



Silent wonders

By Tony Roberts

For the brief period from 1911 to 1916, East Finchley housed one of two studios belonging to the British and Colonial Kinematograph Company, Britain's third most productive makers of silent films at that time.

At a well-attended talk organised by The Finchley Society's Local History Group, Gerald Turvey gave a fascinating account of this prolific period, well illustrated with a range of slides from film and press.

He explained how East Finchley's connection began when the company expanded into larger premises: offices and manufacture at Endell Street and a studio at Newstead House, East Finchley, located in large grounds on the High Road just north of where Sylvester Road is today.

Why East Finchley? It was described then as one of the most charming of suburbs, easily reached by train and tram.

The studio was mainly used for filming interior scenes whilst outdoor action was filmed in a wide variety of locations, sometimes locally but also in many parts of the UK. The interior scenes were filmed outside in natural light on a stage 15 by 30 feet, so summer was a busy time of

the year. A barn housed the props, scenery and maintenance area.

The opening ball sequence of Britain's first epic, *The Battle of Waterloo* (1913) was shot at Newstead House, but the battle scenes were not filmed in East Finchley.

The company filmed a wide range of subjects: shipwrecks at sea, crime films, war films, lives of Shakespeare and of Florence Nightingale; even one on prostitution.

The company produced several film series including ones about Dick Turpin (appropriately for the location!), Three-fingered Kate (a successful gang leader), and Lt. Daring RN.

The company was active into the first half of 1916 until McDowell, mainstay of the company, went to France as a cameraman. He filmed the *Battle of the Somme*.

Gerald Turvey is a director of the Phoenix Cinema Trust and is researching and writing about the British and Colonial Kinematograph Company.



Bob and June Wiltshire have gone into the beauty business together. Picture by John Lawrence.

Banking on beauty

A couple seeking a new outlook on life have gone into business with their own beauty treatment centre.

June and Bob Wiltshire, of Elmfield Road, previously worked in banking, June as a bank worker and Bob as part of the team advising wealthy customers for HSBC.

But they reached a turning point in their lives last year after June had returned to college to train as a beautician and Bob realised he'd had enough of the rat race and the daily commute to Canary Wharf.

So the couple grabbed the opportunity to buy a franchise and set up the North London IPL Centre, based at Cootes Pharmacy in Ballards Lane, Finchley Central.

Bob said: "It's something we both wanted to do. June had given up her career to look after our family so it's her chance to do something she loves."

June is fully trained and accredited to give treatments using intense pulsed light, hence IPL, for permanent hair reduction. IPL is a gentler alternative to laser treatments that uses a light source converted to heat to push out hair follicles.

Their business is already attracting international attention. One client travelled to Finchley from Prague because her sister had recommended June.

Singing in the Passion

By Helen Drake and Molly Hogan

On Sunday 9 April at the start of Holy Week, the Martin School Junior Choir travelled with their Choir teacher Jan Trott to Holy Trinity Church in Sloane Street, central London to sing in J.S. Bach's St Matthew Passion.

Performing alongside the internationally renowned Canticum Choir (of which Jan Trott is a member) and the orchestra, Counterpoint, it was a great honour for the children to be involved in such a prestigious event. As one parent said: "It was marvellous to see the children singing so competently, and even more marvellous considering they were singing in German!"

The three-hour piece looks at the last two days of Christ's life on Earth as told by the Gospel of St Matthew.

Martin School pupil Molly Hogan has written about her experience.

"The Choir rehearsed every Tuesday morning leading up to the performance with Jan, our Choir teacher.

On the Sunday before the actual concert we went to Sloane Square to practise with the other singers. There were two secondary schools performing with us, along with the adult choir. On the day, we went with our parents to Sloane Square where we had our last rehearsal, this time with the orchestra. Afterwards, we went out to a café nearby. When we got back people were already arriving. While we waited

for the performance we were really excited!

Our Choir sang in two sections of the first half, one at the beginning and one near the end. When we weren't singing we were standing on either side of the orchestra. The sound coming from the Choir and the orchestra was beautiful, it filled the church. We had never performed with an orchestra before so it was very exciting. We all really enjoyed ourselves and were proud to have participated."

Open door for artists

Local artists are being invited to submit their work to The Barnet Open, an annual exhibition to showcase the talent of local artists in Barnet and the neighbouring north London boroughs of Brent, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Harrow.

A panel of experts including curators, art critics, art enthusiasts and community representatives will select the work to be exhibited. Entries for the exhibition can be made till 12 July.

The exhibition will be open to the public from 8 September to 5 October in *artsdepot's* Apthorp Gallery in North Finchley.

Submission forms can be

downloaded from the website www.artsdepot.co.uk or collected from the box office and the Apthorp gallery at *artsdepot*.

Last year's exhibition was the first of these annual events and has set the mark for a future of exciting offerings from a wealth of local talent. This year artists can choose to sell their art work during the exhibition.



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