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THE ARCHER



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September 2006 No. 157
ISSN 1361-3952

20p
where sold

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



"You'll have to get out my side" Picture by James Connell

Car overturns in East End Road

A car ended up on its side after colliding with a wall and a road sign in East End Road. The 62-year-old female driver was taken to Barnet General Hospital but was not seriously injured.

Police were called to the accident at 2.30pm on 6 August by a 999 call from a member of the public.

It is believed that the car may have clipped a raised kerb, skidded and then turned onto its side. Police confirmed that no other vehicles were involved.

Will weekend underground shutdown last into 2007?

By John Lawrence

The closure of the Northern line at weekends for Tube users in East Finchley has been extended to the end of November and *THE ARCHER* has heard disturbing whispers that the shutdowns may even drag on into 2007.

Some staff at East Finchley station doubted that the work would be finished by the extended deadline, warning one of our team to expect line closures into the Christmas period and possibly beyond.

Transport for London said no further closures are scheduled beyond November 'at the moment' but were unable to rule out another round of weekend shutdowns.

Our branch of the line has been shut on Saturdays and Sundays throughout the summer, forcing travellers to endure longer journey times into and out of town on the replacement bus service. When first announced, the closures were scheduled to end in mid-October but now three extra weekends have

been added.

There will be no tube service between East Finchley and Euston on all weekends in September, and on the weekends of 14-15 October, 21-22 October, 28-29 October, 18-19 November and 25-26 November.

TubeLines, which is responsible for the maintenance and renewal of the Northern line, has so far replaced 1.2km of track on our branch, as part of a long-term project to provide quieter, smoother and more reliable journeys.

Weekend travellers who have had to get used to breaking their journey at Euston to clamber on and off sometimes packed buses will not want the tube closures to go on one day longer than necessary, particularly not into the peak shopping weekends of December and the Christmas school holiday.

Free ride

The only advantage to the replacement bus service seems to be that ticket inspections are rare, with no facilities for swiping Oyster cards, effectively giving everyone a free journey to and from town.

A Transport for London spokeswoman said: "From what we have heard from Tube Lines, everything is on schedule and there are no more closures booked at the moment beyond November but that is not to say there won't be the need for more engineering work in the future."

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PRINTED BY
Eastway Offset Ltd

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

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

Your contributions

If you have a story for us, please
contact us at the above address.

Comments to THE ARCHER may be
published unless clearly marked
'Not for publication' within the text.

Copy deadlines

October issue: 15 September
November issue: 14 October
December issue: 10 November

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Councillors' Surgery.

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❖ **Careers advice**, Green Man, Community Centre 020 8883 4916
❖ **Toy library**, Muswell Hill 020 8444 0244/ 8489 8774

Thefts from charity shops

Charity shops in East Finchley, Finchley Central, North Finchley and Muswell Hill are reporting a rising number of thefts.

The shops say they are losing goods on a daily basis and sometimes money is being stolen from their tills. Some counterfeit notes have also been identified.

Although staff are requested not to tackle people acting suspiciously in the shop, the manageress of the ORT shop in Finchley Central gave chase to a thief recently.

She later requested a copy of the CCTV tape from the camera located in Ballards Lane near the shop, but was informed that the camera is directed towards the nearby bus stop so the suspect would not be included on the tape.

The rising number of thefts has meant that charity shops have now agreed to report all occurrences to the police.

Van overturns

By John Dearing

Residents of Creighton Avenue were woken by the sound of a vehicle crashing at about 2am on the morning of Sunday 13 August. Some of them went outside to find a blue van had overturned and careered into several parked cars, writing off one of them, damaging a tree and a skip, and ending up on its roof.

The driver was pulled out of the van in a confused and injured state. Residents tended to him as he awaited the arrival of medical help. It would appear that there were some passengers in the van, but they departed in a hurry on foot, leaving the driver

to take the consequences.

The London Ambulance Service, the London Fire Brigade and the Police were in attendance. The driver was taken to hospital, but it has since been confirmed that his injuries are not life-threatening.

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Cash snatch

A 48-year-old man had £550 in cash stolen from him, immediately after withdrawing the money from an ATM machine in Finchley.

