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THE ARCHER



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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Another day, another dollar. Photo by Erini Rodis

Till death us do park

By Diana Cormack

It looked like a scene from an Ealing comedy – a group of traffic wardens and undertakers arguing while an empty limousine and a hearse, waiting for a coffin to be loaded, stood at the roadside in the pay and display zone. But in reality it was no laughing matter, for onlookers outside Co-operative Funeralcare at 133 High Road were witnessing what could have been a classic example of warden zeal.

The funeral parlour's limousine driver had had to buy a pay and display voucher and, though no parking tickets were issued, he said that he had been fined previously for parking outside the premises.

Respecting the dead

He said, "There was a time when the wardens used to turn a blind eye but, now that they get paid for the number of bookings they make, it has all changed. One even replied 'No' when I asked him if he had any respect for the dead."

This was not an isolated incident. Lucy Oliver, manager of Funeralcare, told THE ARCHER, "It is a continuing problem," she said. "The undertakers have to be constantly watching for the wardens." A few days later, Lucy had to intervene when she spotted a warden who appeared to be in the process of preparing a parking ticket for a hearse. She told us that she managed to persuade him not to do it.

Disturbing

Many of the people who were watching were disturbed by the situation and felt that the undertakers should be allowed to go about their task without being hassled.

When questioned by THE ARCHER, a spokesperson for Barnet Council said, "Anyone may load or pick up and set down passengers at a pay and display parking place, and, in the case of hearses and limousines, our parking attendants recognise that this may take some time."

"In relation to the date under discussion, our parking attendant approached and saw that the hearse was unattended and did not have a pay and display ticket. When approached by the driver who explained that the hearse was in fact in use, our parking attendant voided the ticket."

Apologies

"Barnet Council apologises to onlookers who may have believed that the parking attendants were being insensitive. We invite the owner of the funeral home to contact us and we will assist in any way we can to resolve any parking issues with the premises."

"Barnet Council would also like to point out that all our parking attendants are salaried staff of the council and receive the same pay regardless of how many penalties they issue."

Oak Lodge cuts

By Sheila Armstrong
Oak Lodge School in Heath View, East Finchley, has been hit by changes to Barnet's funding formula for special schools. With cuts of £100,000 the pupil staff ratio will be affected including teacher loss.

THE ARCHER spoke to head teacher Lynda Walker who said the school were hoping to manage their budget so as to have the least impact on all pupils in the school including their specialist autistic spectrum disorder unit.

Parents have already been to a meeting at Hendon Town Hall about the future of the ASD unit, voicing their concerns about maintaining specialist provision for their children.

At the time of writing, a meeting was being arranged on April 26 to outline the school's position and its plans for the future.

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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.*

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Councils

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

Leisure

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

Transport

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

Help & Advice

Childline 0800 1111
Disability Info Service 02084466935
E.F. Advice Service 020 8444 6265
Gingerbread 020 8445 4227
National Debt Line 0808 808 4000
NSPCC 0800 800500
Rape & Sexual Abuse 020 8683 3300
Relate 020 8447 8101
Samaritans 08457 909090
Refuge Crisis Line 0870 599 5443

Health Advice

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

OAP's Advice

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

Hospitals

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

Crime

Emergency 999
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Crime Stoppers 0800 555111
Victim Support 0845 303 0900
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❖ **Toy library**, Muswell Hill 020 8444 0244/ 8489 8774

Pay and display behind Budgens

At the end of March, the Viceroy Close car park at the rear of Budgens had parking bays painted across the central part and double yellow lines painted around the perimeter. A few days later, a ticket machine was installed and notices erected at the entrance announcing a pay and display scheme and renaming the car park Viceroy Court.

The terms of the scheme are simple: 50p for the first half-hour or £1 for the first hour and then £1 for every subsequent hour. The charges apply 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Failure to display a valid ticket may lead to vehicles being clamped with a release charge of £60. This compares favourably with council bays on the High Road where charges are 30p for 15 minutes, rising to £2.50 for a maximum of 90 minutes, applying between 8am and 6.30pm.

However, at Viceroy Court the ticket machine and notices

were covered up for over a week and while the display on the machine just says to pay with coins, at the time of writing it does not take any money or issue tickets.

Some local residents have approached LB Barnet planning department, who have advised them that, while the line painting and the installations are not against planning regulations, should Viceroy Court charge for public parking, this could be regarded as unauthorised change of use of the land, and could be subject to an investigation.

Any ideas about the 263?

By Daphne Chamberlain

After the survey by London Transport Users Committee on the 263 bus, what does East Finchley Bus Watch do next? Anyone with an opinion on how to move forward would be welcome at the next Bus Watch meeting.

As reported in *THE ARCHER* last month, LTUC found that the bus service between East and North Finchley is inadequate.

The report put a measure of blame on Barnet's traffic policy, but Barnet maintained that their decision not to give priority to buses kept traffic flowing more smoothly.

LTUC told *THE ARCHER* that they are not recommending a

second bus service along this stretch of road. They think Transport for London would say it was not financially viable.

Bus Watch will decide what to do next at a meeting at the Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale, at 7pm on Monday 23 May. Anyone interested is welcome. For further information, contact Hazel Burnett on 8444 6824.

Don't get scammed

If you use email a lot, you may have noticed mails coming from various banks asking you to confirm your banking details for security reasons.

These emails are not genuine. There are known to be internet fraudsters operating who are keen to get their

hands on your personal banking details and passwords.

We have spoken to two banks who assured us that they would never send out this type of mail and that they were investigating its origins.

So therefore please do not respond to these types of mails. Instead, delete them immediately.

Ring tone rip-off

By Deborah Hill

You may remember an annoying advert that was on the television all over Christmas. I certainly do! I wonder how many people did what I did, and got caught out?

I followed the advert's instructions to get a trendy ring tone for my mobile phone by texting a short message to the given phone number. A day or two later, I received a text message. When I tried to open it to read it, it disappeared!

I have the correct hand-set but I do not have GPRS which you need to be able to download ring tones like this. That was disappointing, but of little consequence. I wondered casually how much I would be charged, despite not having received the ring tone.

Warning

Soon I found I was receiving text adverts from the ring tone company concerned at the rate of approximately one per week. When my bill arrived, I was horrified to find that not only had I been charged £3 for my text to request the ring tone, and £3 for the text that disappeared, but also £3 for each of the text advertisements.

I finally found out how to stop the adverts (you text "STOP" to a given number in this particular case) but by then I had accumulated a total bill of about £30 for something I never received, plus lots of annoying adverts that I did not want!

I cannot believe this is legal, but I understand that it is, so let this be a warning to you. Take special care before you do what I did!

Planning Applications

4 Maya Road N2

Single storey side extension
20 Baronsmere Road N2
Alterations to roof, including rear dormer window to facilitate loft conversion.

The Grange Estate N2

Installation of replacement PVC windows.

Land adjacent to 1- 12 Norfolk Close N2

Submission of details pursuant to Condition 9 (Contaminated Land) and Condition 10 (installation of extraction system, air-conditioning units of plant, and ventilation openings) of planning permission C15598/05, dated 25/02/04.

40 Fortis Green N2

Alteration to roof, including rear and side wrap-around dormer window to facilitate loft conversion.

18 Howard Walk N2

Conversion of garage into habitable room.

107 Brim Hill N2

Conversion of garage into habitable room. Single storey rear extension and link extension to converted garage.

Land adjacent to 373 High Road N2

Erection of four-storey block, to provide 6 two-bedroom and 2 one-bedroom self-contained flats, with associated off-street parking.

8 Heath View Close N2

Installation of railings above existing front extension, to provide a balcony. Associated installation of new first-floor windows.

Vale Farm, Long Lane N2

Submission of details of air-conditioning and ventilation pursuant to Conditions 8&10 of planning permission C10784AS, dated 11/02/04.

