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THE ARCHER



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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Praise for Barnet

By John Dearing

Barnet Council's planning service has been allocated an extra £736,000 by the Government in the Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) for 2004/05 following a substantial improvement in performance.

Barnet Council is one of only 24 local authorities in the country to receive over £700,000 from the PDG and this recognises in particular improvements to the speed and quality of Barnet's planning control service, as well as progress on the Unitary Development Plan and the delivery of new homes in the borough. Barnet Council's planning service deals with the second largest number of applications in the capital.

Impressive

In August 2003, the Government praised the authority's progress towards achieving national planning targets after several months of monitoring and has since

described improvements in key planning performance areas as 'impressive'.

Graham Beattie, Director of Environment, said: "This is an outstanding achievement and is testament to the hard work and effort of all staff in the planning service. They have turned around the service, which is now in good shape to continue improving."

No doubt all this will come as welcome relief to the many householders and businesses in East Finchley and elsewhere in the Borough whose homes and premises have been blighted in recent years by planning applications that have taken months and sometimes years to resolve.



Pollarding a tree in the High Road on Good Friday. Picture by John Dearing

Bus lane demise

For a trial period the bus lane northbound up the High Road from The Bishops Avenue to the intersection with East End Road will be withdrawn and replaced by no waiting and no loading restrictions.

Waiting and loading will be banned between 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday. For much of the way from a point 66 metres north of the junction with The Bishops Avenue there will be no waiting at any time.

It is hoped that this will ease traffic congestion caused by the interaction of the bus lane and the need for vehicles to turn right into Fortis Green.

Strangely, the plans are not on show at our library,

and can only be viewed at The Burroughs or at Barnet House in Whetstone from 3 May, the day after the scheme is introduced. The scheme was outlined in Forum Report, *THE ARCHER* Jan 2004.

After six months the council will decide whether to make the scheme permanent. During the six-month trial period written objections to the scheme can be sent to the Chief Highways Officer, Barnet House, 1255 High Road, Whetstone.

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Thank you to *Madden's Ale House* for providing us with a meeting place.

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

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 May is the copy deadline for the June issue.

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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 020 8446 6935
E.F. Advice Service 020 8444 6265
Gingerbread 020 8445 4227
National Debt Line 0808 808 4000
NSPCC 0800 800500
Rape & Sexual Abuse 020 8683 3300
Relate 020 8447 8101
Samaritans 08457 909090
Refuge Crisis Line 0870 599 5443

Health Advice

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Alcoholics Anonymous 0845 7697555
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. 0845 7711 7711

OAP's Advice

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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

Crime

Emergency 999
Finchley Police 020 8200 1212
CrimeStoppers 0800 555111
Victim Support 0845 303 0900
E.F. Community Police Officer:
PC Paul Carter (Golders Green)
Tel: 020 8733 5562, e-mail:
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❖ 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



Police investigating incident at the Grange Estate. Photo by Erini Rodis

Shooting in East Finchley

According to a police report, at about 4.20pm on Friday 16 April, some young men in the park area near New Trinity Road were approached by a group of 3 to 5 youths wearing balaclava masks.

After an argument, one of the masked males drew out a silver handgun and shot one of the young men before making off. The attack was not fatal, and the male victim who is in his twenties was taken to a

Central London hospital.

Officers from Operation Trafalgar (which deals with serious crime) are investigating. Anyone with relevant information should call 020 8217 7381.

Fatal road collision

New Scotland Yard are appealing for information following a fatal road collision on the North Circular Road at Henley's Corner on Easter Sunday (11 April).

At approx. 10.50pm a green Rover 620 car travelling west on the North Circular Road (A406) at the junction with Regents Park Road was in collision with a Suzuki Hyabusa motorcycle travelling east.

The motorcyclist died at the scene. He was Frank Osman, 41 years, from Bracknell Close, Wood Green. He was a construction worker, divorced

and leaves young children. His youngest—a boy—was one year old on Tuesday 13 April.

The driver of the Rover, a 44-year-old man, stopped at the scene.

The police would like to hear from anyone who saw the collision. They should call Sgt. Mick Cheeseman at the Collision Investigation Unit at Alperton Traffic Unit on 020 8246 9820.

Don't let them in

Police are warning residents, especially the elderly or vulnerable to be on their guard against bogus callers.

Homes these days are generally reasonably secure so burglars now have to try to talk their way into your home. By pretending to be from one of the utility companies they gain access to homes where they then steal valuable items and cash. The utility companies go to great lengths to ensure that their representatives wear some kind of uniform or logo and carry identity cards. Genuine representatives will not be offended if residents keep them waiting while they check their identity.

There have been instances of callers pretending to be police officers. In most cases where officers not in uniform need to speak to a resident they will try to arrange an appointment over the phone beforehand. If in any doubt, residents should ring 020 8200 1212 and check with Barnet Police that the caller is genuine.

Another trick, which has been tried in Camden, involves callers pretending to be from Royal Mail and asking for bank details to refund money for a damaged parcel. Royal Mail has confirmed that they would never ask for those details from a customer.

Safety guidelines

- * NEVER let people into your home unless you are sure who they are.
- * NEVER give out personal or bank details to strangers.
- * If you have any doubts or suspicions don't let them in, don't tell them anything and call 999.
- * If they go away, without putting yourself in any danger try to see where they go and write down as detailed a description as possible. Try to remember any registration numbers if they get into a car or van.

Scam scam?

In last month's ARCHER we published a report of a mobile phone scam.

The information came originally from a police intelligence unit by way of Barnet Borough Watch. Paul Hammond, Administrator for Barnet Borough Watch, has told THE ARCHER that the police had put out the phone scam warning in good faith but had since found that their information was inaccurate.

Nonetheless they continue to advise caution in contacting unknown phone numbers and premium rate lines. They also warn not to open unexpected or unrecognised e-mails.

Our thanks to the two people who mailed in to put us right.

Local Planning Applications

29 Pulham Avenue, N2

Two-storey side and rear extension following demolition of part of the property. New single-storey porch.

19 Durham Road, N2

Single-storey side extension and loft conversion.

Oak Lodge School, N2

Proposal: Construction of multi-use games area with associated floodlighting and surrounding wire mesh fence.

Land at Park Gate, N2

Submission of details pursuant to condition 3 (Samples of materials) and condition 4 (details of the storage of refuse) of Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/A.03/1116263 for Erection of a two-storey block of four flats and four car parking spaces allowed 24/09/03.

5 Chambers Gardens, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

4 Bedford Road, N2

Single-storey side/rear extension.

6 Chandos Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

106 High Road, N2

Installation of rear escape stairs from first floor.

Holy Trinity C of E Primary School, Egans Close, N2

Submission of details of materials pursuant to condition 2 of planning permission C02094J/03 dated 14/11/03



The battered hulk of one of the vehicles in the cemetery. Picture by John Dearing

Stolen vehicles crash in cemetery

On Monday 5 April, the police were called to the Islington and St. Pancras Cemetery by the deputy cemetery manager after two vehicles had driven into and around the cemetery at high speed, eventually crashing into each other, the occupants making off on foot.

One of the vehicles concerned has since been removed from the cemetery, but the other remains stranded. Police are still investigating the matter.

Suspicious fire in Park Road

Police are appealing for witnesses following the outbreak of a fire in East Finchley. The fire started at about 2.20am on Friday 16 April at the back of Langley House in Park Road, N2.

The fire then spread and destroyed the neighbouring garden sheds of residents as well as damaging the offices in Langley House. The outbuildings had been used



Sheds burnt out in Park Road. Photo by John Dearing

to store valuable documents that were destroyed in the fire. Nobody was injured in the fire, which the Fire Brigade attended to extinguish.

Detective Sergeant Alex Brook said, "At this stage we are treating this fire as suspicious as it cannot be established exactly how the fire started. I am appealing to anyone who may have seen anybody in the vicinity late on Thursday night into Friday morning to contact me on 020 8733 4436 so that we can progress this investigation."

