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THE ARCHER



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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Barnet trips up on pavement charging

By Daphne Chamberlain

Barnet has dropped its plan to tax shops and cafes in the borough for use of the pavement, "pending a comprehensive review with no time frame".

East Finchley shopkeepers, backed by local councillors, had campaigned against the proposal, which would have meant paying 92p per square metre of pavement used for every working day. At present they are allowed free use of 10% of the footway, providing at least two metres are left clear. In some cases, the tax would

have amounted to thousands of pounds.

The proprietor of Casa Pepe told *The Archer* "this would have killed us".

Barnet was considering following the lead of other local authorities, but for the foreseeable future East Finchley's café society and local shops will remain unchanged.



Enjoying a coffee outside one of East Finchley's cafes. Photo by Erini Rodis

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Tally Ho pollution

By Garth Morton

The threat to our health from air pollution may be greater than we think, as newly published research figures reveal. Tally Ho Corner in North Finchley has for the first time recorded levels of nitrogen dioxide which exceed those that the European Union recommends as safe, according to the London Air Quality Network run by King's College London researchers. On 94 separate days last summer the safety levels were breached, a situation exacerbated by the weather.

Tally Ho is surprisingly in the same pollution category as central London sites such as Knightsbridge and the King's Road, despite the air quality action plan adopted by Barnet Council in January 2003.

According to information provided by the researchers, young children and the elderly as well as those with respiratory problems such as asthma are the most at risk from increased pollution.

What is particularly alarming is that while motorists may only be exposed to such dangerous levels of pollution while driving through, those

residents and nearby primary school children are exposed to hazardous levels for as long as the problem persists. An example of this happening occurred

during the 21 days when Chalgrove Primary School suffered levels of dust particulate, called PM10, which exceeded the set guidelines.

Six terms? - after you!

By Daphne Chamberlain

After consultation, Barnet has decided in principle to change to a six-term school year. So have our six neighbouring local authorities. Now the question is when. In July, the Cabinet announced that "the date of change should not be considered until at least five of the six LEAs which border Barnet confirm the date(s) when they will change".

When Barnet sent out questionnaires to parents, carers and teachers and others earlier this year, 43% of the returns voted *No* to change, against 35% who said *Yes*. 15% agreed on condition that neighbouring boroughs also change. The remaining 7% were unsure.

Continued on page 3...

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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 September is the copy deadline for the October issue.

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Employment Service 020 8258 3900
Haringey Council 020 8489 0000

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Tourist Info Service 0870 128 8080
Warner Cinema 020 8446 9933

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London Transport 020 7222 1234
National Express 08705 808080
Heathrow Airport 0870 000 0123

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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 02086833300
Relate 020 8447 8101
Samaritans 08457 909090
Refuge Crisis Line 0870 599 5443

Health Advice

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Alcoholics Anonymous 08457697555
Barnet MENCAP 020 8203 6688
Cancer Support 020 8202 2211
Carers' Line 0808 808 7777
Drinkline 0800 917 8282
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❖ Toy library, Muswell Hill 020 8444 0244/ 8489 8774

Motorbike fire

By Frank Tymkow

While passing the alleyway behind the Herbert Wilmot Centre on 2 August smoke alerted me to a blazing motorbike that was being put out by three fire tenders.

Onlookers told me that this was the second stolen bike in a month, and that the police have a good idea as to the perpetrators, but cannot act until they catch them at work. Meanwhile these blazes put the Centre at risk.



Firefighters survey the damage. Photo by Frank Tymkow

Fatal bus crash

Police are appealing for witnesses to a fatal collision involving a bus in Golders Green to come forward.

At approximately 3.50 pm on Saturday 21 August a double-decker Rail Route Replacement bus was in collision with a single-decker route 210 bus, opposite the King Alfred School, North End Road NW11. Both vehicles were travelling west, towards Golders Green. It is believed that the double-decker then mounted the pavement and was in collision with two pedestrians.

The first pedestrian, 61-year-old Bent Hjerting, who was originally from Norway, was pronounced dead at the scene. His 10-year-old son Harald, was taken by air ambulance to Royal London Hospital with chest injuries, and later transferred to St Mary's Hospital, Paddington where he is reported to be in a

critical but stable condition with his mother at his bedside.

The driver of the double-decker bus was taken to hospital with cuts and bruises and later discharged. Five other passengers from the two buses were taken to hospital, but there are also believed to be about 27 other passengers who left the scene with minor injuries.

Sergeant Andy Nelson from Alperton Collision Investigation Unit said, "These are the people who can really help us establish how this tragic collision occurred and it is extremely important that you come forward and tell us what you saw." Anyone with information is asked to contact Alperton Collision Investigation Unit on 020 8998 5319.

Keep your car safe!

Do you own a high value or high-powered car? Barnet Police are issuing guidelines to owners after a spate of thefts where the target has been the car parked outside the house. Since 12 April this year, police have reported some 44 burglaries of this type. In other burglaries the car has not been stolen, but the keys have, and owners have had to take measures to stop thieves returning to help themselves to the car.

Most modern cars nowadays have excellent security, forcing thieves to have to use the car keys to steal them. They may break into the house to steal the keys or use rods or canes through letterboxes to remove them from just inside the front door.

What can car owners do?

If you have a garage, why isn't the car in it? Out of sight is out of mind. If thieves can't see your car, they can't be tempted to steal it. Have a clearout in the garage and throw away the old bits and pieces 'that will come in handy someday', making room for the car, which is worth a lot more! Insurance companies will often contact police to find out details of crimes and if your policy is dependent upon the car being

stored overnight in a garage and it wasn't, they may reduce the value of the claim.

If your car is high powered or high value, consider getting a 'Tracker' or other vehicle location device fitted. Insurance companies will recommend this action and while it may not stop the vehicle being stolen, it may act as a deterrent and there is a good chance the car could be found before too much damage is done.

Make sure your keys are kept in a safe place, preferably not near the front door. To prevent the keys being hooked through the letter box there are letterbox cages and deflectors that can be installed at minimal cost.

If you would like further advice on keeping your car and your home secure, contact PC Duncan Hillcoat, one of the Crime Prevention Officers at Barnet Police on 0208 733 5092. Or visit the website at www.met.police.uk/barnet

Pickpocket strikes in East Finchley

By John Dearing
Recently a local resident visited the Post Office in the High Road to buy some stamps. Initially she placed her purse on the counter, but then replaced it in her pocket.

While leaning over to look at the birthday cards, her purse was picked from her pocket. Fortunately she doesn't keep much money nor any credit cards in her purse, but it was annoying and distressing all the same. She told THE ARCHER "I want to warn people that crimes like this are taking place, even in a quiet place like East Finchley."

Attempted break in at Budgens

On the morning of 8 August, between 0.15 and 0.45am, there was an attempted break in at Budgens in the High Road.

Two suspects were seen trying to enter the premises via the rear of the building, in the Viceroy Close car park. It would seem that they failed to achieve entry and left the scene. One is described as about 25 years of age.



