned with the form if possible. If that is not available, the Anniversaries Office will check details with the Department of Works and Pensions.

Remember, Remember

By Helen Drake

"Spectacular" and "great value for money" were some of the comments of those in the throng who gathered on Martin Schools' playing field on Thursday 4 November to enjoy the annual fireworks display. For the second year running, volunteers from Martin Schools PTA, the Green Man Users Committee and the East Finchley Development Trust banded together to organise, set up and steward this much-loved community event.

Approximately 1,500 adults and children from across East Finchley enjoyed the twenty-five minute professional display, with many new crowd-pleasing fireworks added to the repertoire. Children clutched their brightly coloured glow sticks, while their parents enjoyed the warming hot chocolate with marshmallows and cream, one of the many comforting offerings from the Blue Bird Café.

Councillors Colin Rogers, along with Councillors Alison Moore and Phil Yeoman, who acted as stewards on the night, observed that this second annual fireworks display was what the East Finchley Development Trust was all about – voluntary groups working together for a common purpose,

using the unique talents of each organisation.

Catrin Dillon, Chair of Martin Schools PTA, said, "We're so pleased that we have the space, in the shape of our fantastic field, to put on an event of this size. I want to thank all the volunteers from the community groups involved, who, together, made it such a success."

For Kevin Anscomb, the new headteacher at Martin Infant School, attending the school fireworks display was a new experience. "Thrilled" was his reaction to the evening. He also commended the PTA team on producing such a "professional and well co-ordinated event.... with the support of our neighbourhood partners in the Development Trust."



Members of Martin School's PTA with their families. Photo by H. Derraji



HISTORY

East Finchley's Kewgardia

By Rita Palmer (nee Chick)

My family moved to Kewgardia in 1956 when I was nine years old. It was situated at 329 High Road, between Oak Lane and Sylvester Road. My mother and father initially ran the shop as a greengrocer's and florist's, and then changed over to all floristry and employed staff, including my husband. We grew quite a lot of our own flowers – chrysanthemums, gladioli, and lots of dahlias.

The grounds covered approximately five acres, on which there were two cottages and a privately owned garage. Our house was Georgian and I think it was called Leicester House, but I cannot find any record of that. The side of the house was burnt down, but then rebuilt again. We had two Alsatian dogs, called Jill and Kim. After the business started to take off we began to get quite a big clientele, including some famous faces, such as Cliff Richard, Bernard Bresslaw, Alfred Marks, Joy Beverley and Barbara Cartland.

A lot of our customers would buy flowers to take over to the St. Pancras and Islington cemetery opposite us. At Christmas time we made hundreds and hundreds of wreaths. We used to have a production line running, each one adding something to the wreath. Our hands used to get quite sore.



Kewgardia in the 1960s. Photo courtesy of The Finchley Press / Rita Palmer

I have a lot of happy memories of the nurseries, and Mum and Dad, who have now both passed away, did enjoy running the business and watching it grow. I don't think they wanted to leave there, but we had no option as it was on a lease. We moved out in 1972, and it was demolished to make way for a

housing estate.

We sometimes drive down to East Finchley but it doesn't seem the same now as there have been so many changes, and I don't recognise it. Writing this, though, has made me remember the people we got to know who lived nearby, and all the friends we made there.

Octavia's garden

By Ann Bronkhorst

One day the Green Man Community Centre may be haunted by a friendly ghost. The Centre's user committee plans to create a garden on a nearby patch of land and include in it a memorial to Octavia Hill, the nineteenth-century housing reformer, who would surely give it her blessing.

On 28 October the committee invited Peter Clayton, Chair of the Octavia Hill Society and a social historian of London, to talk about her life and achievements. Peter had the facts at his fingertips and was an engaging and humorous speaker, sharing his enthusiasm for this Victorian woman who, he says, has taken over his life.