Safer Neighbourhoods scheme bypasses East Finchley this year

The Metropolitan Police Service recently introduced its Safer Neighbourhoods programme to London. The programme will see new teams of uniformed officers working with communities and partners to tackle the quality-of-life issues and anti-social behaviour crimes that Londoners say make them feel unsafe. These could include graffiti, abandoned cars, noisy neighbours and vandalism.

A Safer Neighbourhoods team will this month begin operating in one neighbourhood in every London borough.

A total of 96 teams, three per borough, will be introduced during 2004/05. The MPS is committed to delivering this programme to every

area of London over the next few years.

Policing priorities for each team will be identified through consultation with local residents, community groups and other organisations.

Burnt Oak, Colindale and Childs Hill are the areas in

Barnet where this initiative will first be introduced. Sadly, East Finchley is not included at this stage; the nearest areas will be Crouch End in Haringey, and Gospel Oak in Camden.

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Top that? Photo by Tony Roberts

Odeon development refusal

According to the Lib Dems, Haringey's planning committee has refused a controversial application to build an additional storey on the flats forming part of the Odeon cinema building in Muswell Hill.

The additional level, including a bridge over the car park entrance with flats above, would have spoiled the appearance of this local landmark, with its classic silhouette, and put more pressure on parking and social infrastructure.

Cllr Gail Engert has pledged to monitor closely any future planning application for the site.

Local Agenda for the Year Ahead

Everyone is invited to a public meeting to discuss East Finchley's environmental issues at 7.00pm on Tuesday 25 May at the Green Man Community Centre.

Hosted by Local Agenda 21, the main speaker will be Stuart Gadsden, Barnet's Waste and Sustainability Officer for East Finchley. The meeting will see the launch of the first recycling guide for East Finchley, as well as the start of a recycling scheme

for Strawberry Vale. There will also be tree planting at Strawberry Vale earlier in the day.

It's your future

The meeting will double as the annual general meeting for LA21 – the first since the council withdrew from the LA21 partnerships in March. And there will be refreshments and plenty of time to meet others concerned about East Finchley's future.

Turn up on the day or phone 020 8883 4916 for details.

Volunteers' Group closes

By Ann Bronkhorst

After 29 years the end has come for Barnet Volunteer Bureau. Among the reasons for its closure on 31 March were changes to its sources of funding. Gail Scott-Spicer, Barnet's Communications Director, explained that funding for BVB's transport scheme from the Community Care Service was withdrawn last December but there had been no plans to discontinue their annual revenue grant. The loss of the funding for transport, however, seems to have precipitated BVB's decision to close.

We produced actions

At a farewell gathering on 24 March at Avenue House there were reminiscences and some regrets. Bill Tyler, Chair of the Finchley Society, said that a valuable service was being lost to the borough.

Rose Hambury, Chair of the Management Committee, acknowledged that the annual revenue grant was never adequate while Joy Wowrek felt that the Bureau had always been run inexpensively, as a charity. Joy, who worked at BVB for 16 years, said, "We produced actions, not loads of paper." The Bureau ran citizenship and community service schemes with second-

ary schools and administered a leisure coaches scheme. BVB ran a database for the Home Office and checked information on volunteers for local organisations. Above all, Joy felt the Bureau had always recognised the needs as well as the strengths of volunteers.

The best outcome?

The importance of the volunteers themselves is echoed by Julie Hawkins, who describes them as "the lifeblood of the voluntary sector". As Chief Executive of Barnet Voluntary Service Council, a charity with a membership of over 270 groups in Barnet, she is aware of the gap created by the demise of the Bureau. She intends to consult all the groups who come under the BVSC umbrella to find out what sort of service the voluntary sector now needs. She stresses the importance of opportunities for volunteering, proper support for volunteers themselves and maintenance of public confidence. At present it seems likely that BVSC will take on some of the work previously done by the Bureau, a possibility described by Councillor Mike Freer as "the best outcome".

On the buses

Here are two new ways to influence your local transport:

Bus group goes into action

The local campaign to improve the 263 and 143 services starts in earnest this month, with support from Haringey West Bus Watch. All adult members of the community are welcome - age and/or disability will not be an impediment. Note that this is not intended to be a talking shop; volunteers will be actively involved. Anyone interested should contact Hazel Burnett on 020 8444 6824 or at hazel.burnett@freeuk.com.

Your chance to comment on bus design

A GLA bus forum is currently considering varied aspects of bus design. The East Finchley Bus Group will pass on comments and suggestions to them. Please contact Hazel Burnett on 020 8444 6824 or at hazel.burnett@freeuk.com.

Victim and witness support team launched

On Monday 26 April 2004 as part of the *Justice for London* project, Barnet police are launching their witness and victim support team. This dedicated team of staff will provide a single point of contact for all victims and witnesses whose cases are awaiting trial.

Enhanced victim and witness care is one of the ways that the government are seeking to restore public confidence in the criminal justice system.

The unit is helping to ensure that witnesses know what is happening in their particular cases. They will be working closely with the Crown Prosecution Service, Victim Support Service and witness services. Victim support is a crucial element. This unit will ensure regular contact from the police.

Building confidence

Because witnesses have often had difficulty chasing down individual officers for information, some have become

frustrated, or lost faith in the judicial process and chosen not to attend court. The Victim and Witness Support Unit will identify vulnerable witnesses and ensure by regular contact that they do attend court.

Victim and Witness Support Unit officers offer victims and witnesses a personal point of contact; once someone is charged, the victims and witnesses are allocated a Victim/Witness Support Officer. Situations are assessed to suit the individual's needs. Allowing witnesses to give testimony from behind a screen or via a video link can make the difference between them deciding to testify or not and judges are

becoming more willing to use these measures.

Chief Inspector Lucy D'Orsi, the officer in charge of the unit at Barnet said, "The work of our unit will be vital in ensuring that victims and witnesses in cases get all the support they need. It will ensure that witnesses feel more confident attending court, which will assist in securing a successful prosecution. The idea of attending court and testifying against people who may be dangerous criminals can be a daunting one. Victim and witness support officers will provide an important point of contact to explain the situation and allay witnesses' fears."

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To China for charity

Michael Burgess from East Finchley plans to raise £2,600 for the Alzheimer's Society in May when he cycles more than 450km in China. He will ride from Badaling to Tiananmen Square, Beijing, in memory of his mother who died two years ago after suffering from Alzheimer's. During the ride Michael will see one of the wonders of the world, the Great Wall of China.

Michael said, "I have put in £1,000 myself, which covers the cost of the trip, so all the sponsorship money that I raise will go directly to the Alzheimer's Society. People have been really generous so far."

The China Cycle Challenge is from 8 to 17 May. For more

information about the China Cycle Challenge call 0870 905 5577.

The Alzheimer's Society is the UK's leading care and research charity for people with dementia, their families and carers. Dementia affects over 750,000 people in the UK

alone. The Society provides information and support for those with any form of dementia and their carers. It advises professionals, funds research, runs quality care services, and campaigns for improved health and social care and greater public understanding of dementia.

Cyclists wanted!

Keen cyclists are invited to join the **Suburban Break-out from East Finchley on 11 July, a 100km (66 miles) ride via Potters Bar into the rolling Hertfordshire countryside and back. The ride is run on behalf of the Cyclists' Touring Club and Audax UK - the long distance cycling organisation - by local cyclist Nick Bloom, who hopes to encourage local riders by showing how quickly you can get out of London by bike.**

It's not a race, and it's not a charity ride. You can think of it as a personal challenge. Ride with others or on your own, flat out or steady. Anyone can take part on any bike, tricycle, tandem or recumbent, though under-18s need parental consent. If you finish in time you can buy a medal or badge.

Although most of the route is on quiet country roads, there are some nasty 'A' roads to cross, and busy traffic on the way back through Barnet and Finchley. There aren't any mountains around here, but that doesn't mean it's flat. You can take a break at the halfway point, or at many other pubs along the route. There's a time limit of 7.5 hours. You do have to look after yourself; you have to follow the route sheet, and there's no pickup if you get tired or break down!