The incident took place on Saturday 5 August at 2.30pm outside Woolworth's, High Road, North Finchley. Having just withdrawn cash from the ATM machine at Abbey nearby, the victim walked from Abbey to outside Woolworth's holding the money. Just as he was about to put it into his trouser pocket he was approached from behind and the money was snatched from his hand.

The victim chased the suspect who got into the passenger seat of a green Vauxhall Vectra, driven away by another man.

The first suspect is described as a white male in his twenties, about 1m 65cm tall, with short light coloured hair, wearing a light coloured shirt and trousers.

The driver of the Vectra is described as a white male, of heavy build, aged 38-45 years old, with a black moustache, and wearing a white T-shirt.

Anyone with any information about this incident should call DS Gornall on 8733 4447 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

Robbery in Huntingdon Road

A laptop was stolen in Huntingdon Road on 21 July. A woman was loading various items into her car, and had left her laptop on the pavement while she briefly popped back into the house. On returning to her car she saw a person running off with it.

Apparently this person then went into a house in Durham Road, but police are unable to confirm this, and no arrests had been made at the time of going to press.

Planning Applications

Barnet Council:

East Finchley Underground Station

General internal and external refurbishment.

Former Finchley Manor Garden Centre, 120 East End Road, N2

Additional retail use (A1) in part of existing detached building adjoining the north-western boundary and two-storey rear extension.

72 Hertford Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension

49 Leopold Road, N2

Single-storey rear conservatory extension

63 Park Hall Road, N2

Alterations to roof, including rear dormer window, to facilitate loft conversion.

42 Church Vale, N2

Two-storey side extension. Alterations to roof, including heightening, and dormers to both sides to provide second floor accommodation in roof.

75 Brim Hill, N2

Loft conversion, comprising side and rear dormer windows.

6 Brim Hill, N2

Enclosure of area between two bay windows under balcony, as rear extension to ground floor. New side dormer and conservatory roof window to existing second floor.

202 East End Road, N2

Conversion of garage into habitable room.

30 New Trinity Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension.

29 Ossulton Way, N2

Removal of magnolia tree.

25 Edmunds Walk, N2

Felling one sycamore, and treating stump as specified.

Haringey Council:

16 Twyford Avenue N2

Erection of rear and side dormer windows, erection of single storey rear extension and alterations to garage to form habitable living space.

22A Aylmer Parade, N2

Conversion of 1st and 2nd floors to create 1 x one bed and 1 x two bed flats including conversion of roof to habitable living space.



On-off support for better service

By Daphne Chamberlain

A group campaigning for a better bus service through East Finchley has had good news and bad.

East Finchley Bus Watch organiser Hazel Burnett has been told by Barnet Council's Head of Environment and Transport Peter Bradburn that he supports the fight for improvements to the 263 and 143 routes.

He told her in writing: "Bus 263 is the only route on an important stretch of radial road, as is route 143 on East End Road. If route 263 is not made more frequent, then I think we must press for an additional service to augment it, at least between East and North Finchley."

He went on to say that the council will continue to press both London Buses and the operator for improvements to the 143 route.

However, London Buses wrote to Ms Burnett with the news that the frequency of the

263 will not be increased. They told her that after a full review and consultation with all concerned, including Barnet, "the frequency was deemed appropriate".

Contradictions

When *THE ARCHER* investigated these contradictory statements, Barnet confirmed that they were definitely supporting an increase in the service. London Buses have not yet been able to explain to us why they have implied otherwise.

A London Buses spokesperson told us that they had carried out a "loading" survey, which concluded that an extra bus would not be viable. Answering claims that the 263 is often loaded like "a cattle-truck", they said that loading was considered alongside the operator's ability to deliver a reliable service. So problems with vehicles or staff would mean that the operator could not deliver an increased frequency. A new contract for the 263 starts

in February 2007.

Route 17 to the rescue?

Bus Watch will be surveying current reliability this month, in a repeat of their all-day surveys in 2004.

They have suggested that an additional service between East and North Finchley could be supplied by extending route 17 (currently London Bridge to Archway, via Holloway) to North Finchley, as in the past. London Buses will consider this idea when the route is next reviewed, but say that the cost would not be justified because the route would parallel the Northern Line for part of the way.