Country childhood

Old maps and engravings revealed a lost world: Finchley Common, Strawberry Vale Brook, the Turnpike Road (A100) and Brownswells. Here much of Octavia's happy childhood was spent, providing a touchstone for her all her life. She campaigned to save open spaces for all to use, eventually co-founding the National Trust. Queen's Wood, Highgate, Parliament Hill Fields and many smaller open spaces in London (her "outdoor sittingrooms") were saved for us by Octavia.

Better housing

Her main achievement lay

in her practical, business-like approach to housing management. She trained women to combine rent-collecting with social work; her methods brought huge improvements to the living conditions of the poor. Today's best housing management practice evolved from her beliefs and hard work.

Making it happen

A community garden will be in the Octavia Hill tradition and Martin O'Donnell of the Green Man Centre is "absolutely confident it will happen". The committee are bidding for at least £25,000 from the Peabody Trust. Other support is coming from the Living Spaces Programme of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Trafford Hall, the National Tenants' Training Centre. East Finchley Community Development Trust are helping to secure more external funding and Groundwork Camden will make a model and canvass residents' ideas.

Coldfall for glaciers

By John Dearing

Those of you who have had the pleasure of watching Alan Titchmarsh's excellent series "British Isles: a Natural History" may have noticed that East Finchley was mentioned in the edition broadcast on 13 October.

The last ten minutes of each edition were entitled *Local Landscape Detectives* and in London, Joe Swift met experts to examine local evidence of the subject matter of the main programme.

On this occasion, he went to Alexandra Palace to meet Eric Robinson, a geologist, who pointed out the wide valley between there and the Highgate ridge, which, he said, was formed by the melt water from the Ice Age glacier whose southern edge was in the locality.

They visited Coldfall Wood and without much trouble found flint pebbles with pitted surfaces rather than the more usual smooth surfaces from river water polishing. This indicated that they had been dragged against hard rocks by moving ice. They also found sandstone pebbles which must have been transported from further north, and which had striations caused by similar circumstances. This glacial *till* indicates that the southern-most extension of the glacier was at or near to Coldfall Wood.



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Bishop opens library extension

By John Dearing

Thursday 21 October 2004 was an auspicious day for Holy Trinity School, as The Right Reverend and Right Honourable Dr. Richard Chartres, the Bishop of London, visited the school to open their new library extension.

The celebrations started with a reception for the Bishop, attended by Duncan Mills, the headteacher, Mrs Sylvia Duthie, chair of the board of governors, many of the school staff and governors, and other distinguished local people involved with the school, including Carolyn Pickles, Councillor Alison Moore, and Father Christopher Hardy of All Saints' Church.

The guests were given a tour of the school, and the new library extension which includes a new room for the headteacher, a new office and an extended staff room.

Special assembly

A special school assembly was conducted in the presence of the Bishop, looking most impressive in his full formal regalia. He gave the address, applauding the singing, and speaking on the topic of listening as a means of personal development. He said that he had last visited the school in 1997 for the 150-year anniversary, and noted how much the school has changed in appearance. He remarked on what a happy place the school is and how cheered he was by its spirit.

The Bishop then presented commemorative leather bookmarks to representative pupils, and the medal of St. Paul to Duncan Mills, the head teacher.

The guests repaired to the



The Bishop of London visits Holy Trinity School. Photo by John Dearing

playground to enjoy the pleasant autumnal sunshine, while each pupil in the school was given a balloon inflated with helium, and tagged with their name. This was a lengthy process, enlivened by the Bishop, a tall man, giving an impromptu demonstration of retrieving prematurely-released balloons from the top of the playground fence!

Balloons

When the whole school was finally present, the Bishop led a countdown, at the end of which all the balloons were released at once. A cloud of balloons was seen, rising rapidly and drifting east past the tower blocks of Prospect Ring.

Finally, the company gathered around the school entrance. The Bishop said a special prayer, in Greek, and cut the ceremonial ribbon.

PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

By Diana Cormack

Holy Trinity

After five years, headteacher Duncan Mills is moving on to a bigger school. From Easter he will be leading Holly Park School, Friern Barnet.

The new school library is up and

Martin Schools

Class 4S visited Finchley Fire Station Maths Trail in Long Lane where they investigated the use of maths used by the fire-fighters in everyday life.