Green Flag for CTW

By Diana Cormack

Cherry Tree Wood has been identified as one of the parks that will benefit under Barnet Council's new 'Premier Parks Strategy'. Cabinet members have backed a scheme whereby sixteen parks are to get premier league treatment, with their quality being measured against a national *Green Flag* standard, similar to the *Blue Flag* award scheme used on public beaches.

The chosen parks will be subject to a five-year improvement plan destined to "ensure they are attractive, accessible, well maintained and offer a wide range of facilities". Due to be in place this month, these plans will initially concentrate on essential repairs, followed by such things as improvements to park entrances, horticulture, disabled access, park furniture and play facilities.

The safety of park users will also be a priority, so all park keepers and ground maintenance staff will be regularly and clearly visible in their uniforms and will have received customer care training. Vandalism and anti-social behaviour will be monitored and, where



This should be more convenient for all park users next year. Picture by John Dearing

there is a need and appropriate funding, CCTV will be considered.

Leasing buildings

Where there are suitable buildings, every effort will be made to lease them to cafes or organisations such as play and youth groups, which brings the new kiosk and the pavilion in Cherry Tree Wood to mind. At the time of writing, someone has been accepted to take over the lease of the kiosk, but the opening is being delayed by legal technicalities. Barnet Green Spaces say that it will open as soon as possible.

They also say that the pavilion will not be pulled down, but hope to re-vamp it, perhaps to be used by young people's groups.

This all depends on funding, as does the refurbishment of the children's playground, so any improvement will be on hold until the money is available. Similarly, the toilets next to the tennis courts need to be upgraded for use by the disabled and this is in the pipeline for next year.

It seems that funding will focus on the premier parks, with less money going to the 200 other parks not given this rating. When any significant improvements to our park will occur remains to be seen; the chairman of the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood has said that no matter what the intentions are, it always comes down to money in the end.

Six terms

Continued from page 1

Unions' views

Speaking nationally, Unison – the local government union – considers that any change should take place only on a regional basis. The National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers says that any change must be negotiated nationally, and there should be "no piecemeal changes in individual LEAs". The National Union of Teachers says that "there are wholly insufficient reasons to change".

Wide consultation

What do the people of Barnet think? 58,000 questionnaires were sent out this summer – not only to schools, but to care establishments, childminders, businesses, diocesan authorities, neighbouring LEAs and religious groups. The Council says that details were also available on the Barnet website and in libraries. 7,516 (about 13%) were returned.

No change can happen until 2006–7, because the terms are already set until then. A Barnet spokesperson told *THE ARCHER* that Chief Officers of neighbouring boroughs are in constant contact, but this is a very complex issue.

THE ARCHER would like to know what East Finchley thinks.

A bunch of buses

By Daphne Chamberlain

"It's not the number of buses we're concerned about – it's their reliability." East Finchley Bus Watch was working on its second survey of the 143 and 263 buses last month, and group organiser Hazel Burnett considers that the results are confirming what many people suspected.

Intervals of 25 minutes and more between some buses alternate with bunches of buses close together, and others running reasonably. The average wait works out as quite acceptable, but the bus user arriving at their stop never knows whether they will wait for a short, average or long time.

In this second survey, Bus Watch has picked out different days each week, with members

on a rota system 'on duty' from 8am to 10pm. (The standard shift is one hour, and survey points have seats!) Both routes are timed in each direction.

At the end of each survey month, results are analysed and sent to Transport for London, but Hazel is sending off details of any bad waiting times immediately, with a request for an explanation.

If you would like to join, call 020 8444 6824.

Public CSAZ Meeting

A meeting of the Community Safety Action Zone (CSAZ) is to take place on 21 September at the Old Barn Community Centre, Tarling Road from 7pm to 9pm.

This is a Public Meeting for the Police to explain about the Community Safety Action Zone, and for members of the public to ask questions. Chief Superintendent Ricketts, along with all police and council people involved, will be there.

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Is The Dick Turpin closed for good?



By John Dearing

The Dick Turpin boarded up. Picture by Paul Dearing

Last year, we reported that The Red Lion had closed and was boarded up. In April this year, *THE ARCHER* learnt that The Dick Turpin, located nearby, had been refused a renewal of their licence to sell alcoholic drinks, as they had been caught selling drinks after hours.

Then a sign went up saying "Under New Management", but attempts to contact them to find out about their plans for the pub were singularly unsuccessful.

Now The Dick Turpin has been boarded up, joining The Red Lion. Presumably both will remain boarded up unless and until the Council Planners allow a "change of use" application, whereupon two more of the ubiquitous blocks of flats will rise in their stead.

New beginnings

By Diana Cormack

The new school year at Holy Trinity has started with a difference for, after 18 years in the post, school secretary Gillian Morgan has begun her retirement. During her time at the school, Mrs Morgan worked with four headteachers, 75 teaching and non-teaching staff and about 1,000 children!



Gillian Morgan. Photo by Diana Cormack

But one child in particular has persuaded Gillian to make the move, for she is now the proud grandmother of baby Kieran and she wants to spend more time with him and also with his grandfather Clive. The couple are about to go on holiday to Canada and have other long journeys in mind, all of which are now possible outside the school holidays.

Born and bred in East Barnet, Mrs Morgan used to travel to work from her home in Whetstone, where she had lived for thirty-nine years since her marriage to teacher and lecturer Clive. However, they moved to Hatfield and the long drive, along with the prevailing traffic conditions, were other reasons for her decision to retire.

Gillian's love of gardening was reflected in the many leaving gifts she received from staff, parents, pupils and governors and she planted a special tree to commemorate her years at the school. Rest and relaxation were catered for too, with one of her presents being tickets for a journey on the Orient Express.

But there is one aspect of Gillian's life from which she will not be taking a rest, for she has been a member of The Salvation Army from the age of only two weeks and is still actively involved.

Mrs Morgan's immense contribution to the school was recognised at a special assembly as well as at other end of term events in July. The place will not be the same without her.

Planning Committee in action

By John Dearing

The Finchley and Golders Green Area Planning Committee met on 12 July at 7pm. About 200 members of the public were present and the room was full to overflowing.

Numerous applications were considered; a few of the highlights follow. One involved building five houses on a plot that presently hosts a large pond full of frogs, which some councillors felt should be taken into account.

The most contentious business of the evening was the proposed re-development of the Sternberg Centre in East End Road. The committee decided that it should be referred to the Council's Planning and Environment Committee. At this point about half of the audience left.

Successively increased

A development company has made an application to build 72 flats on a piece of wasteland. Speakers against the application pointed out traffic concerns and the sheer size of the building, and presented a petition against the development. The architect spoke for the application, claiming that all objections had been dealt with, and that the development would enhance the value of adjacent properties. One of the councillors revealed that the owners have been granted permission to develop the site on several occasions over the last 15 years, and the size of the proposed development has successively increased. He felt that a smaller development should have taken place long ago. The

application was rejected.