Bus Watch find this objection "bizarre". Hazel Burnett points out that most bus routes in London parallel Tube lines and other bus routes. She says, "We are asking for a generally improved public transport system with an element of choice, like that enjoyed in other parts of London".

Six sentenced for Bishops Avenue burglary

Six people have been sentenced for their part in a £1.7 million burglary in The Bishops Avenue in East Finchley.

Three people, including a 15-year-old boy, smashed their way through the front door of a house in the avenue and dragged a safe from the living room into a waiting van, getting away with jewellery and cash.

They then took the keys to the vehicles parked on the drive and stole a Mercedes and a Lexus said by police to be worth a total of £400,000.

Members of the larger group were already known to police and, following the burglary in January, were kept under observation and seen getting rid of the stolen property.

At Harrow Crown Court, Gerrard O'Leary, aged 22, of no fixed abode, received a seven-year custodial sentence for conspiracy to burgle. A 15-year-old male received a two-year detention and training order for conspiracy to burgle. Louise O'Leary, aged 29, of Garth Rd, NW2, received a four-year custodial sentence for conspiracy to handle stolen



Gerrard O'Leary. Picture courtesy the Metropolitan Police.

goods. John Sheehan, aged 42, of Richborough Rd, NW6, received a four-year custodial sentence for conspiracy to handle stolen goods. Valerie Bennett, aged 19, of no fixed abode, received a one-month custodial sentence, suspended, for conspiracy to handle stolen goods. A 16-year-old youth received an 18-month custodial sentence for conspiracy to handle stolen goods.

Detective Constable Reg Pickering, of Barnet Police CID, said: "We are very pleased that Gerrard O'Leary has received a sentence that will stop him targeting peoples' homes for some time. Gerrard is a prolific offender and the judge has recognised this in sentencing."

Can Barnet afford to turn down sports funding?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Members of the Stanley Field Steering Group were working against the clock last month to prepare their viability plan for developing the field as a sports facility.

With assurances of support coming in, the East Finchley Community Development Trust asked: "Is the Council going to turn down a £1.5 million injection of funding into the borough for sports facilities?" As the country prepares for the 2012 Olympics, the Trust likened their position to the UK delegation last year: waiting for an all-important decision.

All correspondence with Barnet Council has been sent to Council Leader Mike Freer, including the rough estimate of costs presented to Councillor Salinger in November 2005.

Football Association Regional Manager Roger Reed has confirmed in writing that the Football Foundation will consider

funding up to 60%, with a cap of £1 million, of an application from a charitable Trust such as EFCDT. Mr Reed said he would be pleased to assist with the application.

Cllr Freer asked for the viability plan to be with him by the third week of August. *THE ARCHER* understands that the short timescale prevented the appearance of at least one very big name in East Finchley to support the scheme.

Next forum meeting

The next Finchley Forum will be held in East Finchley, at Holy Trinity School, Eagan Close (off Market Place), at 6.30pm on Monday 4 September.

Local Forums offer everyone the chance to discuss topics of their own choice with Councillors, Council Officers and other members of the general public.

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Culture with your coffee

By Lucy Chamberlin

If you've never thought of East Finchley as a centre of *avant-garde* culture, then it's time to think again. Although the East Finchley Open arts weekend in July may seem like a long time ago now, local art is alive and well in our shops, watering holes and eateries.

Pop into Chorak on the High Road for coffee and a cake and you will notice the neat, brightly lit interior hung with colour. The present exhibition is of Eimear Kavanagh's mixed media collages, which with their mirrors and patterns give an impression of Arabic influences.

A few paces along is our new Monkey Face bar, where the funky urban vibe is accentuated by digital photographs and original work by various local artists, not to mention the striking wall art in the loos by manager Johnny Rayner's cousin.

Johnny is impressed by the sheer number of artists (about 50) in EFO as well as by the high standard of their work: "I'm very pleased to be displaying local artwork - it's nice to be doing something for the community."

Up and down the High Road

Further on is a location that often seems forgotten by East Finchley residents: The Old White Lion, subtly separated from the rest by its position under the bridge on the other side of the tube line.