55 Summerlee Avenue N2

Alterations to roof, including formation of side and rear dormer windows to facilitate loft conversion.

The Bungalow, Cherry Tree Wood, Fordington Road N6

Single-storey side extension.



How many green bottles?

By Sheila Armstrong

Plastic recycling is less well developed than recycling for other materials in this country but there are some plastics that East Finchley residents can recycle at Summers Lane Recycling Centre, although not in household boxes.

Any plastic packaging that is categorised as a 1, 2, or 3 type of plastic is fine. And you can find out if your particular packaging is recyclable by looking on the bottom, where you will find a triangle, composed of three arrows with the vital number inside. It seems to be mainly bottles that are made from recyclable plastic and sometimes the screw tops too. But it's worth checking all plastics.

The Friends of the Earth website tells us that nine out of 10 people would recycle more if it was made easier to do. At the moment, however, few north London boroughs seem to offer plastic recycling

at the kerbside and of course driving to Summers Lane raises environmental issues, too

Why worry?

Why is it important to recycle plastic? Because it's made from oil which gives off toxic fumes if it's burnt and takes years to biodegrade in landfill sites which of course are filling up fast.

Useful ideas about recycling, saving money and generally going green can be found in Friends of the Earth's new book *Save Cash, Save the Planet* by Andrea Smith and Nicola Baird. Contact details are: Friends of the Earth 020 7490 1555 or www.foe.co.uk

Forum welcomes Stanley Field plans

By Daphne Chamberlain

Barnet has appointed a liaison officer to meet the East Finchley groups who propose developing Stanley Road Field as a community and sports centre.

At last month's Finchley Forum, Deputy Chief Executive Brian Reynolds said that he hoped the first contact would be made the following week.

Philip King, representing the Park Road Residents' Association, had outlined the development proposals for the Forum, and asked for Council support, starting with a liaison officer. He was supported by Sylvia Duthie, chair of Holy Trinity School governors; Roger Chapman, from the East Finchley Development Trust; and local architect Chris Hampson (who is also a member of Holy Trinity's Parent Teacher Association).

An opportunity not to be missed

Mrs Duthie emphasised that the idea was for many different community groups to use the centre. She said, "This is a rare opportunity to show what mem-

bers of the community can do. It's a real opportunity not to be missed. It would require fund-raising, but could make a tremendous difference to East Finchley".

Roger Chapman endorsed everything that had been said, adding that the proposal would fit in with Barnet's corporate plan for a healthy lifestyle.

Public support

The East Finchley contingent was originally refused permission to show the forum their architectural plans for the site, drawn up by Chris Hampson and Tristram Williams. Brian Reynolds said that as they had not been discussed with Barnet Council, who owned the land, it would not be appropriate.

However, he was overruled by public demand, and chair Leslie Sussman agreed that Mr Hampson could show the plans to all those interested after the meeting.



Landlord Alan Parkinson and his patrons prop up the bar. Photo by Erini Rodis

Dick Turpin rides again

By John Lawrence

An old East Finchley favourite is back in the saddle after years of decline. The Dick Turpin pub on Long Lane, named after the notorious 18th century highwayman, has been refurbished and is open for business.

Locals have watched with sadness over the past few years as the pub went through a succession of short-term managers and lost most of its regular trade as it became more and more run-down. For the last five months, it has been shut altogether.

But now Julie and Alan Parkinson have taken over and the place has been changed beyond all recognition with a £250,000 makeover. The money for the refurbishment was put up by management company GRS which rents the business from Punch Taverns.

Transformation

Gone are the old bar and furniture and in have come a lounge bar and a sports bar, two satellite TV screens, two fruit machines, comfy leather sofas and wooden tables, along with full facilities for disabled customers. Twenty craftsmen worked on the building inside and out to achieve this transformation in just five weeks back in March.

Julie and Alan, who have been in the pub trade since 1982 but have also spent time running a Post Office and working for a tour operator in Greece, say they

want the Dick Turpin to be a thriving community pub.

Julie said: "We want people to come in and feel welcome. It's a safe and relaxed atmosphere. We're already getting women coming in here to enjoy a quiet drink on the way home from work. There's one old gentleman who hadn't been in for years but he's been in every night since we opened."

Alan added: "We're setting our standards high. When we were offered the position of running the pub, we saw the potential it had and decided to go for it."

The upstairs of the building is now a family home for Julie, Alan and their two daughters aged 15 and nine. Children are not allowed in the bar but they are welcome in the outside terrace area where there are plenty of tables and patio heaters for those cooler nights.

Bar food is on the menu daily along with a full roast on Sunday lunchtimes; a fuller menu may be introduced if the food takes off

with the customers. A grand opening is planned once all the finishing touches have been made.

Now that the recently-closed Red Lion pub on nearby Red Lion Hill looks likely to be converted into yet more flats, it will be good to see the Dick Turpin welcoming customers again.

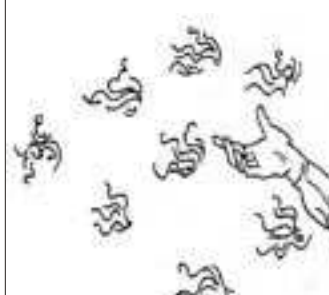
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Woodcraft Folk's future threatened

By Hannah Eiseman-Renyard

The Government has scrapped the funding for a national youth group that has been a central part of the upbringing of hundreds of East Finchley children.

The Woodcraft Folk has lost its funding grant of £52,000, representing 20% of the organisation's overall funding. Without it, the Folk's future is uncertain. Earlier this year, Minister for Children, Margaret Hodge, refused the annual grant that Woodcraft has been receiving for 40 years. The national organisation, run on a shoestring by five paid members and more than 3,000 volunteers, was accused of not providing 'value for money' - ironic, given that the Government has named 2005 as the 'Year of the Volunteer'. The Woodcraft Folk, founded in the 1920s, is a peaceful and progressive youth organisation with slogans such as 'Span the World with Friendship' and 'Education for Social Change'.

Values or value?

I have been involved in Finchley's group since I was six, and can't imagine growing up without it. On the annual summer camps I've learnt about ecology, unfair world trade, as well as outdoor skills such as how to build fires. But Woodcraft is so much more than that. Woodcraft is a supportive, co-operative community where everyone is valued, and everyone helps each other. Rudi Vis, our Labour MP at the time of writing, whose children are

members, described Woodcraft as "a wonderful upbringing", adding, "We ought to save it. We will save it."

On Tuesday 22 March, I was one of around 30 local Woodcrafters who went to the Houses of Parliament to lobby MPs about the cut. We were joined by members from all over the country. By 5pm the central lobby of the House of Commons was packed with green sweat-shirts - the Woodcraft uniform. Margaret Hodge, unsurprisingly, stayed away and the only MPs willing to meet with the hordes of Woodcrafters were familiar with the organisation and extremely sympathetic.

MP Jeremy Corbyn told us that 65 MPs had signed motion 849 to reinstate the funding. Stephen Pound, MP of Ealing North described the amount of funding as "absolutely minuscule" in government terms and said "only a parblind bean counter locked in some Treasury basement" could accuse Woodcraft of not being value for money.

At the time of writing, the Woodcraft Folk are waiting to hear if the support they have for their campaign to get the funding reinstated is having any effect on the powers-that-be.

East Finchley aid gets to survivors

When local mother Sara Sibley called on her community to help the survivors of the tsunami disaster, she was amazed at the response.

Hundreds of tins of baby formula milk powder and feeding bottles poured into the donation centre she set up at the Green Man Community Centre at Strawberry Vale in January, courtesy of residents and businesses across the district.

And our pictures show that this crucial aid has got through to the very needy.

The goods were shipped to the Bellanwila temple in Colombo, Sri Lanka, who are co-ordinating the relief operation on behalf of the London Buddhist Vihara.