Care homes

Two quite separate applications were taken, involving proposed extensions to care homes for the mentally ill. The first was not a registered care home. Numerous speakers catalogued a litany of problems, some of which had been caused by inappropriate referrals by Barnet Council. The management's response was to undertake to apply for registration! The application was rejected. In contrast, the second involved a registered and well-regarded care home. The management appeared to be taking steps to alleviate the impact on adjacent properties, and the application was accepted.

Although the room used was not best suited to the purpose – it was difficult to see and hear what was going on – the debates were informed and interesting, with councillors trying hard to stick strictly to planning issues. Speakers from the public who were concise were better received by the committee than those who allowed their emotional involvement to affect their presentation. The meeting closed at 10.30pm, which is a long time for committee members to maintain their attention!

Local Planning Applications

201, High Road, N2 -

Change of use from B1 offices to A3 restaurant.

Five Bells Public House, 165-167, East End Road, N2 -

Single storey rear extension and alterations to existing conservatory. Installations of various externally illuminated and non-illuminated signage.

54, Hertford Road, N2 -

Two-storey side extension, following demolition of existing garage.

40, Fortis Green, N2 -

Single storey rear extension. Alteration to roof, including hip to gable and rear dormer window, to facilitate a loft conversion.

53, Summerlee Avenue, N2 -

Alteration to roof, including hip to gable end and side and rear dormer window, to facilitate a loft conversion.

238, Creighton Avenue, N2 -

Demolition of existing garage and formation of two-storey side extension to dwelling house.

1, Nursery Road, N2 -

Erection of front entrance. Formation of rear dormer to roof, to

facilitate loft conversion including a balcony.

37, Brim Hill, N2 -

Conversion of garage into habitable room, with associated installation of door at front. New rear door from kitchen. Enlargement of rear window. French doors at rear. Alteration to roof, including front and side dormer windows, to facilitate a loft conversion.

3, Abbots Gardens, N2 -

Alteration to roof, including hip to gable end and rear dormer window, to facilitate loft conversion.

1, The Leys, N2 -

Alteration to roof, including addition of side and rear dormer windows and rear conservation rooflight, to facilitate a loft conversion.

60, Bancroft Avenue, N2 -

Conversion of garage to habitable room, including insertion of front window.

23, Shakespeare Gardens, N2 -

Single storey rear extension.

86, Ossulton Way, N2 -

Removal of ash tree. Reduction in height, or lifting, of wild plum tree.

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Children enjoying the new Avenue House playground. Photo by Daphne Chamberlain

Ahead of the game

By Daphne Chamberlain

The new play area in Avenue House grounds “sets the standard for parks all over the borough”, said Barnet’s Deputy Mayor at its official opening. He was speaking to celebrities, carers and children, all celebrating the first playground in Barnet to be designed for disabled children as well as those with no disabilities.

The all-over safety ground surface (also the first in the borough) is soft and spongy, and the equipment is in bright primary colours, with rounded edges. Swings can be adjusted to get children in easily, and the short slide is wide enough for child and carer to whiz down together.

Other pieces of equipment are also built to allow adults to share the ride, if necessary.

Some pieces incorporate manual games, and some encourage children to develop upper body strength by hanging from handholds. Children can climb to the top of the slide

by using decorated hand and footholds, and then climbing through a larger hole. This was designed particularly for partially sighted children.

“Not all disabled children have mobility problems, and we have tried to cater for everyone,” said Janett Durrant, Avenue House Estate Manager. Described as “a human dynamo” in the opening ceremony, Janett herself praised the efforts of her staff.

Guests at the opening included Felicity Edmunds, great-granddaughter-in-law of “Inky” Stephens, who once lived in Avenue House, MP Rudi Vis, Council Leader Victor Lyons and several councillors, as well as representatives of the various charities which have contributed towards the cost of this play area.

With their generous contributions and money raised from public subscription, the project is just a few thousand short of covering its cost of £89,000. This attractive and worthwhile playground has certainly set standards, but I heard more than one person at its opening wondering how easy it would be for other parks to follow its lead.

every day, not to buy anything but because he had decided to train Martin in the skill of key cutting. At times it was as if nothing had changed, as Bob would introduce Martin to customers as “the imminent new owner” rather than the actual owner he now was.

Bob and Martin must have got on well however, because, on the strength of a handshake with Bob, Martin still cuts keys at the back of the shop and will still continue to do so after Alan’s Records moves in.

Record move

By Garth Morton

Alan’s Records of East Finchley High Road is set to transfer to new premises just a few yards away. Martin Henham is retiring after 31 years of running his antique shop and Alan’s Records will soon be moving in. There is, however, one rather unique aspect of this antique business which will remain – the key cutting service.

The unusual combination of antiques and key cutting came about when Mr Henham tried to buy the shop from its original owner in 1973. Bob Thomas wanted to sell his business as a going concern and did not want it to be turned into an antique shop. After 10 weeks of Mr Henham trying unsuccessfully to acquire the shop, Mr. Thomas relented on condition that Martin kept up the tradition of cutting keys in addition to his new antique business.

To Martin’s surprise, on the day he opened his antiques business, one of his first customers was Bob Thomas. Over the next six months Bob appeared

Find your market

By Daphne Chamberlain

Last month Nikki Joule wrote about the success of a new farmers’ market at Alexandra Palace. When other markets in London are closing, why is this one seemingly catching people’s attention?

It is run by Chris Elder, whose company – City and Country Farmers’ Markets – started up four years ago and has sites at Dulwich, Brockley, Lee Green and Hammersmith. He told *THE ARCHER* that he doesn’t want farmers’ markets to die out in a few years “because of lack of inspiration”.

This is why he offers organic Free Trade tea and coffee at some sites, low-key music, traditional dancing, and occasional cookery demonstrations, and guest “healing tents”.

As Nikki said, the choice of site is important, and perhaps the fact that Ally Pally has parking spaces for 840 also draws the customers. Chris says that there are regularly 32-38 stalls, from as far north as Norfolk and as far south as Sussex.

The Ally Pally market started in April, and has yet to get full planning permission. Also, ‘main events’ at the Palace prevent the markets

being held every week. This is why he recommends checking before going along. Call 020 8291 1124 or 07780520610.

This month’s dates are fixed already – Sunday 5, 12 and 19 September (10am-3pm), when apples and beer will be the main focus.

But don’t forget that London Farmers’ Markets – the company which started the whole thing off – still has 16 markets running. Some (like the Whetstone site) have closed, but the first one, in Islington, is still apparently flourishing. This is now held in Essex Road, opposite Islington Green, on Sundays from 10am to 2pm.

If you want to browse further, look up Farmers’ Markets online. I shall be making a few comparisons myself, and it would be interesting to hear your opinions. Meanwhile, don’t let’s desert our excellent local shops.

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A net success

By Diana Cormack

Throughout the summer holidays, Barnet Bulldogs Basketball Club has been holding free courses on the court in Cherry Tree Wood. Supported by funds from the council, Connexions and the Milly Apthorp Charitable Trust, many local children were able to benefit from these training sessions out in the open air.