More information or an entry form from Nick on 020 8365 3806 (saddlesore@blueyonder.co.uk) or from Bike and Run on the High Road.

Finchley Forum report

By Daphne Chamberlain

21 April 2004

Library petition

Councillor Alison Moore handed over a petition expressing concern over Barnet's failure to commit to refurbishing East Finchley Library.

Speed humps

A questioner wanted to know whether traffic calmers removed from her road would ever be replaced. She had received no response to her enquiries, and was worried that the pre-calmer situation would return, when "we were picking up the pieces from accidents every weekend".

Paul Bragg, Chief Highways Engineer, told her that humps were removed before resurfacing, and then interested parties were consulted as to whether they would be replaced.

Chair Leslie Sussman asked whether the accident rate prior to installing the humps was looked at. He was told that it was. Another questioner wanted to know whether there would have to be a set proportion of dissenters before humps were finally removed. Mr Bragg didn't think so.

He was then asked whether it wouldn't be more logical to consult before re-surfacing, so humps to be replaced could be embedded in the surface

immediately. It was the Council's duty to control speed, said the questioner - and if not by humps, how could it be done? Mr Bragg replied that traffic speed was always assessed after removal, "to see if it had gone up drastically". He added that warning signs would be put up in their place.

Friern Barnet Day Centre

A questioner challenged the Council's proposed use of Friary House, Friary Park, as a day centre, calling it illegal. He suggested a Section 106 agreement with Barretts to install a purpose-built centre on part of the Friern Barnet Town Hall site. Leslie Sussman said the proposal would be forwarded to the relevant departments.

Other items

There were protests about the financial implications of the Arts Depot, the "worthlessness" of residents' permits in the North Finchley CPZ, and the closure of Church End Post Office. Mr Sussman said that the Council was powerless to do anything about Post Office closures.

Next Forum

The next Forum will be at 6.30pm on Wednesday 21 July at Trinity Church, Nether Street, N12 (where one speaker hoped the acoustics would be better).

An excellent result

By Diana Cormack

The Easter Egg Hunt held at Budgen's in aid of North London Lupus/Lupus UK was a wonderful success. Organiser Sippy Azizollah was overjoyed at the generosity of people.



Sippy Azizollah collecting in Budgen's Photo by John Dearing

"They were filling my money boxes like there was no tomorrow," she said.

Sippy was in the store from 9 am to 5 pm and in those few hours the four Lupus collection boxes were filled three times, raising a total of £250. Sippy would like to thank everyone who gave so generously and to say a huge thank you to all the staff at Budgen's, who were brilliant, with a special mention for their customer service manager Rosie Townsend.

Unfortunately, on a soggy Saturday morning, nobody turned up for the Easter Bonnet Parade, so Sippy raised some more money by raffling off the prize at The Five Bells Quiz Night, which is held every Monday evening. At the time of writing, her total is almost £1,700 closer towards her target of £10,000.

If you were inspired by the London Marathon, don't forget that you could run for Lupus UK in the London 10K Run

on Sunday 1 August. It starts at the Hard Rock Cafe at 9.35 am and finishes at St Paul's Cathedral. Email Sippy at sippya@hotmail.com or phone THE ARCHER Voicemail on 08717 33 44 65 for details.

Sunday 6 June 100 mile relay challenge.

Sippy and friends are looking for 100 people to each run just one mile in their 100 mile challenge in East Finchley. They'd like each runner to obtain a small amount of sponsorship for the completion of their mile.

There will be a whole day of fun and events to include the whole of our local community. All proceeds will go towards Sippy's Lupus UK fund raiser.

Car boot sale/ BBQ/ traditional fete attractions/ memorabilia auction/ bouncy castle. Local newspaper and TV coverage.

Information and sponsor forms from Sippy, Bobby Moore or The Five Bells Pub.

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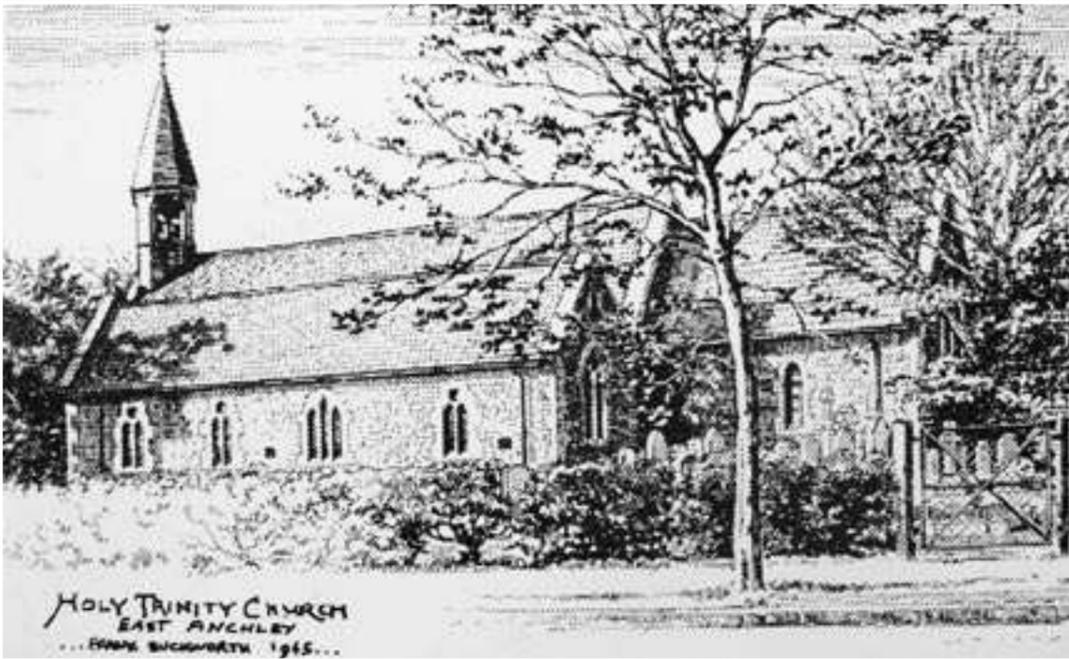
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Drawing of Holy Trinity Church 1945 by Frank Buckworth By kind permission of Revd. Hill

East Finchley's religious heritage

Part 3 - Salvin's Legacy

By Ann Bronkhorst

In the 1840s East End – later East Finchley – had no truly local parish church. Poorer members of the Church of England walked on Sundays to Saint Mary's in Church End until an idealistic young architect, Anthony Salvin, came to their rescue.

"Drunkards abounded"

The Salvins were regular churchgoers – but could afford to keep a carriage. What about the villagers? They included, according to Salvin's daughter, "many sadly godless persons". Methodist and Congregational chapels were within easy reach of penitent East Enders but the Established Church was not. Salvin, with other benefactors, raised funds to build Holy Trinity in 1846 on Bull Lane, now Church Lane, giving his architectural services free. The construction was a simple hall with a hammer-beam roof and a bell tower; later, aisles were added and stained-glass windows.

Industrial School

Salvin's next local project was a church school, one with a difference. In 1847 the first Industrial School in the country opened in East End Road near its junction with the High Road. Designed by Salvin, it was created in response to local concern about the lack of education for poor children. Boys were trained for 'agricultural labour or handicraft' and girls

for 'domestic service'. There were lessons on gardening and 'plain needlework'; scripture and catechism instruction were compulsory. Financially the school struggled, even after becoming an ordinary National School. In the 20th century it became Holy Trinity Primary School, C. of E. but within the state system, and in 1974 moved to its present premises. A campaign to secure Salvin's "rare and pretty piece of Victorian Gothic school architecture" as a Community Centre for East Finchley failed.

Bobath Centre

Since then the building has belonged to, firstly, Pardes House School and now the present owners, the Bobath Centre, a charity treating children with cerebral palsy. David Hanson, Premises Manager, said, "I love this building." Internal conversions have not spoiled its charm. Rooms are small but light; hammer-beams and mellow old bricks have been retained. The school bell still hangs above the building and the ancient well still lies below it. Salvin would be pleased

that children's needs are still being met in the building he designed.