An EFO picture in The Old White Lion. Picture by John Dearing

Part of a group which also owns The Flask and The Angel in Highgate, its interior décor has that cross between the modern and the vintage so popular today. Nooks with old pews and basket chairs, stained glass windows, quirky lighting and fitments, 'baroque' *chaise longues*, curios and bare brick walls - apart, of course, from the art.

Most are EFO pieces, chosen to match the pub's individualism, but a couple are by staff member Maxine's friend Joe Kletz. Maxine enjoys having the pictures and collages around

as they lend a homely yet individual atmosphere.

EFO have also exhibited works in Lazooli, The Cherry Tree, Kokos, The Phoenix, the Community Support Office, all in the High Road, and the Noble Sage Gallery tucked just inside Fortis Green. According to member Adam Justice-Mills, 2006 has been their most successful year in terms of publicity, sponsorship and sales, with the majority of this being locally generated. He says it would be nice to have some art in every High Road site...and I'm sure we'd all agree!

We have plans for the future!

Say the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood

Four parks in Barnet have recently been awarded Green Flag status. Although Cherry Tree Wood is not one of them, we believe that Barnet Council would put the Wood forward if there was strong community support.

Being awarded Green Flag status would be a huge boost for the Wood, bringing better facilities and high standards of maintenance and conservation. It would also be a boost for Barnet Council and its Green Spaces department and should ensure their continuing commitment to the Wood. It could in addition open the door to additional government funding.

The Friends of Cherry Tree

Wood are considering plans to help the Wood achieve a Green Flag Award, which is the national standard for parks and green spaces. You can find out more about the Green Flag scheme at www.greenflagaward.org.uk

To win a Green Flag award:

- The park needs to be safe and welcoming
- The facilities should be well maintained

• Attention must be paid to conservation and sustainability

• There should be strong community involvement and support.

Here's the plan:

Nature and conservation: We want to organise more educational and conservation activities (for example, we are planning a bluebell planting activity in the autumn). We would also like to publish more information about Cherry Tree Wood either on our website, in our magazine Grassroots or on a Friends' notice board in the Wood.

Recreation and Facilities: We want to work with Barnet Council and others to improve facilities in the Wood, for example by making further improvements to the playground and working with the Council to ensure that the derelict pavilion is put to good use. This is a crucial feature of any future plans.

Community and Membership: We want to build better links with the local community and other groups. We want to develop and add to our existing contacts with the Woodcraft Folk, Highgate Wood and the Countryside Management Service.

To become a Friend or to know more about them, visit www.cherrytreewood.co.uk

Festival concert celebrates East Finchley musician

By East Finchley Arts Festival director
Geoffrey Hanson

Local musician Charles Proctor will be celebrated in a centenary concert in this year's East Finchley Arts Festival in October.

Born in Market Place in 1906 and talent-spotted by conductor Sir Henry Wood, famous for popularising The Proms, Proctor had a distinguished career as conductor, organist and teacher.

Starting as an organist at All Saints, Durham Road, where the Arts Festival events are held, he moved on to become organist at Holy Trinity, Church Lane at an annual salary of £40. From 1943-73 he was organist at St Jude's, Hampstead Garden Suburb.

He made his reputation with the Alexandra Choir and was active on the London music scene from the 1940s to 1978. Known to generations of students at Trinity College of Music where he taught, he was a prolific composer.

His music performed

Jennifer Bate will play some of his organ music at the concert on Saturday 7 October and two of his choral works will be sung by the London Ripieno Singers together with music by Elgar and Parry.

A piano recital by Rimantas Vigras opens the Festival on Thursday 5 October. An East Finchley resident, Lithuanian by birth, he trained at the Moscow Conservatoire and will include Scriabin's 24 Preludes in his programme.

Julian Bliss, still in his teens, is making a huge reputation as

a clarinetist; he recently played at the Queen's Birthday Prom and will be playing on Sunday 8 October with Gemma Rosefield (cello) and Simon Lepper (piano) in a programme of clarinet trios. During the day there will be a puppet show for children in the church garden.

Jazz is represented by the London Vintage Jazz Orchestra on Wednesday 11 October and French music by the Dore Ensemble of Flute, Viola & Harp on Thursday 12 October. The London Mozart Players make a welcome return on Friday 13 October. Their programme includes Festival Director Geoffrey Hanson's new work for violin, cello and orchestra and music by Mozart, Haydn & Salieri.