From there, Army personnel and volunteers transported the aid to the affected areas in

the south and north-east of the country.

The powdered milk, bottles and feeder cups sent from East Finchley were vital in helping the stricken communities fight the threat of hunger and thirst amongst their children.

Sara thanked everyone who had helped the aid operation and said: "I just hope people don't forget that the people out there still need our support. We have given these babies a start. Let's hope they now have a great future."



Sri-Lankan toddlers feel the benefit of our local donations. Photo courtesy of Trinity Newspapers.

Truth behind the tsunami

By Jackie Randall

Ten hours from Heathrow is Colombo, where at a sweltering 37°C an enthusiastic welcome awaits from Sri Lankans renowned for their hospitality and friendliness.

From our hotel, we investigated how to offload the goods we had brought for the tsunami survivors, including hotel toiletries. Our contributions seemed woefully inadequate as we passed endless campsites for the thousands of displaced families lining the southern coast road.

We were advised not to give items spontaneously at these camps as, being by the road, they are frequented by tourists. Eventually, we managed a controlled giveaway to a children's orphanage and a camp for elderly people 8km inland.

It appears to many of the survivors that the Sri Lankan government has yet

to pass a rupee their way. An investigation is under way to account for \$500M in donations. The country still seems bound up in bureaucracy and corruption, with continuing tensions between Tamils and Sinhalese.

The government declared that no houses are to be rebuilt within 100 metres of the shoreline, but enforcing this whilst securing suitable building land is a major issue.

Most of the relief work is being done by EU Army crews and overseas charities, for which gratitude is expressed through large banners at each campsite.

Desperate conditions

There is intense hostility towards the government because of the lack of progress towards providing permanent housing. Although some benefit from makeshift wooden huts, most people only have one tent and a sleeping mat for their remaining family. With the early monsoon rains the campsites are becoming steaming mudbaths, exacerbating an already desperate situation.

What seems most remarkable is the resilience and cheerfulness of the people amidst the loss of life, livelihoods and devastation. A living has to be scraped by whatever means and unfortunately this includes plundering endangered turtle eggs for bartering.

Come back, tourists

Sri Lanka is desperate for tourists to help economic recovery. If you were thinking of visiting, now would be a great time, with special packages available. Visitors can donate their unwanted clothing and buy in Colombo clothes designed for western stores at a fraction of EU prices, all helping to fuel the local economy.

For those willing to help in other ways, several charitable schemes are providing aid and constructing basic, solid homes for the survivors e.g. "Odel Foundation" or "Unconditional Compassion" (look on the web). Currently, these are the most effective schemes for getting people out of tents and into homes.

Ian McCormack Invites you to catch "A Glimpse Of Eternity" Sunday 22nd May - 11:00am at The Finchley Youth Theatre 142 High Road East Finchley London N2



Ian McCormack was night diving off the island of Mauritius when he was stung multiple times by Box Jellyfish, which are among the most venomous creatures in the world. His amazing true story relates how he clung to life while being taken to hospital, and how he was declared clinically dead soon afterwards. During this time he had an encounter with God which radically changed the direction of his life.

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Pianist Bobby Chen and Mayor of Barnet Wendy Prentice. Photo by Kathryn Salomon

Mayor's concert for hearing dogs

By Kathryn Salomon

When I was a child my mother sometimes sent me to my grandmother with a basket of food. I used to ring on the door bell, bang on the door and shout through the letter box but frequently my grandma didn't hear me because she had taken her hearing aid out and was totally deaf.

I used to cry with frustration, but how must she have felt? If any member of the family popped round unexpectedly, she wouldn't know they were there.

Today, this situation need not happen. A hearing dog could have alerted her. The Hearing Dogs for Deaf People charity provides trained assistance dogs that can transform the lives of their owners. They have saved some people's lives by making their owners aware of the smoke alarm and have turned some depressed or isolated people into outgoing members of the wider community.

Mayor's Appeal

When Wendy Prentice, Mayor of Barnet, chose a charity for the Mayor's Appeal she felt that it should be one which involved people and animals so she chose Hearing Dogs for Deaf People. She feels it does just as much for the recipient as Guide Dogs for the Blind, but is less well known. She hopes to raise sufficient funds to train two hearing dogs.

A splendid concert was staged on 31 March at Belmont School by international pianist Bobby Chen,

as part of the Mayor's Appeal. Bobby trained at the Yehudi Menuhin School and the Royal Academy of Music and has travelled extensively in Britain and Malaysia giving recitals and concerts.

Thrilling performance

Bobby Chen played piano pieces that ran the gamut from Haydn to Stravinsky by way of Chopin and Debussy. His superb technique was well demonstrated in Mendelssohn's Variations Serieuses Op.54, which was followed by a complete change of mood with Beethoven's 'Moonlight' Sonata. Stravinsky's Petrouchka proved a resounding finale and the 120 strong audience was enraptured by his virtuoso performance.

During the interval, over a glass of wine, a raffle raised a further £400 towards the Charity fund. The whole event raised nearly £2,500 for the Mayor's Charity appeal.

Future event: 15 May, North West London Orchestra at Ravenscroft School. Contact Mr Vaughn Mabbett on 8440 5677.

Lights, music... Shiatsu!

By Daphne Chamberlain

"Shiatsu!" said a friend, who suffers from depression and addiction problems. "I love it. It's so calming. It always makes me feel good."

I was nursing two sore shoulders after lugging around too much shopping. Would Shiatsu help me? I went to Fiona Hurlock (pictured right) to find out.

Fiona practises Zen Shiatsu, at her premises in East Finchley, in a tranquil atmosphere with soft lights and relaxing music. Her clients lie on a comfortable futon on the floor. Clothes remain on, but should be loose and warm, and women are better in trousers.

Energy flow

After taking a detailed medical history, we were into the treatment. This covers the whole body, because one part affects another. For example, contracted muscles in the chest can hunch the shoulders forward, causing shoulder pain. Sometimes the areas affected

are some distance apart and not obviously connected.

The word shiatsu means "finger pressure" in Japanese, and practitioners begin a session by pressing gently on the client's midriff area. They are assessing the flow of energy through the meridians (energy channels running through the body), and determining which need to be worked on. They then use stretches, joint rotation and gentle pressure to rebalance disrupted energy. These movements stimulate the systems of the body - digestive, circulatory, respiratory and lymphatic, as well as those affecting muscles and the autonomic nervous system.

Sure enough, I felt knots of tension unravelling, and at the end of the session not only did my



shoulders feel comfortable, but the rest of me was relaxed too.

Body connections

Shiatsu came to us from Japan, but originated more than 2,000 years ago in China. Fiona sees it as a way to access "the still point deep inside the body, where self-healing resources lie." Many of her clients return for MOTs to keep physically and psychologically balanced, and I was fascinated to find on my second visit that Fiona used different stretches and pressures. Different day, different me, but the session still left me refreshed and revitalised.

Fiona Hurlock practises Shiatsu, Reiki and Japanese facial massage at The Beauty Lounge, 2nd Floor, 87 High Road, N2 and at Cootes Complementary Therapy Centre, 110 Ballards Lane, N3. For information and appointments, contact 07795 203107 or www.innerbalance.uk.com.

Poetry helps children

East Finchley's Lourdes Morais and Dennis Evans recently spent five weeks in Brazil - Lourdes's birthplace. They were based at Recife, in the state of Pernambuco.

While they were there, they arranged and gave a public reading with 18 other poets from Pernambuco, to raise money for the street children of Recife.

They told *THE ARCHER*, "The plight of the children is desperate. They beg in the streets from a very young age. They are in constant moral and physical danger. Bravely, they do what they can to survive. The public reading raised some much-needed money and toys to help the children. All the poets read in Portuguese, of course, except for Dennis, who read in English, with Lourdes translating. Everyone, including the public library, gave their services free. Consequently, everything donated was given directly to a local charity, Pro-crianca, which works tirelessly to rescue, feed and educate the children."