Shree Aden

The parishioners of Holy Trinity Church needed a hall as well as a school so in 1913 they built one, a surprisingly large building next to the church in Church Lane. By the 1970s it was under-used and run-down, as the vicar, the Revd Laurence Hill, explained, and the interior of the church itself needed attention. The solution was to construct spaces inside the church for non-liturgical uses and to sell the hall. In 1985 the hall was bought by a local Hindu community group. In the 1840s while Salvin was building the church and school, far away in Aden some Indians were establishing new lives. Later one of their descendants settled in Finchley, founding a mutually supportive community. Shree Aden members emphasise human service, for example help for the elderly and food distribution. Social activities with music and dance are organised, with a great festival in the autumn.

A child in Hawthorn Dene

By Daphne Chamberlain

One of the most famous buildings in Finchley is the house at the top of Strawberry Vale. Spike Milligan fought to preserve it, and Helen Fletcher has told *THE ARCHER* about her life there as a child in the 1920s.

She loved the garden. It had a big lawn, an enormous cherry tree with its trunk split in two, and a brook. Occasionally, water from Squires Lane pool emptied into this brook, and her brothers "rode the rapids" on planks. Sometimes, they crept through the containing pipe across the High Road.

She remembers violets, primroses, and a spring in a hazelnut copse. Her grandfather was a pioneer in developing blue polyanthus.

"Coming from the High Road and the Green Man – a little wooden inn run by Mr and Mrs Foster – there was Lincoln Cottage, then Jimmy Crouch's house, a stable, Hawthorn Dene, tennis courts, Strawberry Vale Farm, pastures, and a tiny bungalow."

Safe as houses

Before the 1820s, Strawberry Vale was under water for most of the time. Earmarked as the reservoir to feed the new Grand Union Canal extension, and then rejected in favour of the Welsh Harp, it was bought by an East Finchley builder called James Frost. Frost, the inventor

of modern cement, eventually worked for the Franklin Institute in America. Hawthorn Dene was his show-house.

Its special features are its plastered tile ceilings, supported by fluted cast iron ribs, and stone stairs with fretworked iron banisters – all fire-resistant. When it became a Grade 2 listed building in 1969, it was said that "no other known examples have so far been found of this type of construction in so small a house".

The Finchley Society, Spike Milligan, and GLC Councillor Jean Scott led the campaign for its listing. Otherwise it would have been demolished to make way for a slip-road to the North Circular Road.

As a child, Helen Fletcher was unaware of the uniqueness of her home, but remembers the large, square rooms, leading into each other so that each floor had a circular plan. Particularly significant to her was the front door. "It had no lock, just a big bar that would slot across. I was always pleased when Dad put the bar across – and we were safe inside."



Spike Milligan points out the fire-resistant iron-ribbed ceiling
Photo courtesy of The Finchley Society Archives



The Black Bess – Can anyone supply details? Photo by courtesy of Barnet Local Studies and Archives

Remember Black Bess?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Looking at the number of eating-places in every shopping centre today, it's hard to realise that only 50 years ago most people ate out for a treat. Local restaurants and cafes were few and far between, which is probably why The Black Bess Temperance Hotel is still fondly remembered by the more senior East Finchley residents.

It stood at 170, High Road, on the corner of Hertford Road. The 1926 street directory lists its immediate neighbour as Finchley Motors, with East Finchley's department store, Bradshaw and Son, completing the block up to Bedford Road.

Its photo shows an impressively large building, big enough to hide Dick Turpin and his horse, though there seems to be no historical basis at all for that. In 1926 its proprietor was

Miss J. Wright. By 1938 it was run by Stephen Thomas-Dole. Can anyone identify the people in the photo, who are obviously from an earlier time than either of those, and who look very proprietorial?

Famous for its sausage sandwiches, it was apparently used by transport drivers on their way north, but there were also adjoining tea and children's rooms.

Can anyone tell us more?



The French Connection

By Diana Cormack

A fairly recent addition to local eating-places is to be found at 42 High Road, where **Chez Nous** has taken over the long-empty site of Jerome the jewellers. From the name, many passers-by assume it to be French, though the full title is "Chez Nous Meze and Grill Restaurant," which is a bit more helpful.

Cosmopolitan

The waitress provided the description "Mediterranean food," which covers many of the courses on offer, though not really the breakfast, which has a definite English emphasis.

For lunch or snacks, ciabatta rolls and special sandwiches are served with salad or chips but,

if you fancy a bigger meal, you can begin it with a hot or cold starter from the Mediterranean Mix. Whether you fancy British, French, Greek, Italian or Turkish, you should find something to choose in this café restaurant.

Chez Nous, tel 8444 1332, is open daily 10 am to 11 pm.

Thais are us

By Diana Cormack

If proof were needed of the popularity of Thai food in the country today, a visit to the **Nahling** at 106 High Road should suffice. Since opening at the end of March, it has been inundated with customers, both for the dining in and the takeaway service.

Nahling means monkey face and was inspired by Lek Rayner, who runs the place with husband Mick. Her hometown of Lopburi is known as monkey town in Thailand, because its people revere the monkey (the full story is told on the restaurant menu). As a child, Lek was nicknamed monkey face and Mick was constantly called a little monkey, so the name is doubly fitting.

The couple, who live in Creighton Avenue, have previously been involved in catering for private functions as well as importing Thai furniture and



Service with a smile Photo by John Dearing

Poseidon adventure

By John Dearing

On the afternoon of Sunday 4 April a party was held to celebrate the opening of the new **Poseidon Fish Restaurant**. Partners **Stephano** and **Stelios** laid on an excellent buffet of all manner of fish, seafood and meat dishes for a considerable number of guests.

The restaurant has been created by linking the premises next door to the existing fish restaurant and completely refurbishing both, a job which was started last October and took until the end of March. The restaurant section is in two linked parts, the front room including a fully licensed bar, and an arched doorway leading to the back room where a large skylight provides a natural light and space for a palm tree to grow.

Classical theme

The decor is mixed, with the front section in more traditional materials such as the wood used on the bar and the restaurant fronting, but overall the design is contemporary with abstract pictures and decorations, resisting the temptation of a piscine theme. Rather, they intend eventually to introduce a classical feel, with a representation of Poseidon, god of the sea.

Stelios has been involved with the Poseidon Fish restaurant for nearly four years



Steve and his colleagues celebrate the opening of the new Poseidon restaurant. Photo by John Dearing

and has built up a successful trade. Stephano previously ran a family restaurant business, the Nautilus in West Hampstead, for over thirty years. The closure of Toms Butchers offered them the opportunity to join forces to create the new restaurant.

Menu

The menu focuses on fish and seafood, both fried and grilled, with fish mezes, fish starters, chicken and lamb kebabs, and steaks also offered. The restaurant seats 70-80 people, and opens Monday to Saturday, 11.30am to 10.30pm.

furnishings. The amalgamation of these two skills is evident in Nahling, where diners can get an authentic taste of Thailand both in the food and in their surroundings. Special touches like the colourful couchette cushions in the non-smoking section upstairs and the pagoda in the garden all add to the ambience.

In the summer they plan to serve barbecue food and special Thai salads, as well as having

a different lunch and dinner menu. At present the most popular dish is Pad Thai prawns, but whatever your choice it will be the real thing, because 90% of the staff are members of Lek's family.

Nahling is open for lunch from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm and dinner from 5.00 to 11.30 pm Tuesday-Sunday and Bank Holidays; Monday for dinner 5.00-11.30 pm Phone 8883 8688 to give this Thai a try.

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Donkey Festival comes to Cherry Tree Wood

The date for this year's Muswell Hill Festival has been changed from 13 June to Sunday 12 September, with the new venue of Cherry Tree Wood. The changes will enable it to run alongside a major new attraction – a Donkey Derby in aid of the Hornsey Trust for Children with Cerebral Palsy.