The infants made special displays during their Divali and Eid celebrations. They also commemorated Remembrance Day.

The Infant School will have many exciting off-National Cur-

riculum activities in a day devoted to Speaking and Listening.

A very successful meeting of the new school council discussed pupil of the week awards and the class representatives also suggested special monthly lunches when the staff could wait on them.

Both school heads, Maggie Driscoll and Kevin Anscumb, paid tribute to the wonderful work done by the PTA.

YOUNG ARCHER Christmas Crackers

A sweet-maker called Tom Smith invented the Christmas cracker in 1847.

He got the idea when he was sitting in front of his fireplace watching the yule log burning. As it crackled in the heat, small sparks jumped out, but they didn't hurt anyone.

A strip of very thin card – the snap – runs through a cracker. It

is coated round the middle with a chemical compound. When the snap is pulled at each end, it breaks in the middle. This creates enough friction to heat the chemical, causing a tiny explosion.

There is a cardboard tube alongside the snap. It gives the

cracker its shape and usually contains a party hat, a small gift and a motto or joke. The tube protects them when the snap explodes.

However, there is no protection against the terrible jokes some crackers contain.

Scribbles celebrates 6 months

By Helen Drake



Jill Hallums (centre) with staff and children at Scribbles nursery. Photo by Helen Drake

Staff at Scribbles nursery on Hertford Road, are celebrating their first six months of business. Opening on 1 June this year, in what was the old Salvation Army church hall, Scribbles has proved tremendously popular with local parents, who particularly like its location in the heart of East Finchley. Jill Hallum, Director, said "It is lovely to see Scribbles full of life, and we are all very excited about the future".

Jill, and her husband Jason, decided to set up Scribbles when they found it difficult to find childcare locally for their own pre-school children. When they saw that the old Salvation Army hall was up for sale, they could see its potential immediately.

To get the conversion done in the best way possible, they found an architect who had had experience of designing a nursery. She remodelled the building to create a second floor in the roof space and to retain some of the character of the original building, Jill and Jason recycled as much of the timber and bricks as possible. Readers who remember the old Salvation Army building will be amazed by its transformation into a contemporary, light-filled space.

Child centred

Scribbles offers full day care for children aged from 6 months to 5 years. Jill says, "Our aim is to make learning fun. We have a child-centred approach to ensure that each child is treated as an individual, to promote the development of their emotional, intellectual and social needs. Activities for the children are planned in line with government directives, and pre-school children are offered special activities such as Drama and French."

Parents can contact Scribbles through their website, www.scribblesnursery.co.uk or by e-mail enquiries@scribblesnursery.co.uk or by phone 020 8883 8546. Once individuals receive a copy of the

Scribbles brochure, they can then arrange to visit the nursery before deciding whether to register. There is a registration form in the brochure. Currently there is a waiting list for most age groups.

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All Saints' also has a strong musical tradition and an enthusiastic choir of both adults and children.
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<http://www.allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk>



Little Danny and the Monster Digger

By Jonathan Blackstaffe

Little Danny was watching the telly a few weeks before Christmas when an advert for the Monster Digger came on. "Mummy, mummy," little Danny yelled, "that's it. That's what I want for Christmas."

"Well, Danny," replied his mummy, "have you written to Father Christmas and asked him nicely?"

"No," said little Danny, scrambling to his feet.

"Perhaps if you do, Danny, and if you are a good boy, Father Christmas will bring you one."

So Danny went running off to find a pen and some paper. Then he sat down to write a very neat letter to Father Christmas, politely asking for a Monster Digger.

Christmas morning

On Christmas Day, little Danny awoke early. He was sure Father Christmas climbing across the roof had awoken him. After lying in bed shaking with excitement for what seemed like forever, little Danny could wait no more. He jumped out of bed and rushed downstairs.

At the bottom of the stairs stood the sparkling Christmas tree, lights twinkling in the early morning gloom. Under it was a pile of presents. In the middle of them was a big parcel wrapped in shiny paper. Little Danny tore the paper off excitedly. It was the Monster Digger! He was so happy and spent the rest of the day playing with it.