Sylvia Reid and Bill Fry have been performing over a period of 45 years and this Company of Two, in their final season, presents an adaptation of Barchester Towers on Saturday 14 October.

A Victorian Evening on Friday 6 October needs everybody to be in good voice and the Finchley Children's Music Group will close proceedings on Sunday 15 October.

Funds will be raised throughout the Festival for the North London Hospice by the sale of pictures at the Art Exhibition. The open evening takes place on Tuesday 10 October.

Here's the full programme for the festival. All events take place at All Saints Church in Durham Road.

Thurs 5 Oct: Piano Recital: 7.30pm - Bach, Schubert, Scriabin. Rimantas Vigras - Piano

Fri 6 Oct: Victorian Evening, 7.30pm

Sat 7 Oct: Charles Proctor Centenary Concert, 7.30pm, Jennifer Bate - Organ

London Ripieno Singers, Conductor: Geoffrey Hanson. Stanford, Parry, Elgar, Proctor, Howells

Sun 8 Oct: Mister Peter's Puppets - St George & the Dragon. 12 noon, 2pm, 4pm, Tickets £1

Sun 8 Oct: Bliss, Rosefield, Lepper Clarinet Trio, 7.30pm - Bruch, Debussy, Beethoven, Martinu, Brahms

Tues 10 Oct: Art Exhibition Open Evening in aid of North London Hospice

Wed 11 Oct: London Vintage Jazz Orchestra, 7.30pm - Classic big band jazz

Thurs 12 Oct: Dore Ensemble, 7.30pm - Ravel, Bax, Faure, Debussy, Takemitsu

Fri 13 Oct: London Mozart Players, 7.30pm - Haydn, Hanson, Salieri, Mozart

Sat 14 Oct: Theatre Roundabout, 7.30pm - Barchester Towers

Sun 15 Oct: Finchley Children's Music Group, 7.30pm
Visit the website for more details: eastfinchleyartsfestival.org.uk

Tickets: London Mozart Players £15, all other events £10, concessions £8, children under 16 £1. Season ticket £30.

Box Offices from 4 September: Coral Travel, 50 High Rd N2, and Les Aldrich, 98 Fortis Green N10.

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Wheelie specials

By Diana Cormack

At the end of July children attending Scribbles Nursery in Hertford Road took part in a fund raising event in aid of the NSPCC. They joined more than 4,000 others from over 100 nurseries across the capital who were aiming to raise over £25,000 from May to August. The children were sponsored to complete laps of a circuit either pushing or riding a wheeled toy. They received a sticker for each completed lap and a strip of Happy Kids stickers when they finished.



Under starters orders! Laura Blackaller and Nora Tageldin get a group of children ready for their ride.
Photo by Diana Cormack

The money raised will go directly towards supporting the work of the NSPCC in London, funding over 25 projects helping to prevent and protect children from child abuse. This also builds the foundations of the NSPCC Full Stop campaign. The NSPCC relies on voluntary donations for 85% of its income and needs to raise £47 million annually simply to maintain its crucial

services.

Recycling for tots

Organiser Shareenah Cemal told *THE ARCHER* about previous fund raising events held at Scribbles and of how the staff aim to raise the awareness of the youngsters in their care, particularly using community-based projects. At the time of writing they were planning a re-cycling event, with suitable materials to be brought in on

specific days and put in special bins outside the nursery at 2A Hertford Road.

As Scribbles takes children from aged six months to five years, parental involvement is crucial. The idea is for this to be an on-going feature, which will create a regular re-cycling habit in both the children and adults. It could also encourage others in the locality to use those re-cycle bins!

No such thing as a free game

By John Lawrence

People who want to play tennis on the two courts in Cherry Tree Wood are having to put their hands in their pockets to pay charges again.

Playing on the courts has been free for some years because no one has been available to collect fees or take bookings but now an hour's play costs £5.10 for adults and £2.60 for juniors.

Barnet Council has come to an agreement with the tenants of the re-opened Cherry Tree Wood café to man the courts and take the bookings. The council claims it is a fair system that prevents players occupying the courts for too long and is in line with other courts in the borough.