Earlier attempts to hold it in a Haringey park failed because of a rule banning animals, but Barnet was more accommodating.

As well as the Donkey Derby, the event – which

will run from 12 - 6pm – will include a dog show, a performing arts festival and a children's entertainments area, plus stalls featuring a variety of produce and arts and crafts, with many local organisations, including the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association, also well represented.

Sponsors sought

The search has already started for sponsors to lend their names to the Derby and the dog show, plus other aspects of the afternoon's attractions. It is hoped that many local celebrities – Muswell Hill and the surrounding area has more than

its fair share of TV, radio, music and film personalities – will turn up on the day to make the event in aid of this local charity a big success.

The Hornsey Trust runs the conductive education centre for children with cerebral palsy on Muswell Hill itself, and is a neighbour of Muswell Hill Primary School.

For further information, contact Alison Wynn, the Hornsey Trust, on 8444 7242 (Tues and Wed) or 8340 2524 (Mon and Thurs), mobile 07808 364 033 or e-mail alison@onlib.com or info@hornseytrust.org.uk

YOUNG ARCHER

May flowers and good luck

By Diana Cormack

This month hawthorn bushes are covered in masses of beautiful "may" blossom, but don't be tempted to pick any to take home, for it is supposed to be very unlucky to have it in the house. It is also said to be unlucky to chop down a hawthorn tree. Could this be because legend says the crown of thorns, which Jesus wore when he was crucified, was made from its branches?

After the Crucifixion, Christians believed that they could get special protection by touching pieces of wood that were supposed to have been part of the 'true cross'. But to 'touch wood' has been a way of asking for good luck since pagan times, when people worshipped tree gods. They used to touch or knock on trees as a way of seeking protection from the spirits living inside them.

Secret signs

Crossing fingers for luck began when early Christians used it as a secret sign for protection against evil. Another once secret sign goes back to ancient days when people worshipped the hare, which was the sacred animal of Eostre, their goddess of spring. When Christianity arrived and people were not supposed to continue with their pagan beliefs, they got around it by carrying a hare's foot. After the Normans

brought rabbits to this country, the rabbit's foot eventually replaced the hare's, which had become a sign of good luck.

Probably the best-known animal to be linked with luck is the black cat. However, they can be connected with both good and bad luck, depending on when and where you see them and how many times they cross your path. Of course, it also depends on whether or not you are superstitious!

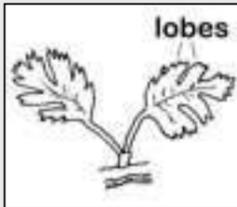
Checking for May blossom

By Tony Roberts

So, it's May and you have found a bush covered in leaves and white blossom, but is it May blossom, is it Hawthorn? A closer look will tell:



Be careful as you pull back a branch – hawthorn has long sharp thorns, well hidden!



The leaves are smallish and divided into parts called lobes – you should be able to count between 3 and 7 of these.



The flowers grow in clumps and have five white (or pink) petals. They have a sweet smell.

If your blossom passes these tests it almost certainly will be May blossom. There is another variety of hawthorn with smoother and less noticeable lobes and larger flowers; it is up to

you whether to call this May blossom! Later in the year you will find that the flowers turn to red berries called haws; together with the thorns, this explains the name.

Clever Clogs Corner

If you break a mirror you're supposed to get seven year's bad luck!

This superstition dates from Roman times when mirrors were made from flat polished stone. Presumably it took that long for the poor servant to make a new one? Can you work out these mirror image words from their definitions? The first one is done for you.

1. married / drops of water which appear on plants early in the morning **wed / dew**
2. One more than nine / used to catch fish ---/---
3. Rodent / sticky black stuff on roads ---/---
4. Wild dog-like animal / movement of a river or stream ---/---
5. Part of a hospital / to sketch ----/----
6. Animals we keep at home / one foot forward ----/----
7. Something you drink through / little growths on the skin ----/----

Jokes

Mary: Mum I got into trouble in school today for something I didn't do.

Mum: That's not fair. What was it you didn't do?

Mary: My homework.

Pupil: Sorry I'm late sir. I was dreaming about football.

Teacher: How does that make you late?

Boy: They played extra time.

Answers

2. ten / net, 3. rat / tar
4. wolf / flow, 5. ward / draw
6. pets / step, 7. straw / warts

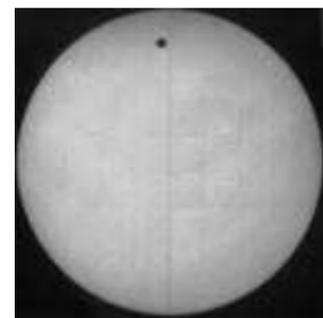
Venusian transit

By John Dearing

The planet Mercury crossed the face of the Sun last summer and was observed in East Finchley and reported in *THE ARCHER*. This summer a much rarer event will take place: there will be a transit of the planet Venus across the face of the Sun, which, weather permitting, will be visible from here. Venus, being much larger and closer to us than Mercury, should be visible to the unaided eye through an appropriate dark filter.

On 8 June, between approximately 6.20am and 12.20pm BST, Venus will be seen as a small, dark circle silhouetted against the bright disc of the sun; its path will be a chord, about three-quarters of the way from the centre of the solar disc.

This took place last in 1882 and will occur next in 2012. Previously astronomers used Venusian transits to improve their measurements of the distance between the Earth and the Sun, and expeditions were sent across the world to observe and



The Transit of Venus in 1882
courtesy US Naval Observatory

time the events. The astronomy section of *THE ARCHER* will be doing its best to record this unusual event for you!

Under no circumstances look directly at the Sun without using an approved filter – you will damage your eyes, probably permanently. Solar filters purchased in 1999 for the eclipse, may be used provided they have no scuffs, scratches or pinholes. The safest way to use binoculars or a telescope is to project the Sun's image onto a piece of white card.

RSPCA news

In Springtime it is common to find young birds sitting or hopping on the ground at this time of year. They seem to be on their own but their parents are probably watching from a distance or busy seeking food for the family.

Do not touch them; go on your way, then return in an hour or so to see if they are still there. Any bird that is injured or sick will be left, and has a very low chance of survival, even given the most tender care. The kindest action is to quickly put them to sleep, or call for the Animal Collection Officer at the RSPCA on 0870 5555 999 who will deal with the situation.

Much less common is to

see fox cubs playing or learning to hunt on their own. They are pushed out of their 'earths' at about four weeks old to see the world. The best time to find them is early morning and, again, the parents are watching from a distance.

If you find one sick or injured, call the helpline as above. Do not attempt to give any first aid but some water and dog food could be left nearby.

East Finchley Baptist Church

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Experienced singers are always welcome.

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



Give it a go!

By Helen Drake

Give breastfeeding a go! That's the message to new mums and mums-to-be of this year's National Breastfeeding Awareness Week (9-15 May). It's the healthiest option. You regain your figure sooner, it helps the womb return to normal and you have a lower risk of pre-menopausal breast cancer and ovarian cancer.

It is also the healthiest option for your baby. Breastmilk provides everything your baby needs for the first six months of its life.

Confidence and support

According to the latest statistics, 90% of mothers who stop breastfeeding in the first six weeks would have liked to breastfeed for longer, and with the right support and help many might have continued. Alison Shaloe, National Childbirth Trust (NCT) Breastfeeding Counsellor for the East Finchley area comments, "Support was a key factor in whether women chose and continued to breastfeed. We encourage partners, family and friends, as well as health professionals, to support breastfeeding mums." She continues, "Confidence is crucial in breastfeeding. Mothers need to believe that the process can work

and that their body is capable of producing what their baby needs. If women contact a breastfeeding counsellor early on they may overcome their difficulties and have a positive breastfeeding experience."

Local Mum

Barbara Herberg, NCT member and local mum of Katya, aged two, and Caspar, five months, says, "I breastfed both my children and I'm still breastfeeding Caspar at the moment. Although I found it difficult to start with I was determined to succeed because I knew it was the best thing for my children, and the most convenient. It was worth persevering in those early days."