Boxing Day

On Boxing Day, little Danny's friend Louie came round. Louie

hadn't been given a Monster Digger. For some reason, Louie hadn't been given very much for Christmas. Still, they had a great day playing with little Danny's Monster Digger.

When it came time to leave, Louie didn't want to let go of little Danny's Monster Digger.

"That's a cool present Danny," said Louie.

"I know," said Danny. Then his eyes popped open and he asked his mummy, "Mummy, do you think Father Christmas would mind if I gave my Monster Digger to Louie?"

"I'm sure he wouldn't, Danny," replied his mother. "But are you sure you wouldn't miss it?"

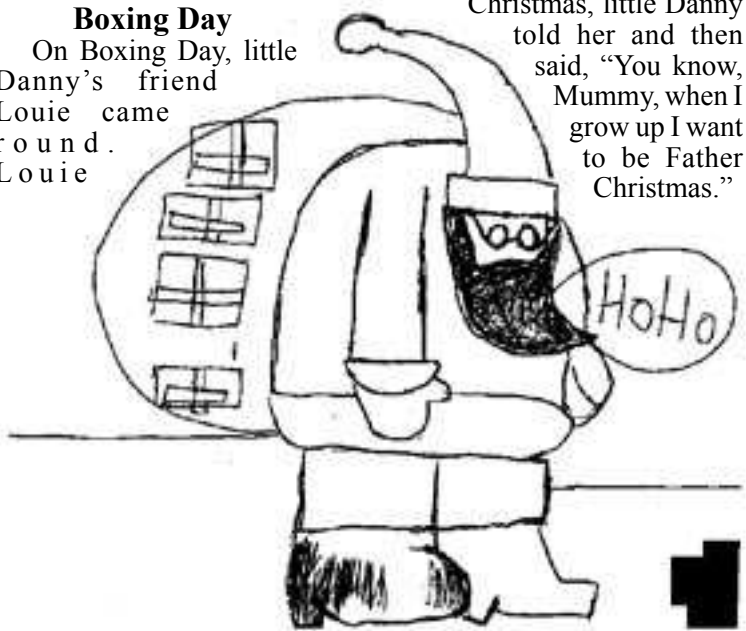
"Oh, I've got lots of other toys to play with."

"Well, if you're sure," said his mummy uncertainly.

So, Louie walked home with the Monster Digger feeling just as happy as could be. It was the best present he'd ever been given and he played with it until it fell apart. He often played with it with little Danny.

Little Danny never regretted giving the Monster Digger to Louie. In fact, the next December when his mummy asked what he wanted for Christmas, little Danny

told her and then said, "You know, Mummy, when I grow up I want to be Father Christmas."



"Father Christmas" by Michael Wiltshire, aged 10, of Elmfield Road.

A bit of Razzledazzle!

By Helen Drake



BBC camera crew filming at Martin Infant School. Photo by Helen Drake

Kevin Anscomb, headteacher at Martin Infant School, has discovered that not only are his pupils talented at reading and maths, they are also great at reciting poetry! During 11 and 12 November a camera crew took up residence in the Infant hall to film some of the Year 2 pupils for *Razzledazzle*, a Foundations of Literacy programme for pre-school children which will be broadcast by the BBC early in the New Year.

Rhyme and reason

One of the principal aims of the programme is to help young children focus on sounds and words through rhythm and rhyme. The pupils taking part were asked to recite simple poetry either on their own or in small groups. Gilly Clifford,

a Year 2 teacher commented, "The children have amazed me with their confidence. They don't seem at all fazed by the camera and have behaved really well."

For the children, it was an opportunity to learn about how a television programme is made,

and to see that behind the glitz, a lot of hard work is involved. Kevin Anscomb was clear that taking part in the filming was both an "educational and fun event for the pupils", and, he added, "Who knows, we might have inspired a future Oscar or BAFTA winner!"