Lourdes is a volunteer in the North London Hospice charity shop in East Finchley, and has worked for many years

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Memories of a momentous day

Sixty years ago, on Tuesday 8 May, 1945, Britain and the Allied powers announced that the war with Germany was over. For some, it was a day of unbridled celebration, for others a day to remember the loved ones they had lost in six years of conflict. Here, THE ARCHER rounds up memories and stories of VE Day from ordinary people in and around East Finchley.

VE Day May 8th 1945

By Hugh Petrie

It was apparent by the beginning of 1945 that the Nazis were no longer in a position to win against the combined allied armies. So when the war finished in Europe on 8 May 1945 it had long been expected.

In April Finchley Council was already considering how to celebrate, and considering what to do about the trenches in Lyttelton Playing Fields, dug by the Home Guard against the threat of invasion. Things seemed almost normal. The Phoenix, then called The Rex, was playing *The Very Thought of You*. Simms' car works football team beat the Royal Signals Team from Mill Hill 4 – 1, and a notice was given of the compulsorily purchase of the 10.5 acre Elmshurst Estate, now Elmhurst Crescent by the Finchley Council for housing.

For some it was a welcome return. J Roake was serving in the Royal Armoured Corp when he was captured at Arras in 1940. He was liberated on 17 April from a POW camp in Upper Silesia, and was back home in Sedgemere Avenue in time for the celebrations.

The 8th itself was a Tuesday and all the sirens and hooters of the local factories and for miles around, sounded to signal the very end of the war. The "offi-

cial" celebrations were held at Avenue House, and in a victory parade from Victoria Park.

In East Finchley various events were put on, mostly for children, including a massive tea at Summerlee Avenue for local children provided by Mesdames Button, Webb, and Everett, and a tea party in Manor Park Road, with 120 children in fancy dress, who were entertained with a barrel organ and presented with home-made toys like tops and whips, and kites.

At the Park Civic Restaurant, East Finchley, 300 children were treated to a slap up meal by the Women's Section of the British Legion. Ninety children sat down to a party at the Baptist Hall in Creighton Avenue provided by the Rev. Charles Bullock. The Fire Guard organised celebrations at All Saints Church Hall for the people of Leicester Road. The hall was decorated with paper chains and flags, 60 or so children wore fancy dress, and five wounded soldiers from Friern Barnet Hospital were given pride of place.

World War II recipes

Dig for Victory

By Diana Cormack

Fear of a food shortage inspired the Dig for Victory campaign, which called on people to grow their own fruit and vegetables in any suitable area - including gardens, parks and, of course, allotments.

Millions of instruction leaflets were distributed, not only about growing plants, but also on the rearing of hens, ducks, rabbits, goats and sheep.

Seeing in the dark

As there were plenty of carrots, they were utilised in many new recipes and the idea that they could improve your eyesight in the blackout caught on.

Baked carrot and onion pie (serves 4)

Ingredients

1lb 8oz carrots, sliced
6 oz turnips, sliced
6 oz onion or leek, sliced
2 oz bacon, chopped
1 teaspoon salt
15 fl. oz of milk and vegetable stock (see method)
4 and a half tablespoons flour
Pinch of pepper
Pinch of ground nutmeg
2 slices bread (cut 1 inch thick from a large loaf) diced
2 tablespoons melted dripping or margarine

Method

Boil the vegetables and bacon in a little salted water until tender. Strain the vegetables and bacon;

The carotene contained in carrots does help night vision so the Government suggested that the RAF's night fighters and bomber aces were achieving better results by eating them. The fact there was a new radar system in use was not revealed at the time!

This WWII recipe makes good use of the humble carrot and is wonderfully tasty.

keep the liquid then measure out the milk to give a total of 15 fl. oz of liquid stock. Place the cooked vegetables in a pie dish. Blend the flour with a little of the stock, bring the rest of the liquid to the boil and pour onto the blended flour to make a sauce. Return to the saucepan, stir until it boils and boil gently for five minutes. Add the seasoning; pour the sauce over the vegetables in the dish. Cover with the bread and spoon the melted dripping or margarine over the top. Bake in a hot oven for 15-20 minutes until brown and crisp on top.

Read all about it

By Daphne Chamberlain
A group of Barnet Retired and Senior Volunteers have written a book about their wartime experiences – and have become well-known nationally as a result.

Many of them were children at the time and they are telling today's children what life then was really like.

The group, headed by Jean Lamont, go into schools to talk to the children, and show them things like ration books, identity cards or gas masks.

As World War II is on the national curriculum, these visits often coincide with trips to the Imperial War Museum or to the RAF Museum at Hendon.

The project is so successful that it has been featured in *The Times*, and is being copied elsewhere.

Now Barnet's volunteers have collected their memories under one cover in a book called *Our War Stories – Memories of the Second World War*.

They have printed 200 copies, many of which have been distributed to schools, libraries and museums around the borough.

For further information, contact Barnet branch co-ordinator Bill Ibbotson on 020 8440 1291.

VE Day in the saddle

By Peter Crockford

On Saturday 5 May 1945, I was on the way back from a family holiday in Cornwall. I broke the journey in Bristol, visiting a friend, but on Monday caught the train to Teddington, where I worked.

I was urged to stay longer, as VE Day was expected at any time, but I wanted to get back to my work at NPL on wind tunnel propeller tests.

On VE Day, of the 11 people in the house only the landlady and I went to church (Cof E). I would have liked to go to the local Methodist church, but it had been hit by a flying bomb the year before.

My uncle, who also worked in Teddington, suggested that we cycle into London that afternoon. However, after six miles there had been so many street bonfires, which left broken glass, that I felt it was not safe to ride all the way to N2. So we parted company in Wandsworth. He continued on to Muswell Hill, and I returned to Teddington.



Joan Hewitt at the beginning of the War.

When the soldiers kissed my mother

By Joan Hewitt

I was 10 years old in 1945, and living near Holloway. On VE Day I went down to Trafalgar Square with my mum and dad. Everyone was going absolutely mad - jumping into the fountains, climbing on the lions, waving rattles, holding hands and singing.

There were lots of soldiers around, most of them quite merry. Some of them started kissing my mum, and they all ended up on the ground. Everyone was laughing, and she didn't mind, but I did. I was shouting, "Get off my mum!" My dad had disappeared. We always lost him in a crowd anyway, and everywhere was packed that night.

There was a real crush on the Tube, and I was quite frightened when we were getting into Leicester Square station, but it was a great atmosphere.

Everyone was ecstatic after what we'd been through. I remember thinking how lovely it was not to have bombs any more - particularly the V2s (the silent ones). There was a wonderful feeling of freedom.

How East Finchley celebrated VE Day

By Linda Soper

On May 8, 1945 the British, Canadian and Allied forces drove the Nazis out of France and VE Day was a time for true celebration in East Finchley and across the country.

Good neighbours

In those days people were poor but you could leave your front doors open and people wouldn't steal a thing. There was more solidarity between the neighbours.

Even though people were living on rations the women borrowed from neighbours and all shared ingredients to make cakes, trifles and celebration cakes. Trestle tables were laid the length of the street and there was an aroma of freshly baked bread and scones.

As there were no icing bags women crushed granulated sugar with rolling pins and beat it up before putting it into an icing nozzle with darning needles. Teenagers helped lay the tables while younger children played games of tag and hide and seek around them.

Singing and dancing

That afternoon people were listening to music, joking and

chatting. Some were singing, relieved that the blackout curtains could come down and they no longer had to live in fear. A piano was heard playing We'll Meet Again and people joined in tapping their feet. Afterwards there was cheering and shouting. A group of people were dancing, while someone brought an accordion into the street, going round the tables to accompany individuals doing solo songs.