"I thought it was really, really good because they teach you how to do it properly," eight-year-old Gabriel Antoinette of Prospect Ring told me. His twelve-year-old sister Daniela agreed. "The teacher was really good and gets your attention by doing

different things with the ball," she said. They wish it could be a permanent fixture in East Finchley.

Beginners aged around seven to twelve were schooled in the basic skills of the game on Mondays to Fridays from 2.00pm to 4.00pm and could

show what they had learned by competing for prizes, culminating in a tournament at the end of the week.

Older children up to the age of eighteen were offered training from 4 to 6pm, with various competitions and a three-on-three tournament, also with prizes.

Organiser Ted Polson told me that this session had not proved to be as popular as the earlier one, for which over fifty children were registered.

Perhaps that's because it wasn't advertised in *THE ARCHER*! However Ted has said he will contact us before the next basketball training sessions in the park, scheduled for Easter 2005, so that *Young Archer* can pass on the details. They should start just after the schools break up and continue throughout the holidays.

If you can't wait till then, you can find out about other courses in the borough by phoning him on 020 8449 4883



Not just a passing phase for these young basketball players.
Picture by John Dearing

Women's self defence classes

By Sheila Armstrong



Lucy Evans gets into "forward" position. Photo by Erini Rodis

Lucy Evans is running women-only self defence classes at the Green Man Centre, Strawberry Vale every Wednesday from 18 August. The classes start at 7.30 and last two hours. They are open to all women from 12 to 60. No levels of fitness are required so anyone can join.

She stresses that everyone works at their own pace, and will be working mostly on their own with occasional pair work. The best sort of clothing to wear is tracksuit bottoms and T-shirt. Training is in bare feet.

Kixa classes

Lucy already runs Kixa classes in Swiss Cottage. Kixa is a non-contact form of self defence from East Java, involving kicks, punches and blocks. It helps promote fitness, weight loss and relaxation and is essentially non-aggressive. The classes include advice about when to fight and when to run and about increasing your own

awareness of the surroundings you find yourself in.

Women only

The reason Lucy is running a women only class is that she feels the martial arts tend to be dominated by men. It is hoped that this sort of class will encourage abused or vulnerable women to join in and women who may be unable to train with men for cultural or religious reasons.

Details are available from Lucy Evans on 07929 203 129, from Martin O'Donnell at the Green Man Centre on 020 8883 4916, or www.pat@kixa-international.com.

A four-legged friend

by Kathryn Salomon

Sam (my Greyhound) refused to race even once, but he's a real star as a PAT dog. PAT dogs have to pass the Pets as Therapy Temperament Test which ensures that they are gentle and well-behaved. References are taken out on their owners, and they are insured by the charity. PAT dogs and cats visit hospitals, residential homes, hospices, anywhere that needs them. Some help phobic patients overcome their fear of dogs.

Sam and I make regular visits to Jewish Care's Rela Goldhill Lodge, a residential home for younger people with physical disabilities. Sam is also a regular visitor at the residential home where my mother-in-law lives. We also visit a Special School. All the children are in wheelchairs and most of the pupils are terrified of dogs. This is particularly sad because Assistance Dogs could bring them independence when they grow up. Sam is helping them to overcome their fears.

Friendly visitor

People in hospital or a residential home who miss their own pet or are lonely welcome a visit from a friendly pet. A few have become so isolated and depressed that they no longer speak, sometimes they suddenly start talking to their PAT visitor. Others find stroking a friendly pet comforting.

Giving Sam a (low calorie) dog-treat enables those who are used to having everything done for them the chance to give something to someone else.



Marietta Adami and Sam at Rela Goldhill Lodge
Photo by Vic Aboudara

They love to introduce Sam to their visitors and recount his exploits. Instead of just listening to news from the outside world they have something interesting to say.

Sam benefits too

Sam also benefits from the visits. When he first came to us he was very timid but now he is much more relaxed and outgoing, he loves to be the centre of attention. He has had a bad shoulder for most of this year and became very depressed because he

couldn't go for walks. His PAT visits have really kept him going. As for me, I find it really rewarding sharing my lovely pet.

So, if you have a friendly, well-behaved dog, of any shape or size or a friendly cat (yes, there are PAT cats too) and you would like to know more about Pets as Therapy, or if you know somewhere that would benefit from visits, please contact Pets as Therapy, 0870 240 1239 or www.petsastherapy.org

RSPCA autumn fair

This year the fair will be held at the RSPCA Clinic in Park Road on Saturday 9 October between 11am and 2pm. There will be a selection of bric-a-brac, books, toys, clothes and home made sweets.

Try your luck on the tombola and buy a raffle ticket for a chance to win a gorgeous cake. Refreshments will be on sale and volunteers will have a wide range of RSPCA leaflets to hand out covering all aspects of animal welfare.

All proceeds go to maintain the Clinic, which has served East Finchley pet owners for so many years.

Ann Owens redundancy

Re Ann Owens Centre 'steams ahead'

Following last month's article on the future of the Ann Owens Centre, *THE ARCHER* has been informed that Assistant Manager Linda O'Neill was made redundant.



Peaking at 70

By Bill Tyler

I have a severely autistic nephew and have always wanted to see Machu Picchu, the 'lost' city of the Incas. So in May I did a three-and-a-half day trek on the Inca Trail in Peru to raise funds for the National Autistic Society.

Thank goodness I did some hard training, just to build up strength, because there is no way you can acclimatise in England for the 4200m (13,780ft) of the highest pass on the Trail. After two days getting used to altitude in the old Inca capital of Cusco, deep in the Andes at a height of 3,400m, our party of 28 set out on a route now carefully controlled by the Peruvian authorities to prevent visitor numbers damaging the trail itself and the ecology around it.

Dead Woman's Pass

Almost outnumbered by porters, who carried all the camping gear, equipment and food, the group soon started to spread out as the trail steadily climbed up to Dead Woman's Pass, the highest of the three main passes. The uneven steps and inclines and rarefied atmosphere made progress quite slow on the steepest parts, especially when carrying 5 or

6 kilos of gear in a backpack. Some trekkers were affected by altitude sickness – one had to be carried down on a stretcher made from tree branches – but everyone suffered from shortage of breath.

I found this fairly daunting but, at two weeks short of my 70th birthday, I still outpaced some of those well under half my age! The scenery is magnificent, especially the cloud forest and the Inca fortifications and sacred sites. Almost cloudless skies meant sub-zero temperatures at night; morning starts at around 6.30 were decidedly chilly.

Awestruck

Although fascinating and in the most romantic setting, Machu Picchu was almost an anti-climax after the exhilaration of the trek itself. However, watching sunrise from the Inca Sun Gate, high above the ruined city, was magical; all of us were awestruck and a bit emotional.



At the top of Dead Woman's Pass

So far I have raised over £13,500 and hope to make it £1 for every 1ft of Dead Woman's Pass (13,780). You may have already put something in the collecting box at C W Andrew Pharmacy but if you would like to help me achieve my target please send a donation to NAS c/o 22 Southern Road, N2 9LE.