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❖ **Finchley Jazz Club**, Monday 13 December at Wilf Slack Cricket Pavilion, East End Rd, N3.
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❖ **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.
❖ **Street Dance** every Tuesday at Old Barn for children of various ages Contact Lorna 07976203669.
❖ **Symphonic Wind Orchestra** of North London, Contact Caroline Egan 020 8340 2706
❖ **Tap Dance** for children beginning at Old Barn every Monday, Contact Sharon 020-8349-4613

Clubs & Social

❖ **Bingo**, Green Man Community Centre, 020 8883 4916
❖ **Contact Lunch Club** at the Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book a place. Every Thursday. 12.30-2pm
❖ **East Finchley National Childbirth Trust**, Contact Sophie Spence 020 8444 1890
❖ **East Finchley Writers** meet weekly at Clissold Arms. Contact Lillian on 020 8444 1793.
❖ **Fairacres Monday Club** for Jewish people, Rene & Reuby Hyams, 020 8883 0448 or Sylvia Lee 8958 7878
❖ **Finchley & District Philatelic Society**, Contact Brian 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
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❖ **Old Barn pre-school club**, 020 8349 4613/1961
❖ **Parent & Toddler Group**, Green Man Centre, Julia 8444 2276
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Cajun music

By Betti Blatman

On Saturday, 13 November, diners and drinkers at The Spaniards Inn were entertained by the London Cajun Jammers playing and singing Cajun with a touch of Irish music.

Patrick Hogan on guitar and harmonica sang in French and English accompanied by Beth Shaw on triangle whilst Maurice Oliver played a lively fiddle and created a cosy and enjoyable atmosphere, attracting young and old to their foot-tapping music and encouraging some Cajun dancers onto the limited floor space. The band are happy to play in exchange for food and drink in the Cajun tradition. As they say in Cajun country, "Laissez les bon temps roulez" – Let the good times roll! Further enquiries: Patrick 01322 349910, patrick@bexley.ac.uk; or Beth 020 7485 7209, beth148da8@hotmail.com.



Emma Wyllie-Ballard at the Lord Mayor's show. Photo by Dawn Powell

A show fit for a Lord

By Dawn Powell

For 800 years, the Lord Mayor's Show has been a brilliant display of pageantry. But for one East Finchley teenager, this year's procession was extra special.

Instead of watching from the sidelines, Emma Wyllie-Ballard, 15, got to perform in the show. She was part of a

group representing Stagecoach, which is a part-time theatre company for children aged between four and 16. The company has schools across the country and each one put forward three students to take part in the show. Emma was chosen to represent her branch, which is Totteridge. (She modestly claims that she was picked because of her age and not because of her talent.)

For the procession, Emma had to alternate between holding the Stagecoach flag and performing a routine. She explained: "We kept swapping in and out. There was a dance routine and we did it on the outside, and then we would swap

[places] and the people on the inside would do the dance."

At the end of the three-mile route, Emma was quivering – though it was nothing to do with the freezing November weather. She said, "It was quite weird – I was shaking afterwards. There were so many people. We passed a huge stand and there were just thousands of people."

Despite having to dance in front of a large crowd, Emma really enjoyed the day. "It was a really good atmosphere because everyone was smiling and waving. There were a few people standing at the side in a grump, but when you smiled and waved at them, they cheered up."

Swamprock returns

By Sheila Armstrong

On Saturday 16 October Joe Le Taxi's band brought Zydeco music back to Finchley. And a hundred or so people danced to the driving rhythms of South West Louisiana until the early hours.

Forget Cajun this was Zydeco: a fusion of old Creole tunes, blues, soul and funk. Some amazing dancers turned out from all over the country, mostly doing pure Zydeco, but I also saw traces of jive, and some Cajun. You have to travel to hear good bands like this one, who had driven from Wales themselves.

With the sudden demise of the North Finchley's Torrington pub, Swamprock aficionados Carole Lateman and Neil Papworth had only two weeks to find a new venue for this gig. *THE ARCHER's* Betti Blatman suggested The Wilf Slack Centre on East End Road and, as they say, the rest is history.