Breastfeeding Advice

Alison will be running a



Barbara Herberg with Caspar.

Photo by Helen Drake

special breastfeeding advice session during the NCTea Party, a fundraising event organised by the local group on Tuesday 18 May, 2.30-4.00pm at the CUFOS centre, Muswell Hill (end of The Avenue N10). All are welcome. You don't have to be a member of the NCT.

Contact the NCT breastfeeding line on 0870 444 8708. For details of the NCTea Party, contact Helen Drake on 020 8444 9576.

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

The wrong kind of trains

In this modern high-speed world of cars and boats and planes it's hard to remember that trains are 200 years old. Yes folks, back in 1804 some bloke in Cornwall called Richard Trevithick first came up with the idea of an engine hauling wagons on a track. And what have we got now? Not high speed, efficient transport, but courtesy of what was once British Rail, a whole new world of high-speed excuses.

We've had the wrong kind of snow, not in Alaska or some other part of Eskimo country where they have 149 different words for snow, but in Surrey where they have 149 different kinds of Range Rover. Then there is the wrong kind of rain, as it is wet rain, not dry rain. Not forgetting the wrong kind of leaves falling from the wrong kind of trees and the wrong kind of wind blowing them the wrong kind of way.

The latest manifestation of high-speed excuses is the wrong kind of air. Apparently the latest trains don't like certain kinds of air and get so sensitive that they have to have a lie down and cry. But let's not stop there, there are so many other excuses that your average, incompetent rail company can use, that I feel it is my job to let you know just what you are going to be hearing as your train creaks to a halt somewhere outside Milton Keynes.

Firstly, there is the wrong kind of buffet car, an excuse used when they tell you that due to a hold up at Biggleswade you can only get coffee as the tea was on an earlier train and forgot to change at Watford. Of course you could be told that the train has stopped because the wrong kind of sun is shining and the train forgot to buy any sunblock before leaving Glasgow.

Of course it could be worse, they could be about to tell you that the delay is caused by the wrong kind of commuter, you know, one of those who thought that buying a ticket gave them the right to travel quickly to their destination, not via a siding outside Swindon. But all is not lost; apparently some university is about to set up a project to study suburbia, so some train company somewhere is preparing to announce that your train has been delayed due to the wrong kind of suburb. Or, as my grandmother said, if God had meant us to use the railways he'd never have given us the motorway.

OBITUARIES

Joyce Koimur

7 June 1959 - 18 March 2004

By Ralph Goldswain (East Finchley Writers Group)

We were saddened to hear of the death of Joyce Koimur, whose writing was showcased in the June 2002 edition of THE ARCHER. She lost her long battle against cancer, although with great courage and fortitude. Her death has left her friends stunned even though they were all aware of the steady decline of her health. She was greatly loved and admired by all who had the good fortune to know her.



Joyce Koimur

Photo by Ralph Goldswain

Joyce came to England from Kenya in 1992, keen to take advantage of the land of opportunity. Making the most of that opportunity she turned her nursing career into a model of success but tragically, with further promotion in the offing, she was forced to retire from her post as ward manager at St Joseph's Hospice in Hackney 18 months ago, owing to the relentless advance of her cancer.

Apart from her great qualities of strength, a loving disposition, huge courage and unfailing good humour and optimism, Joyce was able to face up to her approaching death, recording the history of her illness, cataloguing her developing feelings, writing daily until a few months ago. Never having written anything other than reports connected with her work before that, she revealed a real talent for written communication and an astonishing ability to write about her life, her illness, and her inevitable early death with stark honesty

and humour. Her friends in the East Finchley Writers group are among the members of the many different groups who will never forget Joyce's unique contribution to their activities.

We extend our sympathy to Joyce's nine-year-old daughter Olivia, a pupil at the Martin School, and all of her family, on their sad loss. Typical of Joyce is that in her final days she was smiling optimistically and trying to comfort the visitors who shed tears at her bedside.

Peggy Darvill

4 February 1920 - 25 March 2004

THE ARCHER is saddened to report the death of Peggy Darvill, who had lived in East Finchley for 57 of her 84 years. Born in the Elephant and Castle area, Peggy spent the war years working in a parachute factory in Tring, Hertfordshire. Her husband Bill, whom she met at a post-war dance, came from a long-established East Finchley family and they moved into Huntingdon Road after their marriage in 1947.

For the next few years Peggy was kept busy with their children, Peggy, Patsy, Billy and, after a few more years, Keith. Before Keith's arrival, Peggy had already begun working in the business that was to make her so well known in the area. In 1956 her mother-in-law started a pet shop on part of the site which Koko's shoe shop now occupies, sharing it with a cobbler's. Peggy and her husband helped out and when, four years later, the pet shop moved to Lincoln Road, she took on more of the work.

When she left the pet shop forty years later, Peggy certainly didn't take it easy. She devoted six days of the week to working in the North London Hospice Shop on the

High Road, where her circle of friends grew even larger. Her colleagues there, who particularly remember how she was always ready to make a cup of tea for them and described her as "a lovely, wonderful person", will sorely miss her. Peggy will be remembered by many for her ready smile and friendly personality. She never passed you in the street without a greeting!

Peggy's popularity was reflected in the number of people who attended her funeral at Marylebone Crematorium on East End Road, followed by a



Peggy Darvill in her pet shop

wake at the Clissold Arms, Fortis Green. Her ashes will be scattered on the graves of her husband and their son Billy. Daughter Peggy was unable to speak to everybody at the funeral, but she wishes to thank all those who came to say goodbye to her mum and to express her gratitude for the floral tributes.

Peggy leaves behind three children, ten grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

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- ❖ **Finchley & Hornsey Ramblers Group** Call Vivien 020 8883 8190
- ❖ **Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club**, Summers Lane N12. New and experienced bowlers welcome.
- ❖ **Keep fit for the Retired** Wednesdays Christ Church N12. Ring Bridie. 020 8883 5269
- ❖ **Step/Aerobics classes**, Sundays at Bar XL. Phone 0789 0033 968.
- ❖ **Tae Kwon Do** at The Green Man Thursdays 7-9pm 07949 612 706
- ❖ **Tai Chi** at the Green Man on Mondays 1.30-3pm
- ❖ **Tennis Club** off Southern Road. Call 020 8440 6953
- ❖ **Yoga & Meditation** classes at Holy Trinity Church, 020 8444 7217
- ❖ **Yoga, breathing & relaxation.** Weekly drop-in classes-N2, N6, N10. Phone Judy on 020 8444 7783.

Dance, Drama, Art & Music

- ❖ **Adult Line Dancing.** Call Footloose 020 8440 8530/ 8216 5633.
- ❖ **Art Classes.** For info call Henry on 020 8888 5133.
- ❖ **Ballroom dancing classes**, beginners and improvers. Phone 01707 642 378
- ❖ **Barnet Schools Music Centre** call 020 8359 3111 for details.
- ❖ **Broadway & West End Musical Singing Workshop** call Idit Gold 020 8449 0011.
- ❖ **Club Dramatika** drama club for kids. Call Vicky 020 8883 1554
- ❖ **Country & Barn Dancing**, at Oakleigh Park, 020 8349 0754
- ❖ **Columbian party dancing** classes, Call Nelsy 020 8444 2012
- ❖ **Incognito Theatre workshops**, Colney Hatch Lane, 020 8883 0911
- ❖ **Finchley Jazz Club**, Monday 17 & 31 May at Wilf Slack Cricket Pavilion, East End Rd, N3.
- ❖ **Over 60s come dancing** at Ann Owens Centre 020 8346 8736
- ❖ **Pottery Class** at The Green Man, Call Celia Holmes 020 8349 9315
- ❖ **Learn to sing** at Finchley Methodist Church. Call 020 8883 4070 for info.
- ❖ **Symphonic Wind Orchestra** of North London, Contact Caroline Egan 020 8340 2706

Clubs & Social

- ❖ **Bingo**, Green Man Community Centre, 020 8883 4916
- ❖ **Contact Lunch Club** at the Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book a place. Every Thursday. 12.30-2pm
- ❖ **East Finchley National Childbirth Trust**, Contact Sophie Spence 020 8444 1890
- ❖ **East Finchley Writers** meet weekly at the Old White Lion. Contact Lillian on 020 8444 1793.
- ❖ **Fairacres Monday Club** for Jewish people, Rene & Reuby Hyams, 020 8883 0448 or Sylvia Lee 8958 7878
- ❖ **Finchley Philatelic Society**, Contact Brian Merryweather 8444 3251
- ❖ **Friendly Rubber Bridge** at The Old Barn, 020 8349 4613
- ❖ **Haringey Recorded Music Society**, informal meetings locally. Call David Mouldon on 020 83611696.
- ❖ **North London Bridge Club**, Muswell Hill, 020 8348 3495
- ❖ **Northern Lights Speakers' Club** alt. Monday eves at The Old White Lion www.northernlightsspeakers.org.uk
- ❖ **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.