Later that evening people ate baked potatoes and lit bonfires while fireworks went off, cascading into the darkness. The mood was jubilant now that people had a future to think of.

And the prices in those days? A beer was 9d (old pence) - the same as half a dozen eggs. A bricklayer earned £4.00 per week; a GP's annual salary was £10,094. Basic income tax was 8s 6d in the pound, a pair of land girl breeches were 17s 7d, a bottle of whisky sold for 17s 6d and a skirt was 2s.6d



China Repairers

By Betti Blatman

Tucked away in a corner of East Finchley at The Old Coach House, King Street Mews, is China Repairers which relocated to East Finchley from St. John's Wood five years ago.

The business was established there in 1953 by Angela Drayson and Pegeen Mair and was one of the first china restorers.

Virginia Baron joined in 1985 and took over the business ten years ago when Angela and Pegeen died. Virginia has one person assisting her in the studio and, as I observed, there were so many interesting items in different stages of restoration.

As one of the best-known and most reputable ceramic restorers in the UK, they specialise in restoring antique and modern pottery and porcelain, including making missing pieces and disguising the mend, so as to make the repair invisible. They can also carry out 'museum' restorations on domestic china or china which

is not valuable enough to warrant the full works.

They have been teaching their craft for a great many years and pride themselves on training students to restore to the highest standard to satisfy the needs of even the most difficult customers! Students will learn all aspects of china restoration, from the most basic sticking and cleaning off someone else's mess to making missing parts for rare antique figures. When time permits, fee-paying students can be trained in this highly skilled craft.

Items can be extremely valuable, or simply sentimental and of little or no value, so if you have any broken bits, contact Virginia Baron on 020 8444 3030 or email virginiabaron@cwcom.net

From Fortis Green to Paradise

By Mo Hort

They say moving house is the second most stressful experience of one's life after bereavement. I think ours was the most stressful (and we've experienced enough of both!).

One of the difficulties was logistical - moving from East Finchley to what felt like the other side of the country: Devon. And not just Devon, but the remotest part of Devon one could wish for.

We'd had to commit our kids to school in either one place or the other and so, when hitches occurred in the sale of our house, we ended up spending four months in a small holiday cottage. That's my husband Andy and me, two teenagers and two large dogs.

Unspoilt

All the trials and tribulations were worth it, as we are now the proud owners of Welle House bed and breakfast in the beautiful, unspoilt village of East Prawle, surrounded by fabulous scenery and unbelievable wild-

life, sea views and the moor in the distance. At night it's just the occasional owl, insomniac sheep or a ship's horn out to sea. There is virtually no light pollution and the night sky is a wonder to behold. On the other hand, it's about ten miles to the nearest town of any size (Kingsbridge) so no popping down to Budgens for the odd bottle of wine on a whim! And I believe the nearest NHS dentist is in Plymouth!

We do miss our old friends, however. We have just finished equipping our B&B business and holiday cottage, and hope to see some of our old neighbours down here soon. This place has got to be the best possible way to "de-stress". Look us up on our website www.wellehouse.co.uk and see what you think.

Going on a creative journey

by Betti Blatman

Learning to be more creative was the theme running through a Creative Journeys session, which I joined one Sunday afternoon at Finchley Youth Theatre in the High Road.

Using voice, percussion, guided visualisation and painting, an enthusiastic group was led by Helen Allen and Robert Norton through a very enlightening course. It was a simple and enjoyable process inspiring positive

transformation with or without previous experience.

Breathing for harmony

There was an opportunity to explore our voices through the use of vowel sounds with diaphragmatic breathing, which produced what is known as 'vocal harmonics'. People were amazed at the resulting harmonies that were reached with their untrained voices.

Robert played live piano improvisations in response to the vibration of the people in the room, while Helen led the group on an inner journey, through guided visualisation. Several drumming and percussion sessions, where we played African and other ethnic instruments, blended well with the vocal play and inspired the painting session.

Gary Upstone, a participant from Brighton, had never painted

in his life. He said, "I found it to be a very safe and free space. There was a lot of positive encouragement and it was a wonderfully freeing experience for me. I'm definitely booking for the next one." Another participant had never sung before and was amazed at how beautiful her voice really sounded.

Visualising colours

A few days later, I went to Helen for a colour healing session. Her 20 years' experience was obvious when the session began. Working on the principle that everything is a vibration, colours from certain flowers are visualised and applied through the hands, to remove disharmonies in the body, restoring the natural frequencies. It was deeply relaxing!

Helen and Robert are currently on tour in Russia facilitating Creative Journeys



First ever painting by Gary Upstone, participant at a Creative Journeys session, at the Finchley Youth Theatre.

in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Robert is playing solo piano concerts and has been honoured with the opportunity of playing on Tchaikovsky's own piano in Udmurtia. Photos are on the website below.

The next Creative Journey takes place on Sunday 22 May from 2.30-5.30pm at Finchley Youth Theatre, High Rd, East Finchley. The cost is £35 and booking is essential. Call Helen on 020 8371 9333. The website is www.creative-journeys.co.uk

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YOUNG ARCHER

An old storyteller

By Diana Cormack

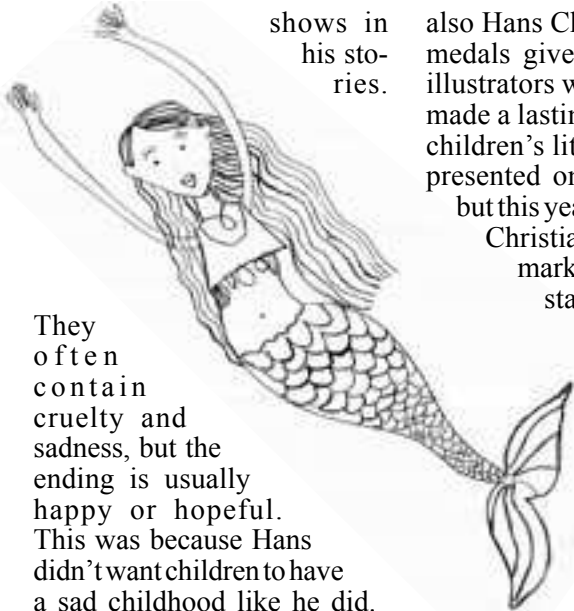
There can't be many children who have not heard, read or seen stories like *The Little Mermaid*, *The Ugly Duckling*, *Thumbelina* and *The Emperor's New Clothes*. The man who wrote them was born in Denmark 200 years ago, but we can still understand the message in them today.

Hans Christian Andersen's father was a poor shoemaker and his mother was a washerwoman. When Hans was 11 his father died and, after that, Hans stopped going to school for a while. That might sound all right to you, but it meant that when he was older he had to go back to his studies and sit with much younger pupils.

Happy endings

He was probably picked on at school, but staying at home doing just what he wanted - reading plays, making toy theatres and clothes for his puppets - must have got boring. At 14, Hans ran away to Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark. He began writing there and he eventually finished his studies with help from the king himself!

However, Hans hated all his schooldays and this sometimes



shows in his stories. They often contain cruelty and sadness, but the ending is usually happy or hopeful. This was because Hans didn't want children to have a sad childhood like he did. He wanted to make them laugh and feel joyful through reading his stories.

Read for yourself

In memory of this, the International Children's Book Day was set up in 1967. There are

also Hans Christian Andersen medals given to authors and illustrators whose works have made a lasting contribution to children's literature. They are presented on alternate years, but this year belongs to Hans Christian Andersen. Denmark has issued special stamps and there are events remembering him and his stories taking place all over the world. A new group called the HCA abc-Foundation has been set up to fight illiteracy.

Only when children learn to read and write can they themselves access the magical world of Hans Christian Andersen.