Joe Le Taxi have been around since the early 1990s, and are now in what is described on their website as their third incarnation. Joe's alter ego Rees Wesson used to be into folk-reggae but has now found his true place both making and playing accordion and fronting this Zydeco group. Undoubtedly the band's love of music keeps them travelling the motorways to gigs and festivals; it's not for the money rub board player Uncle Bud hinted. Long may they continue; it was an exciting night out. More about them on their website www.joeletaxi.co.uk.

See below for the next Swamprock concert or check out www.swamprock.org.uk.

What's On...

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

Friday 10 December - 'Art 4 Fun' (age2-adult) Fundraiser Evening with live jazz, wine and a finger supper. £30 adults, £20 children. Proceeds to OXFAM. Art 4 fun, 212 Fortis Green Rd, Muswell Hill, N10. Bookings Tel 07904 386018.
Saturday 11 December - Swamprock: Elvis Fontenot + The Sugar Bees at Wilf Slack Sports Club, 19 East End Road, Finchley N3, 8–12 pm. £8. Further info: Carole 020 8810 7454 Neil 01727 830280 www.swamprock.org.uk
Saturday 11 December - Finchley Children's Music Group Special Christmas Concert at 8pm at the Italian Church, Clerkenwell, EC1 in which much of the repertoire on their new favourably reviewed CD will be performed live. Tickets £8 (£5 concs) available on the door, or in advance from Les Aldrich Music, or from Tony Wren tel: 020 7923 4929.
Sunday 12 December - Finchley Cinevideo Society at The Phoenix Cinema at 5.15pm. *Hubert's Travels*, a new production by Michael Slowe, written by Rick Limentani. All scenes shot locally and cast drawn from local drama societies. Tickets available by post at £4 from Trevor Williams 8446 3797 and direct from box office at £5 subject to availability.
Wednesday 12 January - Haringey Recorded Music Society - Glad Tidings of Joy, presented by Diana Rowland-Thomas, 7.45 for 8pm. The society (founded in 1946) plays recorded classical music in people's homes. For venue and further information, contact 020 8361 1696.

Christmas Services in East Finchley

Holy Trinity Church

Sunday 19th at 6pm: Candlelight Carol Service
Friday 24th at 6pm: The Blessing of the Crib and Nativity Play
At 11:30pm: Midnight Mass
Saturday 25th at 10am: Parish Communion

St. Mary's Catholic Church

Friday 24th at 6:30pm: Children's Mass of Christmas
At 9:30pm Carols – At 10pm Midnight Mass
Saturday 25th at 8:30am, 10am & 11:30am: Christmas Day Mass
Sunday 26th at 10am: Boxing Day Mass

East Finchley Methodist Church

Sunday 19th at 6:30pm: Candlelight Carol Service
Saturday 25th at 10:30am: Family Service

St Johns Christian Spiritualist Church

Thursday 2nd at 7.30pm: Evening of Clairvoyance
Sunday 19th at 6.30pm: Divine Service with Lin Guest de Swarte
Thursday 23rd at 7.30pm: Candle Light Carol Service

All Saint's Church

Sunday 19th at 6.30pm: Christmas Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies.
Friday 24th 3.00–5.00pm: Children's Christmas Service with Carols and Christmas Party, 11.30pm: Midnight Mass of Christmas with Procession of the Christ Child and Blessing of the Crib.
Saturday 25th at 8.00am: Mass of the Dawn; 10.00am: Mass of Christmas Day with Christmas Carols.

East Finchley Baptist Church

Sunday 19th 11.00am - 12.15pm: All-ages in Together Carol Service with a presentation by the children and young people
6.00–7.15pm: Carols by Candlelight
Christmas Day: 10.30–11.15am: Christmas Morning Service
Everyone welcome



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.

The glow of '73

By Edgar Crook (Address supplied)

See how the sun shines on suburban East Finchley
At least in the glow of '73
The county roads then were full of children
Even Horace was young when we called him Stanley

Now, everywhere houses are broken up,
into rooms
For singles or couples, without any issue
See how the quiet pervades into gloom

East Finchley has grown up
The city encroached it
All gone are the children
A village no more

Do you agree with Edgar? One way or the other THE ARCHER would be interested to know!