Noel Lynch photo courtesy Orla Hurst

Lynch lobbies for Archer

Noel Lynch, Green Party Member of the London Assembly, has successfully lobbied for his local paper *THE ARCHER* to be stocked at City Hall Library. Noel was "shocked" to discover that the paper was not held by the library and took immediate steps to remedy the situation.

"I never miss an opportunity to raise the profile of East Finchley and was keen to make sure that our local papers and the issues they cover are being noticed by the rest of the Assembly," said Noel.

THEATRE

Murder in Play

Finchley's Guild Players present *Murder in Play*, a comedy thriller by Simon Brett at the Methodist Church Hall, Ballards Lane, N3 on 13-15 May.

Boris Smolensky's budget production of *Murder at Prior-swell Manor* is in final rehearsals. Things are not going well when life imitates art and one of the cast is murdered on stage. Who could have done it? And how? The rampant egos amongst the inept company of actors mean that each could have a motive. Christa, a fading soap actress, the monstrous director himself, or perhaps his dippy mistress. What is the relationship between Boris

and Pat the stage manager, and can any of them put up with Harrison's dire theatrical anecdotes for much longer? Despite all the offstage drama, the show must go on.

Simon Brett is best known for the radio and TV comedy *After Henry*, plus the *Charles Paris* and *Mrs Pargeter* series of detective novels.

Tickets are £7 and performances start at 7.45pm. Box office 020 8346 6337 or visit www.guildplayers.org.uk.

Winning farce

Review by Alison Roberts

It was with some trepidation that I set out to see Incognito Theatre Group perform *Run for Your Wife*, as good old British farce would not have been my first choice for an evening's entertainment. In the event, I was pleasantly surprised.

One of Ray Cooney's most popular plays, *Run for Your Wife*, enjoyed an eight-year run in the West End during the eighties. It follows a day in the life of London cabbie John Smith, who uses his odd working hours to cover up his double life – with two wives located rather too close for comfort.

If Cooney's humour feels a little dated, it was more than compensated for by some tight direction and immaculate comedy timing from a polished cast.

Graham Sawtell (as interfering neighbour Stanley Gardner) and Andy Mills (John Smith) demonstrated a mastery of timing, playing off one another with the ease of seasoned professionals. Francine Ross and the utterly convincing Abi Evans provided solid support as the two long-suffering Mrs Smiths, and newcomer Damian Perks gave an assured performance as DS Troughton, with a deadpan delivery that only added to the amusement.

Fast and furious

Packed with innuendo and often-predictable one-liners, this fast-paced comedy offered no pretence of literary excellence; it did however provide a thoroughly enjoyable evening of good honest entertainment, which at times reduced many of the audience to tears of laughter. This is, surely, what amateur theatre is all about.

Incognito Theatre can be found behind the health centre in Holly Park Road, N11. Their next production is Thomas Middleton's *Women Beware Women* on 23-29 May (See What's On, right).

East Finchley Open

This year East Finchley's Festivals will include the East Finchley Open. EFO started this year with a couple of local artists feeling that a group focus would help their isolated suburban activity and it has snowballed to, currently, 30 artists and craftspeople.

The East Finchley Open will start in mid June with a show in the Phoenix cinema's newly opened foyer gallery. During the weekend of 26 and 27 June members will exhibit a wide variety of affordable arts and crafts in their own houses and at the East Finchley Community Festival. One member plans to have a sculpture garden open to the public: another plans to project videos on the walls of the High Road itself. There will be other local venues, details of which will be published in June.

There will be a wide range of work in two, three and four dimensions including work in oil paint, watercolour, acrylic and mixed media; tapestry; murals; photography; video; sculptures in clay, wood and stone; jewellery and other accessories.

A great place for artists

Some EFO members have exhibited widely and internationally, while for others this will be their first exhibition opportunity. The EFO is a local voluntary group which is able to keep its prices affordable and whose members enjoy talking with the public about working

in a creative profession.

EFO Membership secretary Adam Justice-Mills said, "The big fun of doing this has been meeting such creative individuals, all excited by the thought of showing and selling their work locally. Even more exciting is seeing East Finchley continue to emerge as a cultural centre. We hope we're making the beauty of the East Finchley community itself more visible. It's just a great place to be and now it's a great place for artists to be as well."

There will be an 'EFO walk' signposted, taking in each of the artists' houses and centred on the High Road. Look out for posters along the High Road with the EFO logo on them – they will tell you where and when the EFO will be opening houses in June.



What's On...

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

Sunday 9 May - A Celebration of Sydney Carter with Mike Sparks (vocal and guitars) and Carole Clarke (recorder) at 8pm East Finchley Methodist Church, High Road, N2. An evening of music by the late Sydney Carter, well known in the folk singing world and as a composer of many popular hymns. Sydney Carter wrote the hymn *One More Step* especially for this church. His style brought together the music of the folk world, the secular and the religious with humour, thought, provocation, challenge and gentleness in equal measure. Collection in aid of The Alzheimer's Research Trust.

Thursday 13 May - Saturday 15 May - The Guild Players present *Murder in Play* at The Methodist Church Hall, Ballards Lane N3. Curtain up at 7:45pm. For further information visit www.guildplayers.org.uk

Friday, 21 May - The Richard Blues Band at The Green Man Pub 143 High Street, Barnet from 8.30 pm. Blues and Rock 'n' Roll Music and Dancing. Free admission. Tel 020 8449 4033 or visit www.thegreenmanbarnet.co.uk.

Saturday 22 May - East Finchley Community Festival Quiz Night at the Green Man Community Centre from 7pm till late. Tickets £10 per person (includes wine and nibbles) 6-8 people per team. To book your place call Nick or Martin on 020 8883 4916 (please book early to avoid disappointment). All Proceeds go towards keeping our festival free! Supported by the Green Man Community Centre User Committee. (A couple of quiz rounds will have a Finchley slant so make sure you know your local manor if you are entering.)

Sunday 23 - Saturday 29 May - Incognito Theatre Group presents *Women Beware Women*, Thomas Middleton's Jacobean bawdy revenge tragedy Directed by Andrew Robinson. Tickets £6-£8 (Non-members add 50p per order). Performances start at 8pm, except 23 May which starts at 6pm. Box Office: 020 8361 8310 or email graham.sawtell@btopenworld.com. For further information visit www.incognitoteatre.com.

Friday 28 May - Horticultural open day. Tucked away in Islington Cemetery is a Horticultural Resource Centre where environment-friendly gardening is practised and taught. Here 70,000 plants for summer bedding are grown for Islington's parks and open spaces. The Centre also runs a horticultural course for adults with learning difficulties. The Open Day will run from 10 am to 3 pm when visitors are welcome and some bedding plants will be on sale. For information about the horticultural course phone 020 8444 9185.

Sunday 13 June - Friends of Finchley Memorial are holding their **Summer Fete** in the grounds of Finchley Memorial Hospital, N3 from 1.30pm.



Proms at St Jude's

The Suburb's annual festival celebrates its twelfth year with a range of music to suit all tastes and ages, from classical to jazz to Gospel to chamber music – and culminating in a traditional Last Night of the Proms.