Fair play?

But the reintroduction of tennis charges has not gone down well with regular users. Anita Rai,

of Ingram Road, said it would discourage local adults and children from using the amenity to learn the sport and keep fit.

"I feel sorry for those children whose parents can't afford to give them a few pounds to play tennis," she said. "I think it is much fairer to keep the courts open for everyone regardless of how much money you have. I have played there for many years and the system worked well. People came, they waited and then played. People on the courts were very courteous and when there was a queue, they kept their games down to half an hour or so. No-one seemed to mind that."

Matthew Mardling, Barnet

Council's Greenspaces Service Manager, said the only reason the Cherry Tree Wood courts were free in the past was because there was no one to man them. The reopening of the café had allowed them to reintroduce the booking system.

He said: "Though I appreciate the reintroduction of charges has come as a surprise to those who have been enjoying free tennis facilities, we receive very few complaints about our charging policies. More complaints are generally generated when charging is interrupted, because people no longer have the ability to book the courts."

See Letters on page 11.

Food for thought

By Daphne Chamberlain

John Hajdu, from Ringwood Avenue, is inviting you out for lunch. It's a 12-month open invitation, though he does hope you will go on to join his club. He became a Probus member five years ago, and is this year's local president.

PRO comes from "professional" and BUS from "business", so does this mean a certain exclusivity? John, known to many as Chair of the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association, says not. "That would be a bit silly. We welcome people from all occupations, but they must be either retired or on the point of retiring. Our aim is to get together for lunch every month, to provide interesting speakers and good conversation, and to make friends."

This autumn's programme offers talks on jazz, autism (John's presidential charity), Pilates and wacky gadgets, and a visit to the Guildhall Art Gallery and London's Roman amphitheatre.

The first Probus club, an offshoot of the Rotary movement, started in 1965 in Welwyn Garden City, and there are now hundreds in this country, as well as many overseas.

John's Northern Heights branch draws its members



John Hajdu with gavel and chain of office. Picture by John Dearing

mainly from Highgate, Muswell Hill, East Finchley and Church End. They generally meet on the third Wednesday of the month, 12.15 for 12.45pm in the Sparta Restaurant, 225-227 Regents Park Road, N3, where £12 brings them the talk, a two-course lunch and tea or coffee. Club membership costs £10 a year.

Anyone interested in joining the club should first phone John on 020 8883 8114. You can then make up to two visits as his guest before deciding whether Probus is for you.

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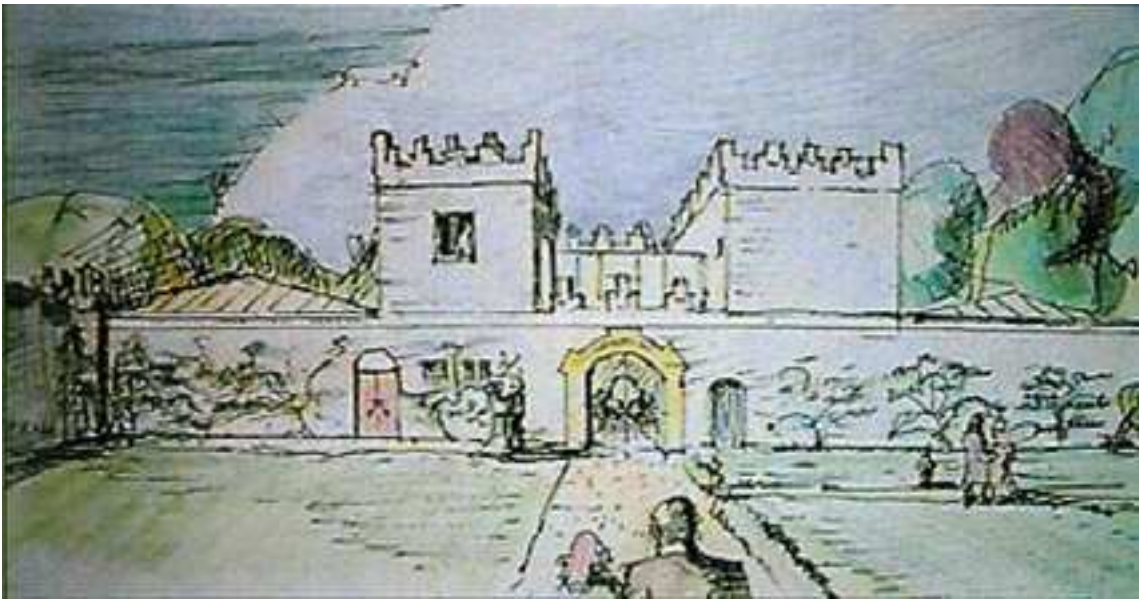
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Building a castle from a crumbling ruin