Walking to work on a winter's morning

By Dennis Evans

And the Brent is iced over,
bent in its purpose of not moving.

The birds have stopped singing,
grass and leaves are frost-encrusted.

Pink-faced girls walk by, smiling,
and hunched office workers
with hands deep in pockets
and steamy breath, hurry from the bus stop.

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Teenage dreams

Teenage dreams... sitting in my bedroom in polite suburbia on Sunday afternoons struggling with my homework, bored, disaffected, lonely and isolated; feeling completely out of touch with everyone and everything around me. Nowadays they give you Prozac, but they didn't have Prozac in 1969. I used to listen to the charts, hating the pap that passed for pop until, one particularly bleak Sunday when maths seemed more incomprehensible than usual, I switched on early and John Peel saved my life because what I heard that afternoon stopped me feeling so alone.

Back then, in the late 60s, John Peel did Top Gear on Sundays between 3 and 5. This was the hippy Peel playing *The Incredible String Band*, *Ivor Cutler* and *Tyrannosaurus Rex*. This was the Peel who wound up the Rolling Stones by playing their new album the week before it was released. And I was hooked because he opened the door to a kind of music that didn't turn up on Top of the Pops, music for outsiders like me. I spent my teen years listening to Peel as he moved to the weekday 10 to 12 slot, hearing early Bowie, reggae, Zappa and prog rock on my transistor radio and knowing that as long as he was on the radio life was bearable.

Something changed for me in the mid-seventies. I'd had enough of pomp and pretension. In early '76 I saw the *Pistols* at the Nashville in Kensington, went out, got guitar and formed a band. I was bored with hippy music and had almost stopped listening to Peel. Tuning into Peel in hope rather than expectation I found he'd made the same journey as me, and that kept me listening. Peel introduced me to the *Undertones*, made me realise I wasn't the only one to rate the *Only Ones* or the *Slits* and kept surprising me.

It didn't matter where I was or what I was doing, there was always John Peel on the radio, always surprising, always playing something new. *Joy Division*, *Mekons*, *Smiths*, *Orbital* and *Pulp*: I heard them all on the Peel show. I always meant to write or e-mail and tell him how much he meant to me, but somehow there was always tomorrow, just as there always would be another Peel show. Now it's too late and all I can do is listen to *Teenage Kicks*, pour myself a glass of red wine and remember...

Teenage dreams, so hard to beat.

Edwardian values

The Editor

Regarding Chris Ostwald and his shop front—he has shown disrespect not only for planning law but for the reason for this being a conservation area.

Muswell Hill character is not pseudo as he suggests but genuine Edwardian. It is his Gaudiesque which is pseudo and a clumsy version. Unfortunately many of the modern shop fronts show little interest in the original character so let more informed designers judge,

Yours truly, (Ms) E McNab
Noblefield Heights, N2

Send your
correspondence to:

"Letters Page",
The Archer, PO Box 3699,
London N2 8JA
or e-mail
the-archer@lineone.net.

Norman Burgess

THE ARCHER was sorry to learn of the recent death of Norman Burgess. We will publish a full appreciation in our next edition.

PO box problem

Over a period of time we have noticed that regular deliveries to our PO box have not occurred. So if you have contacted us and have had no response it is possible that your letter has gone astray in the post. In this event, we would ask you to leave a message on our voicemail service 08717 33 4454 or email us at the-archer@lineone.net.

OBITUARY

Yiorghoulla (Georgina) Rodis

By Ann Bronkhorst

Yiorghoulla (Georgina) Rodis, who died on October 22 after a long illness, had lived in East Finchley for over 40 years.

Here she brought up two children and worked as a dress-maker and a childminder. She was loved and respected in the neighbourhood and in the Greek Cypriot community.

At 23 Georgina left her birthplace Morphou in Cyprus for London and marriage to a fellow Cypriot but was widowed at 49. Turkish troops had occupied her village in 1974 but in 2003 she was able to cross the border for a day, and meet the people who live in her house.