Illustration of The Little Mermaid by Akanksha Gupta, age 8.



Charlotte with a print-out of her picture-of-the-week!

Photo by Erini Rodis

Charlotte's web site

By Diana Cormack

Children from all over the country enjoy the CBeebies website, which forms part of BBC TV's provision for young people. Besides finding fun and games, things to colour and craft, stories and songs to sing, little ones can make their own contributions to the site.

So when five-year-old Charlotte Edwards of Chamberlain Road had one of her drawings particularly praised by her father, she knew just what to do with it. She asked him to send it to the CBeebies art gallery where, from the many submitted, a few pictures are selected to go on display.

Charlotte's dad obviously knows a good thing when he sees it, for her drawing was chosen as a picture of the week and shown on the Your Gallery page. It is a springtime picture of Charlotte and her friend Alice, with tulips in the background.

Unfortunately, drawings cannot be returned, but Charlotte has a certificate to remind her of the event. When asked how it felt being in the CBeebies gallery, Charlotte said, "Fantastic!"

Tale of the riverbank

Brookland Junior School in Hampstead Garden Suburb staged four successful performances of the popular riverside tale *Wind in the Willows*. Teachers and support staff put on the play at the end of March to help raise funds for new gym equipment and further funds for the tsunami relief fund.

All the well-known favourites were played by class teachers. Rob Verrell exhibited a comic talent as hapless Toad of Toad Hall; naïve Mole and optimistic Otter were played with great charm by Vanessa Woolfson and Zoe Chester; Andrew Troy played Ratty with athletic vigour and Jane Pendry created bluff but lovable Badger.

Special needs co-ordinator and class teacher Lorrae Jaderberg led her gang of weasels as Chief Weasel. Learning assistant Barbara Mathews held the stage playing the irascible judge while head teacher Heather Blackmore took a cameo role as a policeman.

Trained by parent and

talented amateur artist Claire Knight, a team of volunteers spent several hours before each performance applying make-up to create the extraordinary animal faces.

The play was produced by dynamic year 5 teacher Katie Kraus, co-ordinating all the staff and parents who made the production such a success. The performances raised £4,000 for school funds.

Andrew Craze, Year 6 teacher and assistant head, directed the play. He said, "It was hard work, but the end result was fantastic. The success of the play is a testament to the dedication and cooperation of our great staff and committed parents."

How children learn

By Helen Drake

An education expert spoke to parents at an East Finchley school on the importance of supporting children as they work their way through their school lives.

Martin Infant and Nursery School welcomed eminent educationalist Dr David George for the special event on 4 April. Dr George works to raise the potential of all children and has done considerable work with gifted and talented pupils. After spending the whole day working with the staff team, Dr George addressed the parent group that evening.

Head teacher Kevin Ancomb was delighted to see between 80-



Head of Martin Infant School Kevin Ancomb (left) with Dr David George. Photo by Helen Drake

100 parents attend this special and informative evening. He said: "Parents' involvement in the education of their children, especially young children, is key not only to their academic development but also to their social and emotional welfare. It was so good to hear Dr George speak powerfully about the contribution parents can make in supporting the school and pupils."

Azra Nath, head of the school's parent-teacher association, described Dr George's talk as 'inspirational'.

The school is very pleased to be able to open its doors to the community. Mr Ancomb said it was important that not only

the parents of children attending Martin Infant School but also members of the local community and parents of children who attend other schools are encouraged to participate in future events.

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Tribute to Pope John Paul II at Tu Destino. Photo by John Dearing

Tribute to the Pope

By Diana Cormack

The passing of Pope John Paul II was marked in a particularly memorable way by an East Finchley shop.

Many passers by stopped to admire the impressive display in the window of Tu Destino at 128 High Road. Specialists in floristry Rosario, Marco and Sue had joined together to create a beautiful tribute to the late Pope.

His picture, framed with white flowers, was the centre of a themed display. History plants reflected John Paul's prominent place in history, whilst Bird of Paradise plants represented his passing into heaven. A profusion of peace lilies emphasised that the Pope had been a man of peace.

There was a tremendous

reaction from the public. Rosario Castro-Garcia told *THE ARCHER* that she had seen people outside praying, crying and taking photos. Many, from a variety of faiths, came inside to comment favourably, and some wanted to contribute to the two memory trees.

Labels were provided so that people could write the names of lost loved ones to hang on the branches. Some even left photos of their dear departed, which was in itself a tribute to the quality of Tu Destino's window display.

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Dog days

Remember Rover? You know, a dog by any other name is still a dog even if it's got a Viking longboat on the front and if every dog has its day, then this dog's day was yesterday.

Yes, the music hall joke that was British Leyland has finally gone belly-up. So what if it's been Austin Rover, Rover Group, MG Rover and Dog's Dinner on its way down, but down it has gone.

Once upon a time Rovers were driven by the kind of people who did something a bit dodgy in an Agatha Christie novel, you know, bank managers and dubious doctors. In between the doctors and bank managers, Rover came up with gas turbines, Land Rovers and the first small executive performance saloon.

Yes, 40 years ago the Rover 2000 was the car to have if you were young and thrusting because back then BMWs were small, German and 'not bought by us'.

Then Leyland bought Rover and BMC, including Jaguar, which BMC had grabbed earlier, and the rest is a music hall joke.

British Leyland gave us such cars as the miracle Maestro, the Montego and the two worst cars ever made in Britain, the Allegro and Marina. And Rover, that once proud name, got the same bad name as the rest. Even Jaguar suffered until they were allowed to get on with it without interference.

By the mid 1990s the whole company was dead in the water but not so dead that BMW weren't interested in having a bash at fixing it. They couldn't. Their English patient did its best to bankrupt the Germans and calling a re-badged Honda a Rover didn't make it less of a dog.

In the end the Germans flogged the best bits and tried to close the rest, before giving it to management company Phoenix. But this phoenix didn't rise from the flames; instead it plummeted straight back into them.

Shame really, but there you go, another motoring music hall joke. If only they'd been better informed we'd still have a motor industry.

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Time to get on your bike

By Jonathan Blackstaffe

You could say that cyclists are lunatics. Cycling is really hard work, hard work that motorised transport has made avoidable. It can be dangerous. It's almost anathema to our speed-driven, technology-obsessed, polluting world. And it often involves wearing skintight lycra.

But it is exactly these things - even the lycra - that give cycling its nobility. And it is an appreciation of these things - particularly the lycra - that defines cyclists. So, I imagine you are now asking yourself, how do I get into both cycling and skintight lycra?

Well, your options are manifold. You could just ride around, inhaling the smoke that is the incense of a mechanised society. If this doesn't appeal, however, despair not. In Hackney is Eastway Cycle circuit, a traffic-free route that hosts races throughout the summer.

Similar shenanigans take place at the circuit in Hillingdon. Information about events in and around London can be found at www.londoncyclesport.com.

A team with local connections is Ride Beyond Racing Team, a new north London-based charity team. This competes in top level circuit and road races throughout the south east and includes two of the staff from our very own Bike and Run shop on the High Road.

Speaking of which, Bike and Run would appear to be the hub from which the spokes of an enthusiastic cycling community

radiate. The shop has friendly, knowledgeable staff, links (and even sponsorship deals) with cycling organisations across the capital and, of course, equipment. It is also the start point for leisure rides, making it as good a place as any to get into gear.

Finally, if you're a real masochist, you could try your foot at triathlon. Optima Racing team, although it's a south London-based team, already has a couple of Archer-area nutters... I mean members. Another option is Finsbury Park CC. If interested, your best port of call would be www.trilondon.co.uk.

Bouncing back

By Jonathan Blackstaffe

As we all know, sport has a lot to offer, like fitness, discipline, responsibility and community. Through these things, sport can create a sense of self-worth - and there are few better examples of this than the Barnet Bulldogs.