My allotment

By Sheila Armstrong

For me one of the great things about having an allotment is the feeling you don't have to dig out every single weed. We all know now that untamed areas of any garden attract wild life – are a positive bonus in fact – well that's how we justify them. It's the slightly dishevelled look that appeals to me. Not that you won't find immaculate plots, with fruit, flowers, vegetables and ponds, not to mention sheds, composts, polytunnels, wildlife gardens, bees, and sometimes a flourishing social life. Some of these (except for the social life) even attract set-up grants. More details from the numbers below.

As well as the fairly therapeutic exercise of digging, you have somewhere to take all that vegetable waste from the kitchen – your communal, or individual, compost heap; so you won't be fined by the council for not recycling enough.

Growing fruit and vegetables side by side with experts who give you advice and camaraderie in equal measure if you're lucky, is another of the benefits, as well as having really fresh food to take home.

So that's eco-friendly on two counts; Brownie points for recycling; fresh vegetables, air and exercise; taking a bit of profit from the supermarkets. Not forgetting the organic option. It's not surprising allotments are having a resurgence, witness the number of times allotments have featured on the television in the last year. And for people without gardens but a compulsion to grow things, they are a lifesaver. So an evening spent on the allotment after work is

relaxing, full of the feel-good factor.

Space available

Despite the proposed increase in charges from April 2005, there are still allotments available on some of Barnet's 50 sites. Those interested should contact Ted Green, Secretary of the Federation of Allotment and Horticultural Societies in Barnet on 01707 876 075, or Colin Nash, Allotment Officer for Barnet on 020 8359 7384, or colin.nash@barnet.gov.uk.

Walking for life

How many of us take walking for granted? Going from A to B, arriving without taking the time to enjoy the journey.

On the first two Mondays of each month the Walk for Life scheme encourages enjoyable walking in East Finchley as a way of maintaining your health.

Meeting at 10am in front of the café opposite the tennis courts in Cherry Tree Wood, the route for the walks makes the most of our local woodland treasures. A lap of Cherry Tree Wood and then of Highgate Wood exercises the body and stimulates the senses. Amid the birdsong you can see the leaves, blossom and flowers developing and changing, as you breathe in

the fresh scented air.

If you are among the estimated three-quarters of the nation's population who do not get enough exercise, these walks could be a great way to start.

The hour-long walks are free of charge and led, come rain or shine, by enthusiastic, trained volunteers, Chris Ward and Patricia Orr.

Personal challenge

Chris has recently completed a slightly more daunting walk. The Three Peaks Challenge involves reaching the top of the

highest peaks in Scotland, England and Wales in just 24 hours. Chris, who is the park keeper at Cherry Tree Wood, had sought sponsorship to scale Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon.

The aim of the challenge, which took place at the end of June, was to raise money to buy a modified vehicle for a close friend who was left paralysed by a horrific domestic accident last year. With a group of friends, Chris managed to complete all the climbs in 23 hours and 42 minutes.

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YOUNG ARCHER

Harvest Home

By Diana Cormack

*Harvest home, harvest home,
We have ploughed, we have sowed,
We have reaped, we have mowed,
We have brought home every load.
Hip! Hip! Hip!
Harvest-home!*

In the olden days, farmers and farm workers (which included women and children) celebrated at the end of harvesting when the harvest was safely home and stored in the barns. They sang, danced and feasted on the farms and held services of thanksgiving in the churches, not only because all that hard work was over, but also because they had enough provisions to keep them going through the winter months.

But they were also thinking of the following year. Farmers used to leave a row of wheat uncut because they believed that it would make a home for Ceres, earth mother to the Romans, who lived in the fields and protected the crops. (That's where we get the word *cereals* from).

In many European countries the last sheaf of wheat, which they believed contained the spirit of the crops, would be woven into the shape of a woman. This was kept throughout the winter and the farmer would plough it back into the earth when spring came.

Because their life or death depended on the crops, for centuries people all over the world have celebrated the harvest. In Malaysia they made a Rice Baby out of seven stalks of rice and in Poland they made a harvest wreath. The Jewish eight-day harvest festival of Sukkoth is mentioned in the Old Testament. Some of these

ancient customs have had an influence on modern day festivities.

Soon you will be playing your part in the harvest celebrations when you are asked to bring tinned and packaged goods to school. Nowadays few of us have to struggle and strive for the food on our plate, so we collect some together and take it to people who we hope will appreciate it. That is our way of saying thank you.

Jokes down on the farm

What game do pigs enjoy?

Pig – pong.

Why is a horse like a cricket match?

Because it gets stopped by the rein.

Why is it hard to talk with a goat around?

Because it butts in.

Where does a sheep go for a haircut?

To a baa-baa shop.

What does a cow eat for breakfast?

Moosli

On which side does a chicken have the most feathers?

On the outside.

How to make friends and influence people

By Kathryn Salomon

Being a VRH volunteer is a bit like being a grandparent; you have all the fun without all the responsibilities!

Volunteer Reading Help volunteers visit local Infant and Junior schools to help children learn to read. You don't use any of the school books or reading schemes but choose from a wide variety of reading material and play games together. You work with children who need that little bit of extra attention from a kind adult.

With retirement looming, I contacted VRH. Harriet Watson, the Volunteer Services Manager, interviewed me and took up references including a Criminal Records Bureau check.

There is a short compulsory training scheme before you start, with another session after you have started working in your chosen school. Ongoing training is provided and you can always turn to Harriet or Ruth Hudson the field worker for help.

The volunteer commits to attending the training course of six-and-a-half hours and to

working with three children twice a week during term time for a year. Anyone over 18, from any background, can help. The only relevant qualifications are a love of children, patience and a sense of humour.

I was allocated to Martin Junior School and duly met the Head Teacher, Ms Driscoll and the three eight-year-old children I would work with. VRH provides a box of books and games but those of us who work at Martins are lucky because the public library is next door and the librarians are very helpful.

Being a VRH volunteer is a most enjoyable, rewarding and satisfying experience. It is wonderful to gain a child's confidence and to see them blossom and grow. I, too, have learnt a great many things, particularly about football and the card game Top Trumps!

Contact Harriet Watson 020 7373 7523 for information.

Olympics in the Cotswolds

By Daphne Chamberlain

So modern Olympics started in 1896? Oh no, they didn't. They started about 1612, on a hill in the Cotswolds, near Chipping Campden.

The blue riband event became shin kicking – wearing pointed clogs, but there was also a lot of swordplay, wrestling, cudgel fights and hurling the pike. There were no surprises in the opening ceremony. That always featured a burst of cannon from a model castle.

Started by a lawyer called Robert Dover and supported by King James 1, the 'Cotswold Olimpicks' kept the locals happy every Whitsun and became famous throughout England.

Closed down in the 1820s, when they were seen as definitely not respectable, they were revived in 1951, and are still going strong today.