All profits will be divided between Toynbee Hall (75%) and North London Hospice (25%). Last year, a total of £30,000 was donated to these two charities, and the organisers are hoping that 2004 will be even more profitable.

Performers, many of whom are internationally known, include Alessio Bax (winner of the 2000 Leeds International Piano Competition), Humphrey Lyttelton's band, and the Finchley Children's Music Group.

The St Jude's Proms will be held in the Suburb's Central Square, NW11, Saturday 12 June to Sunday 20 June. Lunchtime performances begin at 12.45, and evening programmes at 7.45pm. On Thursday 17 June there is an additional Dame Henrietta Barnett concert at 11.45am at Toynbee Hall, Commercial

Street, E1.

Lunchtime concerts are free, and feature talented young musicians at the beginning of their careers. At lunchtimes, snacks are sold in the church, and can be eaten either inside or at tables outside. Evening refreshments are served in the marquee.

Evening concerts cost £8, £12 or £14, with discounts in advance for party bookings and bookings for three or more concerts. Concessions are available on the night (on the door only).

General booking opens on 17 May, via tel. 020 8933 5365 or www.stjudes.org.uk.

For information on how to become a Friend or a sponsor, and/or to receive a Proms programme, phone Yvonne on 020 8455 8687.



Sylvia Read and William Fry in Theatre Roundabout's production of *Canterbury's Burning* directed by Roger Redfam. Arts Festival 2 July. Photo by John Kenward

East Finchley Arts Festival

A haunted Abbey Church, an exorcism, and the life of Thomas Cranmer feature in the two dramatic productions in this year's East Finchley Arts Festival.

The first is Geoffrey Hanson's opera *The Virgin Crown*, which is to be performed by the London Ripieno Opera Group, tells the story of a young priest who mistakenly falls in love with a ghost. Far fetched? Opera is like that! On 3 July all will be revealed.

Theatre Roundabout, who are currently touring their performance of *Canterbury's Burning*, bring it to the Arts Festival on Friday 2 July. The London

Mozart players directed by David Juritz give a programme of string music by Mozart, Elgar, Dvorak and Britten and a new horn concerto with Nick Korth as soloist, on Saturday 26 July. Local resident and international celebrity Jennifer Bate will give an organ concert on Friday 25 July. The Finchley Children's Music Group and the Youth Music Centre hope to repeat their success of previous years in their

very popular programmes. Early Music with Faronell, Thamyse String Quartet, Jazz at Strawberry Vale & Open House Art Week complete the mix.

Most of the events take place at All Saints Church in Durham Road. Full information is available in the Festival brochure and on the website <http://eastfinchleyartsfestival.org.uk>

Letters to The Editor

Service station threat
Dear Archer
Many East Finchley residents recently worked hard to prevent the development of a Waitrose supermarket on the High Road, rightly believing that it would destroy local shops and create huge traffic congestion.

Now we face another unwelcome proposal: the building of a substantial retail unit, with car parking, at the Leopold Service Station further up the High Road. It is understood that the store would be occupied by one of the big supermarket chains.

I urge your readers to act immediately and object strongly to this application (C00046AE/04) by writing to Barnet Council or completing the comments form on the Council website.

Service station supermarkets undermine high streets, like East Finchley, by discouraging people from visiting the whole range of high street shops and by encouraging unnecessary car use. This particular proposal will create an especially dangerous situation when young children from Martin School try to reach the shop whilst cars try to reach the service station.

Noel Lynch
Green party member of the London Assembly
City Hall

Calling Friends of East Finchley Library!

Dear Readers of the Archer
I am trying to establish a campaign group to lobby on behalf of East Finchley Library. I would love to hear from anyone who might be interested in getting involved or who would like to be kept informed of developments.

The first priority would be to persuade the council to make the library Disability Discrimination Act compliant. (As I understand it the

Act makes no exceptions for Grade II listed buildings). In the medium term refurbishment, in sympathy with the existing building, would be something worth campaigning for in order to secure the library's long-term future.

I am sure you know that the council plans to close two of the borough's libraries this year - in Totteridge and South Friern. Listed status only protects the fabric of the building, it doesn't safeguard its use. However, if local people get together and make sufficient fuss, Barnet council will listen.

If you would like to get involved, or if you would just like to be kept informed, please call me on 07971 086 913

Polly Napper
Elmhurst Court,
Elmhurst Avenue, 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)

Hampstead and Highgate Festival

This year's Festival runs from 15 to 23 May and promises a wide range of events including music, art, literature, dance and local history.

Several concerts will focus on the music of Elgar, who lived in Hampstead for 12 years. Ken Russell will discuss his film about the composer after its screening at the Everyman cinema and David Pownall's play *Elgar's Third* will be performed at the Gatehouse. Other music events include Verdi's Requiem, a recital by cellist Robert Cohen and jazz

at Lauderdale House and Pizza Express (yes, really).

Children's shows, bat and bird walks, country dancing at Cecil Sharp House and a visit to the Hampstead Observatory are among the activities in the Festival programme. Most events can be booked on 020 77940022 (Festival Box Office). For the full Festival brochure phone 020 77221414.

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Pick of the bunch

By Diana Cormack

Just two months ago Tricia, Mike and Jimmy, who run Josephine's the florists, completed 40 years of trading at the longest-running shop on the High Road. But their celebrations were tinged with sadness, for they knew that it was only a matter of time before they would be moving on.

Tricia Blam and her brother Mike took over Josephine's in 1964. Jimmy Olney joined them four years later as Tricia's husband. In fact, it was flowers that brought the couple together, for Jimmy sold sundries to the flower trade at Covent Garden market where Tricia bought stock for the shop every morning. They got married three weeks after their first date!

Customers and friends

For the following 35 years they have visited the market together, getting up at 4.30 am on six days of the week. "It's the best time to see London," said Tricia as she graphically described her favourite sights on the familiar journey. Both of

them say they will miss this as much as the many other aspects of their work, including the relationship they have with their customers.

"If a person comes through that door more than once, then they're our friends," Jimmy told THE ARCHER. In the 1970s they also had a shop at 91 High Road and lots of locals,

who have marked all their major family events with flowers from Josephine's, will be really sad to see them go towards the end of this month. There have been many customers of note over the years, from members of the cast of East Enders, to pop singers and television personalities, but I was amazed to hear that once a chauffeur driven car drew up outside and Katherine Hepburn strode into the shop!

Taking a store of local memories with them, Jimmy and Tricia are going to live in Frinton-on-Sea, though Jimmy intends to keep up his regular involvement with the Air Training Corps here. Tricia wants to continue providing flowers for private functions and weddings, which she really enjoys. But Mike could be taking the biggest step of all, for he has plans to set up his own floral business in Calgary, Canada.

THE ARCHER would like to thank Tricia, Jimmy and Mike for many years of support through their advertisements and to wish them well for the future.



Jimmy, Tricia & Mike at Josephine's. Photo by John Dearing

Two High Road pharmacies merge

By Daphne Chamberlain

The Cory Pharmacy and its near neighbour, Cootes Pharmacy, have merged. The arrangement, completed last month, is another expansion for Cootes, the shop at 134 High Road, on the corner of Leicester Road. Earlier this year, they took over the former Boots premises in Ballards Lane, Church End.

Cootes told THE ARCHER that no services will be lost, but there will be a reduction in shop opening hours. All dispensing will take place in the Cootes premises, which are open from 9am-6.30pm Monday to Friday, and 9 am to 6 pm Saturday, with a duty rota on Sunday.

The therapists – such as the homeopath, physiotherapist and chiropodist – do not expect to change their hours. Cory Phar-

macy based chiropodist Mary Goulbourn told us, "We work independently, and are continuing as before."

The Cory Pharmacy, at 166 High Road, is well known for supplying medical equipment, including items such as wheelchairs. This has been a feature of its provision since it changed its owner and its name from Aldington and Lewis in 1969. This provision will also continue.

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