Formed six years ago, the Barnet Bulldogs are more than simply a sports club; it's also a youth club, drug rehabilitation centre and an educational effort. Oh, and it's good fun too.

Courses, some of which are free, run seven days a week and year round at various venues throughout the borough. Barnet Bulldogs also organise various community programmes, run police-sanctioned drug-awareness programmes and organise trips to Spain, where the club has links with professional teams.

According to founder Ted Polson, sport teaches team spirit and is a "great social leveller". It offers the perfect environment for the development of youngsters and, indeed, has helped many a child bounce back from a troubled past.

Last summer Barnet Bulldogs ran courses in Cherry Tree Wood. However there will be no holiday courses in East Finchley this year because Barnet Council, which funds the courses, feels there is a greater need for them elsewhere in the borough. Ted currently runs an after-school basketball club on Fridays at Martin School. For more information call Ted on 020 8449 4883 or visit www.barnet-bulldogs-basketball.com.

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Our bodies' changing nutritional needs

By Simone Baroke

Amongst the plethora of nutrition articles in the mainstream press, issues affecting older people are often overlooked. Many people aren't even aware that their nutritional requirements change with advancing years.

As we get older, although our metabolism slows down and we burn up fewer calories, our need for extra vitamins and minerals increases. Our systems, though, produce less stomach acid and other digestive juices, which means we absorb fewer nutrients from our food than when we were younger. This is known to contribute to many medical conditions, including osteoporosis, heart disease, arthritis and loss of eyesight, as well as declining mental function and Alzheimer's.

Dietary change

The sad result is that many elderly people become frail and immobile, losing their independence years before their time. The great news is that this decline can be prevented, slowed, or sometimes even reversed by dietary change. We need to consume better quality foods, and to remember that small meals and snacks every three hours are much easier for our digestion to handle

than three big main meals.

Nutrient-dense foods

You may have been eating white bread and jam rolls all your life, but now it's time for a rethink. White flour is seriously deficient in essential nutrients, so it's time to switch to more nutrient-dense foods. The most nutrient-dense food group is vegetables. Government advice is to eat at least five portions of fresh fruit and vegetables daily - one portion equalling an apple, a carrot or a handful of cabbage. Adding just two more portions to your current daily intake goes a long way towards disease prevention.

Remember, though, a little of what you fancy does you good. So, instead of guilt-tripping over what you 'shouldn't' eat, it's better to focus on what you could be adding to your diet.

In the coming months I shall be writing about a range of common conditions, and which particular foods and nutrients have been shown to be of benefit.

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- ❖ **Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club**, Summers Lane N12. New and experienced bowlers welcome.
- ❖ **Keep fit for the Retired** Wednesdays Christ Church N12. Ring Bridie 8883 5269
- ❖ **Muswell Hill Bowling Club**, Kings Ave, N10. New & experienced bowlers welcome. Tel: 8883 1178.
- ❖ **Pilates** in East Finchley, qualified teacher. Contact Dee on 8883 7029
- ❖ **Pilates class** Wednesdays, 2.15-3.15pm at Youth Theatre, N2. Ring Penny Hill 8444 2882.
- ❖ **Tae Kwon Do** at The Green Man Thursdays 7-9pm 07949 612 706
- ❖ **Tai Chi** at the Green Man on Mondays 1.30-3pm. An "ageing well" class for older people.
- ❖ **Tennis club** with four clay courts off Southern Road. Call 8440 6953.
- ❖ **Wood Walk**, meet 10am at Cherry Tree Wood cafe on 1st & 2nd Mon of month for 1 hr walk, Call 8883 8750.
- ❖ **Yoga, breathing & relaxation**. Weekly drop-in classes - N2, N6, N10. Phone Judy on 8444 7783.
- ❖ **Yoga classes** Tuesdays 8-9:30pm at EF Methodist Church. Experienced teacher. Call Rosalind 8444 8134.

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- ❖ **Club Dramatika** drama club for kids. Call Vicky 8883 1554
- ❖ **East Finchley Writing Workshops**. Creative writing, poetry and prose. Contact Dennis Evans 8346 9528.
- ❖ **Finchley Jazz Club**-2, 16 & 30 May at Wilf Slack Cricket Pavilion, East End Rd, N3. New members welcome
- ❖ **Line dancing** Tuesdays from 8.30pm at The Constitutional Club. Call Maureen 8440 8530.
- ❖ **Memory Lane Singing Club** - a communal singing club. Call Idit Gold 8458 4508.
- ❖ **Over 60s come dancing** at Ann Owens Centre 8346 8736
- ❖ **Pottery Class** at The Green Man, Call Celia Holmes 8349 9315
- ❖ **Learn to sing** at Finchley Methodist Church. Call 8883 4070 for info.
- ❖ **Street Dance** every Tuesday at Old Barn for children of various ages. Contact Lorna 07976 203669.
- ❖ **SwampRock** events: Call Carole 8810 7454 or Neil 01727 830280 www.swamprock.org.uk
- ❖ **Symphonic Wind Orchestra** of North London, Contact Caroline Egan 8340 2706
- ❖ **Tap Dance** for children beginning at Old Barn every Monday, Contact Sharon 8349 4613

CLUBS & SOCIAL

- ❖ **Contact Lunch Club** Thursdays at the Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book.
- ❖ **East Finchley National Childbirth Trust**, Contact Sophie on 8444 1890
- ❖ **East Finchley Writers** meet weekly at The Old White Lion. Call Lilian 8444 1793
- ❖ **Fairacres Monday Club** for Jewish people. Contact Rene & Reuby 8883 0448 or Sylvia 8958 7878
- ❖ **Finchley & District Philatelic Society**, Contact Brian 8444 3251
- ❖ **Friendly Rubber Bridge** at The Old Barn. Contact 8349 4613
- ❖ **Haringey Recorded Music Society** informal meetings locally. Call David Mouldon on 8361 1696.
- ❖ **North London Bridge Club**, Muswell Hill. Contact 8348 3495
- ❖ **Muswell Hill and Highgate Pensioners' Action Group** Call Bob Cottingham on 8444 7635.
- ❖ **Muswell Hill Tetherdown Bridge**, contact 8883 4390
- ❖ **Old Barn pre-school club**, contact 8349 4613/1961
- ❖ **Parent & Toddler Group**, Green Man Centre, Julia 8444 2276
- ❖ **Probus Lunch Club** for retired professionals. Call Eric 8340 0822.
- ❖ **Stepping Stones**, interactive play session for under 3's. Karen 07957 278860.

Film fest at the Phoenix

By Sheila Armstrong
The Phoenix Short Film Fest for students by students, masterminded by film student and Phoenix employee Ava Grauls, took place at the cinema on 4 April.

A variety of shorts were shown from Godot Isn't Coming to French Fries on the Golden Front. There was a spoof detective movie, an animation about a woman's role in the fifties, a very short and funny film about the dangers of sneezing and the touching animated tale of a toilet who finds himself. It was a very entertaining couple of hours.

The winner by popular vote was The Russian Conspiracy by Josph Asher and Simon Ryninks - the amusing 'tec film and worthy winner. Second was Torque by Janine-Opal Fischer. The White Lion donated the prizes - bottles of champagne - and hosted the prize-giving event.

Young talent

Ava, who is in her second year at the University of Westminster, organised the whole festival, aided by a grant and by help from the Phoenix staff. She told *THE ARCHER* that she feels young film-makers are not given a lot of assistance, and that it's hard for new talent to enter films, the whole industry being dominated by the big studios and companies. But because of the Phoenix Shorts Film Fest London film students could make the films they wanted to make, with the assurance that their work would be screened. Let's hope it's an annual event.

'Spellbound' to aid reading charity

Can you read this?
"eltil ssim teffum tas no reh teffut"

This is the first line of the well-known nursery rhyme Little Miss Muffet written backwards; it may be how words appear on the page to a child who has some difficulties reading.