The view from Dover's Hill Photo by Tony Roberts

(Nowadays, though, shins are padded.)

There were other 'Olimpicks' in England, but the Cotswold games were the ones you had to see.

There is now a plaque in

their honour on Dover's Hill, above the village of Weston sub Edge.

Read more about them in *The First Ever Olimpicks Games*, by Celia Haddon (ISBN 0 340 86274 2).

Trial run

Eleven-year-old Melissa Benjamin of Benedict Way, East Finchley, may well have been watching the Olympic Games last month with more than a little enthusiasm.

Her own talent was spotted at the North Barnet Athletics Championships for Primary Schools, held at Cophall Stadium in July. Melissa won the girls' sprint and long jump for her age group and played a significant part in her Year 6 team winning the relay. On the strength of this she has been invited for trials at the prestigious Barnet Shaftsbury Harriers Club.

Melissa is now a Year 7 pupil at Bishop Douglass Secondary School, having just left Holy Trinity.

Take a closer look

One of our regular readers rang THE ARCHER to point out something she had spotted on the BBC 2 programme Restoration.

It opened with a view panning over the white cliffs of Dover, swiftly followed by a picture of East Finchley tube station taken from the tracks with the archer statue visible in the top right hand corner. Blink and you'll have missed it, but if you happen to have taped any of the recent series, you could freeze frame the beginning for a longer look.

Open meeting about East Finchley library

By Polly Napper

Did you know? This year, Barnet council have permanently closed Totteridge branch library. South Friern branch is under threat.

Our own library is vulnerable because it doesn't comply with the regulations of the Disability Discrimination Act, which comes into force on 1 October.

Do you love your library? Do you want it to stay where it is? Local residents are get-

ting together to form a support group for the East Finchley branch library.

If you'd like to get involved, come along to an open meeting on Wednesday 22 September at 8.30pm, in the first floor meeting room in the Neighbourhood Centre, Church Lane.

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



A smashing time at The Black Bess

By Mark Littlefield

The Black Bess closed about 1964-5, when I was 10 years old. I remember going in with my grandfather to the main café, but not to the tea-rooms adjacent to it. On a mischievous note though, my friends and I had great fun smashing the crockery when it closed.

The owners had left it outside when they went – all plain white plates and cups, etc. It was left on the ground on the south side of Hertford Road, about 20 yards from the High Road, which was where the Black Bess property extended to.

Not on film

Just before this boundary was a fence and two film boards, about five foot square, which advertised the Rex (now the Phoenix) and the Odeon at Muswell Hill. Lorry drivers going in to the Black Bess used to park by these film boards. It wasn't an issue, as Hertford Road had about 15 car owners

then, with a maximum of three or four parked during the day.

Super balls

In school holidays we would play ball in the road. I remember buying our 'super balls', which were sold as seconds, from Conrad – a foam and rubber shop at the north side of the junction of the High Road and Beresford Road. These were 6d (two and a half pence), against five shillings (25p) from a toyshop.

These things really bounced. One holiday, one went astray up Hertford Road when a car was coming down, and the ball went through the car's headlights. What a shot!

Supporting Lupus

This year the ARCHER team decided that they would donate the proceeds of their stall at the East Finchley Festival to Lupus. Sippy Azizollah, an ARCHER team member who unfortunately suffers from Lupus, is seen here accepting the cheque from Sue Holliday. Sippy said that the North London Lupus Group were more than grateful and the moneys would be put to very good use.



Sippy Azizolla accepting the cheque from Sue Holliday

Lupus UK is a support group set up to help people suffering with lupus. They have a very wide network of groups all over the country, plus a worldwide connection too. They raise money to help with research, which is being carried out by specialist medical teams at St Thomas' hospital, which has a special lupus unit under the watchful eye of Dr Graham Hughs. Other hospitals around the country also monitor lupus patients, who are often given the Lupus UK address and phone number for information for ways to help inform themselves of various ways to make life easier. Informa-

tion is also available online, but the local groups also have help lines for people who need one-to-one assistance.

The research so far has proved that this condition is dormant in everyone, but they are now trying to find out what triggers it. Lupus is much more common in women, but there are many male sufferers of this debilitating illness. Lupus Awareness month is this October where all the groups do what they can to inform others of this condition, and to raise funds for further research. Hopefully one day there will be a cure, but help is needed to raise the funds to find one.

East Finchley's religious heritage

Part 6 – The North London Jamatkhana

By Ann Bronkhorst

150 years ago where Budgens now stands there was a stonemason's yard, and a field. Later, from the 1870s until its demolition in 1965, the imposing Congregational church commanded the cross-roads. Two very different places of worship have, in turn, replaced it.

The United Reform Church

The Congregationalists, who had become part of the United Reform Church (URC), built a less ornate church. It was shared with the Elim Pentecostal Church and also hosted groups such as Cubs, Guides and ballet classes. Freda Hancock, then Guide Captain, remembers, "It had a warmth about it." But the building had problems, including a flood, and was too large for its remaining congregation. In 1989 it was bought by the Ismaili Muslim community and, as the North London Jamatkhana, had its civic opening in 1996 after extensive remodelling.

Blending in

The Ismaili community, led by His Highness the Aga Khan, has been established in this country for over half a century. Their main Jamatkhana (place of gathering) is in South Kensington, opposite the V&A. The South London centre opened in 2000, in Croydon, within some carefully restored Victorian buildings. Architecture of



The North London Jamatkhana (place of gathering)
Photo by Ann Bronkhorst

high quality, in harmony with the neighbourhood, is always their aim. In East Finchley, some of the URC building's structure has been retained and its 'footprint' has been used. Externally, however, the building has been redesigned to be in sympathy with the surrounding area, shown particularly in the windows, tiling and brickwork.

Space and calm

"The overall theme is simplicity," I was told when I visited the centre. Inside, my first impression was of spaciousness

and light. A fountain close to the entrance provides the gentle sound of flowing water, a characteristic Islamic feature. Upstairs in the prayer room an expanse of uncluttered carpet and cool, muted colours create a peaceful setting. Intricately carved wooden screens, ceiling panels and grilles – 'jali' work – contrast interestingly with the plainer surfaces.

A busy community

The Jamatkhana is used for cultural, educational and social activities as well as for worship. There are play and study facilities for children and young people are encouraged to support the centre in practical ways. From the tending of flowerbeds outdoors to the collection of shoes indoors, the whole centre runs through the commitment of volunteers. The Ismailis, the most recent faith community to come to East Finchley, have this in common with the Victorian Congregationalists who once worshipped on this site.

The Summerlee Soldiers

Mr. T.E. Mathews, writing about the history of East Finchley in the News Adviser of December 1974, described a reference in Holy Trinity's church records to a soldiers' Convalescent Home at East Finchley.

'After much digging I discovered that two large houses in Fortis Green Road were made into a Convalescent Home for Soldiers during World War One, under the name of Summerlee. It housed nearly two hundred wounded, and continued until about 1922. When it closed, its bedding was given to the cottage Hospital for Summerlee Ward.'

