



OBITUARIES

Harold Perkins

By Daphne Chamberlain

Readers of last June's edition of *THE ARCHER* will remember Harold Perkins telling us about his war years in the Cocos Islands. We were sad to hear that Harold passed away in March at the age of 84.

His widow Rene, a churchwarden at Holy Trinity, would like to thank everyone who has sent her flowers and cards and given her support.

A good life

She told *THE ARCHER*, "We had a very good life together. We really got on well. He was a great help to me, and a loving stepfather to my two daughters. He was so pleased to have been able to tell people about the Cocos, and dreadfully upset by the effect of the tsunami."

Harold was a life-long supporter of Air/Sea Rescue. Born in Northamptonshire into an engineering family in November 1920, he was apprenticed to a butcher. He was interested in good food, wine and cooking. Visits to the Perkins household always included a nice glass or two of sherry and Rene says he regularly made her a tasty Sunday lunch.

In his earlier years he



had dabbled in oil painting; his pictures included family portraits. Harold's first wife, Hilda, through whom he had two stepsons, died in 1976. In 1980, he and Rene were married in Holy Trinity by Father Lawrence Hill, who also gave his funeral address.

Great character

Father Hill remembers him as a great character, with whom he shared many laughs. He recalls that Harold had some good tales about his work as a security officer for the other Hill (William, the betting firm), where he was employed until he was 80.

Speaking of the support she has received, Rene says, "It has been absolutely marvellous. If you've got a good friend, you've got more than gold."

David Jones, 1945 - 2005

Notable local campaigner David Jones died in March. It was said at his funeral that, without him, "Muswell Hill would not be the successful, attractive city suburb it is today".

A pioneer

It would probably be minus nearly 4,000 plane trees, which were in danger of being chopped down in the 1970s, apparently to save the cost of sweeping up their leaves.

David Jones led a successful campaign against this, and also against a proposal to build a large supermarket at the top of Muswell Hill itself. He and fellow-objectors made the case that it would have caused unacceptable levels of traffic congestion.

Another success was stopping the demolition of the United Reformed Church on the Broadway. This campaign had the backing of Sir John Betjeman, Nicholas Pevsner and John Summerson.

David Jones was a pioneer of the Muswell Hill Festival, and an initiator of the environmental area around Grand Avenue.

He used his position on the consultative management

committee of Highgate Wood to ensure that the wood was kept free of building threats. As a result, it is the only open space owned by the Corporation of London that is exempt from possibly losing some of its ground to car parks, golf courses or other leisure facilities.

Crusading spirit

David Jones was also involved in the fight against the proposed Archway motorway, which would have cut through Hampstead and Highgate.

Meanwhile, he had a career as an innovative journalist, particularly at the Financial Times, where he pioneered electronic publishing.

His friends paid tribute to his love of life, his commitment to the environment, and his crusading spirit. Professor John Adams, who worked with him on the supermarket and Archway Road issues, called him "an amazing man".

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

Zero tolerance on parking

Dear Editor,

Despite horrendous annual rises in the resident/visitor parking charges – far above inflation rate – and the parking hours for visitors extended to six days a week, I'm in favour of Barnet's Controlled Parking Zone scheme. It has solved the long-time commuter car problem for many fellow residents.

But I've become very concerned about the way some of the rules are being enforced and indeed if they are actually legal. Three examples:

1. On a recent visit by my daughter to Summerlee Gardens, during the few minutes it took her to carry her sleeping child into the house and settle him, she returned to her car to display a parking card and found she had been issued with a ticket by a remarkably quick-on-the-draw warden.

On behalf of my daughter, I wrote to the Parking Process Manager and suggested he might consider that, in the circumstances, issuing her with a ticket was quite unreasonable. A letter from a "Parking Officer" informed me that they considered the ticket had been properly issued.

During a later phone call, I was also told that Barnet has a policy of zero tolerance for motorists leaving their cars to collect, sign and display a card, and was advised to keep some cards in the car, which my daughter now does.

But this still obviously doesn't answer the question as to what a first-time visitor, who has no reason to keep Barnet CPZ cards inside his or her vehicle, is expected to do to avoid a ticket.

Even more bizarrely, when one of the card vending machines breaks down, drivers are advised to find another one, during which time, presumably, they could be clobbered by the ever-predatory traffic wardens.

2. Another fellow resident's car was also ticketed while he was in

the act of transferring his holiday luggage from his car into his house, despite the fact that both the car's boot and his house door were wide open.

3. Another visitor, after having parked and properly displayed his card, was still ticketed, merely because he'd driven off to the shops, and on his return had been obliged to park on the opposite side of the Avenue. His crime? Neglecting to switch the card to the opposite side window.

But how many visitors are aware that the card must be displayed in the car window nearest to the pavement? Fortunately, even Barnet thought this was a bit much, and cancelled the ticket.

Even so, surely such a take-no-prisoners policy is quite outrageous, and would seem to be solely designed to increase Council revenue – no matter how draconian – and I trust that our three local councillors, who must read *THE ARCHER* as avidly as I do, will take up this grossly unfair and possibly illegal Catch 22 question of zero time tolerance.

R M Sharples,
Summerlee Gardens, N2

Editor's reply:

The Archer contacted Barnet Council for a response to this letter. Here is their reply:

"We don't actually have a zero tolerance policy, but try to operate a common sense approach. Circumstances when described like this always make it seem as if we are wrong but often, from the attendant's point of view, they saw something differently, and we would always remind people they can appeal.

"The basis of decriminalised parking enforcement, carried out by parking attendants, is in accordance with the Road Traffic Act. This states that, if it appears that a restriction is being contravened, then a penalty charge notice may be issued.

"If someone is able to demonstrate that they had reason to be where they were, and that exempts them from a restriction, then a penalty may be cancelled.

Letters to the editor

Not another cafe?

Dear Editor,

It's disappointing that B2, formerly 24 Seven and one of the more useful shops in the High Road, has closed.

There is little enough variety in the shops, what with the five dry-cleaners, six Italian delis, two exclusive beauty parlours and eight restaurants.

So why do we need another coffee shop? I can't believe that there is such a demand for cafes and restaurants in East Finchley. We desperately need a bookshop, a modernised library, a W.H. Smith and a shop akin to Woolworth's.

I am now on my way to Camden Town to visit Waterstone's, Sainsbury's and Burger King (to get my filter coffee). At least that area caters for a whole range of residents, not just those who care about the amount of froth on their cappuccino.

Petra Richardson
N2

When will our café re-open?

Dear Editor,

Over two years ago, vandals burned down the kiosk in Cherry Tree Woods. A few months later we were delighted to see a new kiosk had been built, the patio mended and the gates locked at night.

Sadly, Easter, Whitsun and hot summer days passed but the kiosk remained closed. Mothers carried drinks to the park for their children, as indeed did tennis players and youngsters playing in the field.

Elderly people used to enjoy a stroll in their local park and have a rest, a chat in the sunshine and a cuppa. Not everyone can afford to go away on holiday.

Does anyone know if and when our kiosk will be opened again and why it has remained closed?

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Annington Road, N2

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