Volunteer Reading Help recognises the importance of time spent with children at primary school level by building up their confidence in reading.

Charity screening

The London North West branch of Volunteer Reading Help, which covers the Barnet and Brent areas, is having a charity film screening of the hit film *Spellbound* at the Phoenix cinema on Sunday 15 May at 11am. The film is a fascinating, moving and very amusing documentary about one of the annual, ferociously contested children's spelling bees held in the USA. It follows eight of the 10 million children who took part, highlighting their varying family backgrounds, successes and disappointments, as they chase the American Dream.

VRH is always keen to recruit new volunteers aged 18 plus from all cultures and backgrounds. There is no upper age limit. After six hours of training the volunteer works with the same three children individually, for half an hour each, twice a week in a local primary school. The aim is to increase the children's confidence and self esteem in a relaxed, fun environment, making reading seem enjoyable and achievable.

For film tickets, call VRH on 7372 7523. Adult tickets are £8, children £5 and family tickets (up to 4 people) £20

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for VRH and can commit to working for at least two terms, then please contact Harriet Watson at VRH, London North West Branch, Suite 101, 254 Bel-size Road, London NW6 4BT.



Mari l'Anson at her Chorak exhibition in April.
Photo by Daphne Chamberlain.

From Leslie Road to Asia

By Daphne Chamberlain

Chorak welcomed back an old friend last month. The first artist to exhibit there was Mari l'Anson, and 12 years later she has returned for the fourth time.

"I like coming back to East Finchley," she told *THE ARCHER*. "There's a good atmosphere here, with such a lot going on."

Mari lives in Church End, Finchley Central, now, but in the 1970s Leslie Road was her home. She was a member of EFNA (the East Finchley Neighbourhood Association), which started our annual Festival among other things, and her children went to Martin School.

When her daughter taught in an international school in Thailand, Mari spent four winters there as artist-in-residence.

That was the start of her travels with paintbox, sketchbook and camera, recording daily life and landscapes around south-east Asia and India, where she has made several good friends.

Anyone who, like me, loved the figurework in her exhibition, would be fascinated by glimpses of her sketchbook from the Chennai Arts Festival in southern India. This was her introduction to drawing dancers in movement.

Some of her most memorable paintings portray people - stallholders, street people, child beggars, road sweepers. With those people in mind, she recently held a sale in aid of the Tsunami appeal, which went "very well".

Future plans

She does, however, also specialise in portraits of a more unusual kind. If you want a watercolour of the outside of your home, Mari could be your woman.

A few years ago, she illustrated *Finchley Remembered*, The Finchley Society's collection of reminiscences by local people.

The Finchley Society is currently raising money for a statue of Spike Milligan and some of Mari's paintings of trees will be sold as packs of greetings cards at the Church End Festival at Avenue House on Sunday 15 May, from 1-4pm.

It's probably inevitable that her friends are suggesting she might like to compile a book about her travels. Will she consider it? Watch this space.

Mari l'Anson can be contacted on 020 8346 7011.

What's On...

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

Saturday 14 May:

- **May Fair** 11am to 2pm at All Saints Church Durham Road. Plants, gifts etc. and refreshments.

Sunday 15 May:

- **Church End Festival** at Avenue House, East End Rd, N3. 1-4pm.
- Charity film screening of *Spellbound* at the Phoenix Cinema, High Rd, N2 at 11 am.

Friday 20 May:

- **An evening of Indian Dance** at the Arts Depot, North Finchley, 7.30pm.

Sunday 22 May:

- **Bothy Open Day** - at the restored Bothy, in the grounds of Avenue

House, East End Road, N3, 2-5pm. Will include an exhibition by local artists.

• **Cromwell Hall Residents' Association** annual 'Garage Sale' in Abbots Gardens from 12 noon - 3 pm. Residents will set up their 'Stalls' in front gardens up and down the road.

Saturday 18 June:

• **Summer Fun Day at Martin Schools** - Entertainment for all the family with food stalls, tombola, bouncy castles, arts and crafts tables and face-painters. Other stalls include cakes, plants, second-hand clothes, books, toys and much more. 12 noon to 3pm. All welcome.

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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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In praise of Highgate Ponds

By Daphne Chamberlain

They say that swimming is good for you and Frieda Schweizer, of Cherry Tree Road, unbelievably 90 last month, certainly bears that out.

She still swims regularly at the Oasis, preferring the outdoor pool because it's actually warmer, but don't imagine that Frieda is deterred by low temperatures. She swam in Highgate Ladies' Pond on Hampstead Heath for 75 years, but now finds getting there a bit of an effort.

The Heath has three swimming ponds - a mixed one on the Hampstead side, open only in summer, and Highgate Ladies' and Men's, both available all year round.

Jennifer Adams from the Corporation of London, which manages the Heath, spoke to *THE ARCHER* about them. She estimated that as many as 2,000 people a day have visited the ponds in extremely hot weather, dropping to a maximum of 40 hardy souls in winter.

A visit means as many swims as you like, though many ladies choose just to

sunbathe in the surrounding flower-filled meadow. The entry charge is £2, £1 for concessions. Children over 12 must be accompanied by an adult and nobody under 12 is admitted.

Deep and cold

Non-swimmers are never allowed in. "The water is deep", said Ms Adams. "You can't stand up, it's opaque, and it's cold - usually in the 20s Celsius in summer, but if it drops below 12C in winter, lifeguards issue a warning."

"We only close the ponds because of toxic blue-green algae, which can happen in very hot, dry summers, or if we have ice. Some people want us to break the ice, but it would be too dangerous. It's sharp, and there is also the chance that swimmers could slip underneath it."

"Medical advice is that winter visitors should swim at least twice a week to get acclimatised, as they could risk heart attacks or strokes."

These are necessary precautions, but it's very apparent that visiting these



Frieda Schweizer at age 14 (left) with sister Molly at Highgate Ladies Pond, then known as Kenwood Pond, in 1929. The railings and the house are now concealed by greenery.

ponds can become addictive. Frieda Schweizer speaks for her fellow-enthusiasts when she praises the exhilarating feel of the water and the beauty of the surroundings.

Unfortunately she can no longer visit "my pond" but, despite osteoporosis, still enjoys her regular swims. "Swimming is good for you", she says, "at any age and with most conditions."

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East Finchley Community Festival urgently needs your help. The festival is organised by local people for local people. It is run entirely by volunteers - without them the festival would not exist! Can you spare some time to help?

The committee desperately needs volunteers to help with a variety of tasks throughout the weekend including stewarding, main stage set-up and other logistics. This year's festival is on Sunday 26 June in Cherry Tree Woods but help will also be needed on Saturday 25 June. If you can spare some time (a whole day, half a day or even just a few hours) to help out at the best local festival in London please ring Nick on 020 8883 4916 or e-mail: festival@eastfinchley.co.uk.

Would you believe I was afraid...



...to try a tiny little contact lens?

I'm not a wimp. Really. I mean, that's me rock climbing. But I was afraid to try a tiny, little contact lens. I was afraid they'd be hard to put in... or uncomfortable to get used to... or a hassle to take care of. I was so wrong. My eye doctor told me that now he has these great contacts called Focus DAILIES. He said Focus DAILIES finally make it easy for anybody to wear contacts.

They're made of a special material that moisturizes your eyes on contact. They were amazingly comfortable the first time I put them in. I didn't even have to "get used" to them. And Focus DAILIES are single use. No cleaning. No hassles. Just a fresh pair every day. So now I have Focus DAILIES, and I'm loving them. Climbing is easier. Parties are more fun. And I like the way I look.

If you're still worried or have more questions, go ask your doctor about Focus DAILIES. Make an appointment today. Or check out focusdailies.com. You'll love them so much, you'll wonder why you waited.

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