Dorothy Ditcham, 99 year-old East Finchley resident,

remembers seeing the convalescent soldiers sitting outside the nursing-home. She says they wore bright blue trousers and jackets, possibly with red ties.

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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 & 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
❖ **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 professionals. Call Eric 8340 0822.

Live radio

By Sophie Sweatman

A live radio show for an audience of blind and partially sighted people was inspired by blind, partially deaf and cerebral palsy sufferer Mark Colpstein, 42, of Fairacres in East Finchley. Mark expressed a wish to have his own radio station at a moment when an idea was needed for a community project.

We're all *Political*

Last year Mark performed his own song *Political* with a band of people with various disabilities to a moved and enraptured audience at Middlesex University. It was this song *Political* that had us all inspired and singing after an hour of flagging in the August heat during our radio show rehearsal. Mark then spontaneously started adding some spoken word ideas over the jingle for Day to Day FM, the name he had suggested for our project.

So at the Freemasons Arms on Thursday 5 August the gathered radio show team – Antonio, Zeth, Mel, Mark, Terry and myself, Sophie – started singing the chorus for Mark's song.

PA Music of East Finchley had very generously lent us a full public address system for no charge with six microphones, including one wireless

microphone, and a DAT machine to record our efforts.

Never Give Up

Fully equipped with amplification equipment we launched into the show. We had a live performance from Mel Vondrau singing her forthcoming single *Never Give Up* and the audience were given pre-release copies. The audience joined in with jingles and choruses and some people commented that they kept singing the jingle for days afterwards.

Political by Mark Colpstein also highlighted the event. Terry White, a blind man who sang two pop covers plus Zeth Townsend of Crouch End who provided the jingle, acoustic guitar accompaniment and his own original material, and



Zeth, Terry (singing) and Mark

Mel all harmonised with Mark during his chorus. Since rock band The Streets entered the pop charts, spoken word has been all the rage too.

The next aim is to prepare

the show more thoroughly and perform it at Fairacres and to possibly record *Political*, plus songs by Zeth, Mel and Terry to make it the next great charity number one.

FILMS & CINEMA

Still burning brightly

By David Howes

Legends and myths combine this month at the Phoenix...

If for Spiderman, with great power came responsibility, so it could be said that for the comedian, with big laughs come the demons... and so it is for *The Life & Death of Peter Sellers*, a biopic based on the Roger Lewis' book about Britain's best known comedy export.

Covering the period between his breakthrough with the Goons to the early eighties and his death, Geoffrey Rush pulls out all the stops in a powerhouse performance as a man best known as a bumbling French inspector, and not for his frequent depression, mood swings and acts of extreme selfishness.

Sellers is further fleshed out through those for whom he was at once inspiration, friend and husband. Blake Edwards, Stanley Kubrick and Britt Eckland (the impossibly beautiful Charlize Theron) all appear, and a contemporary audience perhaps unfamiliar of his immense talents are given a timely reminder through recreations of some of his most famous work e.g. Dr. Strangelove. A must for cinephiles and comedy fanatics alike!

Antidote

As a sobering antidote, *The Corporation* documents the pervasive presence of corporations in the 21st century, enigmas whose power on the contemporary world draw comparison with the Church, Monarchy and

the Communist Party's sway on previous generations.

Ever wondered about the people that control and drive corporations to pollute, distort, and capitalise on our everyday lives? Ever wondered what kinds of characters are capable of looking on world disasters whilst thinking, "How will this affect the price of gold?"

Mark Achbar's documentary offers access to the figures pulling the strings, the mindsets of those in charge of corporations whose standard operating practices and ethos meet the diagnostic criteria of a psychopath.

Johnny Depp continues to avoid pigeon-holing in his roles by taking on a period adaptation and the part of J.M. Barrie in *Finding Neverland*, a film from the director of the Oscar winning *Monster's Ball*.

Focusing on a downtrodden Barrie pre-Peter Pan success, we find the destitute playwright cum author overseeing the flop of another play and lacking serious inspiration. Cue the introduction of Kate Winslet as a mother of four fatherless children to help provide the necessary fuel for the imagination, as Barrie plays surrogate father, amazing the children with tales of Pirates and flying children, whilst writing himself on the road to his own immortality...

Fact and fantasy intertwine in a film for all the family.

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

From the sublime to the ridiculous

Well, it's over, the silly season that is August has ended. It really was silly, especially when the Harrods Christmas department opened before the Olympics started. Father Christmas was a bit shocked by that, he'd aimed to stay on the beach until October and turned up in Hawaiian shorts with his surf board. That was when he saw the snow and realised that things were getting seriously weird.

Now that September's here, sanity should return, but I'm not fooled, not by a month that once lost eleven days trying to catch up with Europe. Back then people just couldn't get their heads round the idea that if we didn't sort things out they'd end up with snow in July and December heat waves. Instead they wanted to know who had stolen the eleven days and if they'd get paid for them. Which proves that September is as ridiculous as August, it just has a slightly autumnal flavour and I can prove it.

Take football, September is the month for insane dreamers. By December reality has crept in but in September they dream. So what if the team will be relegated by January, in September the fans dream of victory, not relegation. Everywhere the misguided and the dedicated dream on until reality beats them six-nil on a wet Wednesday in October.

September is when seriously weird things happen. In 1915 the first Women's Institute opened in Wales. Without those dedicated Welsh women we'd never have had the nude WI charity calendar, the spin-off film and the cup cakes. We might also have avoided the nude fox hunters, naked firemen and all those other true signs of British eccentricity, without which Britain might be a more sensible and boring place.

The only problem with this weirdness is that someone has to do the dirty job of investigating it. Maybe that's why the first cops hit the streets in September 1829. They didn't solve the weirdness, which is why we got Agatha Christie in September 1890. But the strange affair of September was too much even for Poirot, and Miss Marple was better with bodies in libraries. So who can tell me why the Swedes changed sides of the road in 1967? We should be told before autumn finally sets in and the clocks go back and sanity finally returns.

What's On...

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

Muswell Hill Donkey Derby and Dog Show

Sunday 12 September from noon to 6pm in Cherry Tree Wood. All proceeds from the Derby will go to the Hornsey Trust for children with cerebral palsy.

There will be donkey races for children and for adults and donkey rides all afternoon. Children and adults are urged to enter their dogs for the dog show. There will be prizes for the waggiest tail, the most elegant dog, for owner/dog doubles (owners and pets who look most like each other), the cutest pup (three months to 12 months), the tallest dog and the smallest dog.

§

Finchley Christian Fellowship

Sunday 19 September at 11am in The Finchley Youth Theatre, 142 High Road East Finchley. Drs Gordon and Barbara White (USA), founders of Faith Ministries International, will be the special guests of the Finchley Christian Fellowship

"This couple have ministered in many Nations and have seen many miracles of healing taking place in their meetings."



John Larimer, 1943 – 2004

By Erini Rodis

Friends, family and fellow Marines are saddened by the recent death of John Larimer, of Long Lane.