In her Bedford Road home Georgina loved cooking, gardening and sharing the results with family, friends and neighbours. The many cards and letters of sympathy received



Photo by Erini Rodis

by her family often mention her generosity. The children she looked after responded to her warmth, patience – and wonderful food.

As her own children, Chris and Erini, have said, "Her outward sweetness and capacity to serve others was combined with resilience and an aptitude for doing the right thing....we're proud of the strong woman who was our mother, who liked to give and who gave with love."

Letters to The Editor

Save the Stanley

Dear Editor

Am I the only person in East Finchley who is angry about what has happened to Stanley Road Playing Fields? This purpose-built playing field has been allowed to deteriorate. Why? Because Barnet Council seems to want to build yet more homes on it.

It is, of course, connected with the Wilmot Centre which has also been allowed to deteriorate so that a road can be built through to the proposed development at Stanley Road

East Finchley badly needs resources like these for the young people of this area. Young people are forced to play football in the nearby children's playground which is not meant for this use. There are few activities for young people in this area.

This space would probably pay for itself if it was well managed with forethought and imagination, e.g. Astro turf football space, basketball courts etc. I'm sure various businesses in the area would be interested to support this venture.

It already has floodlights.

Is it a foregone conclusion that this site will be sold off?

I understand that there is a trust which manages it but who are these people?

We have a wonderful resource here for our young people. We mustn't let it go.

Jenny Cohen
Talbot Avenue, N2

Good and bad

Dear Sir,

I was interested in your article about the Herbert Wilmot Centre and should like to make two points.

The first is that the Finchley Children's Music Group has been successfully relocated to Brookland Infant and Junior School – schools already popular with East Finchley parents.

The second is that the Centre has been closed because it would cost £250,000 to make it usable. I am afraid that there are even more pressing calls on the Education budget.

Yours faithfully,
John Marshall
Cabinet Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

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Moving on after a great career

By Lawrie Chivers

I was born the day after World War II started, so I saw buildings disappear overnight through the bombing, the blackout, and very strict rationing of food.

From the age of 12 till I started work proper, my dad used to take me to work with him at his brother's greengrocer's shop at Warren Street from 7am to 7pm to earn some pocket money. At 17 I secured a five-year indentured apprenticeship with British Thompson Houston – a large electrical engineering company which manufactured power stations. Up at 6am, cycling from Finchley to Willesden to be at work by 8am. Finish at 6pm and then cycle to Harrow Technical College for engineering education, then cycle back to Finchley, arriving home about 10.30pm and so to bed. Saturdays were spent working at Burton's outfitters to supplement my low wages as an apprentice. Eventually I became deputy production superintendent of the factory which employed over 2,500 people and I was responsible for one half of the factory's production.

Career move

Thirty-six years ago

my brother Roger and I decided to leave our jobs and set up a car accessory shop. I sold my 1952 TR2 sports car for £200, and shared Roger's Sunbeam Rapier. We borrowed £1000 from an uncle to buy the lease on 113 High Road. We were made to sign an agreement to pay him back within 12 months, or forfeit the lease. The £200 and a lot of chat to secure credit from suppliers financed our starting stock. The first week's takings were £2.12. To fill the shop up we paid customers for their old oil cans and put them behind the real stock, so 75% of our stock items were dummies. The residents of East Finchley were very supportive and with much hard work and ploughing the takings back, the business flourished. We made a good living and raised our families on the proceeds.

Over the last 10 years, changes to car design and manufacture, competition from supermarkets and obsessive regulation has made it increasingly dif-



(Right - left) Lawrie & Roger Chivers with Ed McHenry. Picture by John Dearing

ficult to trade. In 2004 I have celebrated my 65th birthday, and have since taken the difficult decision to retire.

Roger and I would like to thank all of our customers for their support and goodwill over the years. By and large it has been good fun and we have met some really nice people.

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If you are looking for a playgroup for your child, please phone 8349 4613 for more details.

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