A member of the *ARCHER* team since 1995, John is fondly remembered for declaring, "Meeting closed, bar open!" with a sharp bang of his stick and an infectious American drawl.

John Michael Larimer was born in 1943 in a little Indiana town called Terre Haute. At 19 he joined the Marines and served all over the world, as an arms controller, naval air observer and communications officer. Six years were spent in Vietnam. In 1967 he was awarded the 'Purple Heart' for rescuing fellow servicemen despite having just taken a bullet to the head under enemy fire. A tattoo on his arm had to be sliced in half to enable a skin graft. Further awards as Gunnery Sergeant were taken in his stride:

"You rely on your training," he'd say, "and do it automatically."

He retired from service in 1973 to become a security consultant to governments, international organisations and the private sector. By his own admission he "did a lot of jobs that other people wouldn't touch", in places like South America, the Middle East and Africa.

Family responsibilities brought him to East Finchley in 1994, after winding up his business on the East Coast of Africa. Internet technology enabled him to continue remote investigative

work despite his ailing health. He taught himself genealogy then offered a UK family tree service to fellow Americans.

But as the saying goes, "Once a Marine, always a Marine," and in February 2002 he set up the "London England Detachment 1088, US Marine Corps League". He was inaugurated as Commandant for the first year, and attended Remembrance Dinners and other events with all respect due to an honoured dignitary.

His older daughter, Saba, is living in California with his 3-year-old grandson Shayne. He also leaves behind his mother Nora, sisters Sue and Jayne in the US, and his wife Josephine and 11-year-old daughter Dani-Ella in East Finchley.

Marine Corps League London Detachment 1088 are planning a memorial service for John so watch this space. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

Letters to The Editor

Short stay only

Dear Archer

Your front page article in the August edition (Institute relocation creates parking dilemma) did not make it clear that the Institute will be renting Park House for one year only, until September 2005.

It is then due to move into a purpose-built new home on the Neurological Hospital site. Barnett's plan to sell the Park House site remains unchanged, and we wait with interest to see what the chosen development will be. We understand that the public marketing of Park House to encourage bidders will begin in September.

**Rick and Kathryn Scorza,
Address supplied**

Visits to Avenue House

Dear Sir

In the last edition of *THE ARCHER* you reported that the Finchley Society offers talks and tours of Avenue House. However, I would like to make it clear that the Society, of which I am President, is just one of the organisations involved in the educational visits to the House and the Estate Grounds.

Avenue House Estate Management, The Stephens Collection, Finchley Arts Centre Trust and the Hendon & District Archaeological Society, as well as the Finchley Society, work together to co-ordinate the educational programme for local school children, but each highlighting a particular aspect of the Estate and its history applicable to its own field of interest.

The first line of call for schools wishing to make a visit remains, as you reported, the Finchley Society's Educational Secretary on 020 8445 1808.

Yours sincerely

**Bill Tyler
Chairman,
The Finchley Society**

**Send your correspondence to:
"Letters Page", The Archer, PO
Box 3699, London N2 8JA or e-
mail the-archer@lineone.net.**

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.



Muddled thinking, wasted money and vandalism by Haringey Council

By Amalia Michaels of Lauradale Road

Next to my house in Lauradale Road was an attractive, mature shrubbery that had flanked the approach to Keynes Close, a sheltered housing complex run by Haringey, for many years. In May this year, workmen came with no warning and uprooted the shrubs, leaving a barren area that is now covered with unsightly weeds, including waist-high thistles. Upon checking with Haringey, it seemed that it was thought necessary to do such a thing for various - it seemed to me - inappropriate reasons e.g. the residents of Keynes Close said they were frightened that people could hide in the shrubbery; the Warden had complained of rubbish dumping and fouling by dogs - but IF these problems existed, then uprooting the shrubs would not solve them. Certainly, no-one in this road had ever been aware of any such problems.

Yes, the shrubs - which used to be pruned regularly by Haringey - had been allowed to get overgrown and might have been used as cover, but the weeds are now at least as high as the shrubs used to be and the area looks a mess. I and the other residents of Lauradale Road therefore decided that we would not rest until the shrubbery is replanted and I approached the department in Haringey responsible for sheltered housing to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter. This was held on August 5th and was reasonably well attended by some of the residents of Keynes Close and some from Lauradale Road, plus the Lib Dem Councillor Barbara Fabian and Megan Evans and Len Weir from Haringey who have been responsible for uprooting the shrubs.

They agreed that the area looks awful now and that anything would be better than the weed-infested patch they have created. They suggested planting grass and flowers, which I agree would look nice if it were properly maintained - but let's face it, if they couldn't manage to prune the shrubs, this would probably not happen. We managed to get them to promise that they will replant the area with suitable low-maintenance shrubs and will e-mail me a copy of their plans, but because the residents of Keynes Close say that they still feel unsafe when they walk through the area, we were told that Haringey are going to put railings with a lockable gate across the entrance from Lauradale Road. If that is what they are going to do, it is obvious that they need not have destroyed the shrubbery in the first place. There seems to have been a lot of muddled thinking on this issue and certainly Haringey will have wasted money unnecessarily. Why didn't they leave the shrubbery alone and just put up the railings in the first place?

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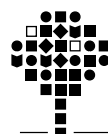
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Grahams – celebrating 40 years in business

By Toni Morgan

The past year has been a memorable one for Graham and his family. Last Christmas he and his wife celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary; 40 years ago last month he opened his butcher's shop in East End Road and their daughter Debbie celebrates her fortieth birthday this year. Their son David was born two years later. As if this wasn't enough cause to celebrate, plans are well underway to expand the business to accommodate the next generations.



Jim, David, Ann and Graham - looking forward Photo by Toni Morgan

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Building a reputation

When Graham started the business 40 years ago, there were approximately 25 butchers' shops in the area between Muswell Hill and Tally Ho; most of these have gone but Grahams survived. Two years later he was joined by his sister Ann. They realised that the obvious way forward was to give the customers what they clearly wanted – high quality organic meat and free-range food – and their ever-growing reputation

has been based on this. Graham's son David had always wanted to come into the business so he went to college, attained the highest standard with the Institute of Meat in 1985 and subsequently joined them.

Heart problems

Three years ago, Graham became ill with heart problems and underwent a triple bypass at Harefield Hospital; fortunately he has made a full recovery. He and

his family have the highest praise for the British Heart Foundation, which has become their chosen charity and to date they have raised £1,200 for the Foundation.

Expanding the premises

As it is the smallest butcher's shop in the borough (the shop still has its original 1938 tiles), Graham and Ann agreed that they needed more space to accommodate the next generations

coming into the business. When the shop next door became vacant, they made plans to expand, combine the two shops and widen their range of high quality food. Graham's daughter Debbie, who is a professional cook, will be making pies and sausage rolls. Both premises will be undergoing a complete refit and should be ready by Christmas – customers will be pleased to know that there will be little or no disruption to business!

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