By Luisa Cotardo and Martin Mitchell

The power of community is no better illustrated than in the restoration of a castellated folly in the grounds of Avenue House, known as The Bothy.

Avenue House, set in parkland with rare, magnificent trees and rolling lawns, was bequeathed by 'Inky' Stephens to the people of Finchley. The Bothy, which has the distinction of being one of the earliest reinforced concrete buildings in England, originally served as residential accommodation for workers at the estate in East End Road. Sadly, though in the care of successive councils, The Bothy was allowed to become a crumbling ruin.

Two-phase programme

Now the untiring efforts of local residents armed with goodwill and tenacity are giving The Bothy and its garden a new lease of life by turning it into a centre for local arts.

With the help of a substantial grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund of £418,000 and grants from The Rose Trust and Milly Apthorp Trust, phase one of the redevelopment is practically complete. Three meeting rooms have been created: an art gallery, a story-telling area and a café.

During phase one, open-air entertainment, in the form of plays by Shakespeare and music concerts, has been successfully staged. The second phase of work comprises the formation

of two large community studios for which further finance is being sought.

Kings of the castle

It is impossible to mention all the volunteers involved with administration as well as practical work on site but consultant Michael Holden deserves a special mention, because he oversaw the building of the Shakespeare Globe Theatre in its final stage and is doing the same for this project.

On 23 July more than 100 supporters toured the restored Bothy, exploring its castellations. With a stretch of the

imagination it could have been a feudal fortress. The view from the castellations overlooked the beautifully restored walled garden and beyond, the park enjoying its summer splendour.

The story of The Bothy shows how the cooperation and dedication of ordinary members of the community can build real castles for everybody to enjoy.

More information can be found at www.bothyartsfinchley.org.uk, or by contacting Mike Walsh, Chairman of Finchley Art Centre Trust, email: mike.walsh44@ntlworld.com.



Do more with feeling

East Finchley artist Kit Friend describes a forthcoming project using drama and the arts to help Romanian street children.

As a local boy from East Finchley I'm aware of the vibrant arts and creative scene we have within our village community.

Having attended Holy Trinity and Hendon Schools, then the Central St Martins art-school, I have been given many privileges. Though my work spans fine art, photography, jewellery, and various design disciplines, I am now embarking on ambitious projects within a charitable organisation called With Feeling.

With Feeling exists to bring artists, designers and other creative people together with doctors, students, and other medical practitioners for the benefit of under-privileged communities.

Thus far our work has helped hundreds of children in orphanages, principally in Romania. We have touched the lives of many young people who come from tragic backgrounds both in and outside of institutions and who suffer from HIV, autism and other disorders.

Our next project begins this September. We aim to build a drop-in centre in a regenerated building within Bucharest, the capital of Romania and home to many street children for whom having a normal, healthy life is often impossible.

With solvent addiction in more than 95% of the street child population, HIV rife, and sex work frequently an occupation from the age of 12 or younger, it can seem that a way out is impossible. But there

is hope.

Working with teams of students from St Barts and the Royal London Hospitals, Central St Martins College of Art and Design, and other professional bodies and NGOs, With Feeling will provide design for the drop-in centre and the arts activities and education that our medical wing has shown to be so beneficial, as well as much needed health advice and support.

We also plan to educate and empower members of the street child population to take over the running of the centre from us, so that it may become self-sufficient.

How you can help

We need donations, and fast. Right now we need funding for a photographic and site research trip in September. We need to pay for flights, accommodation, and additional photographic equipment.

The trip will provide materials for our advertising and literature, as well as for an exhibition we hope to hold early next year in a prominent London gallery to raise awareness of our work amongst potential patrons.

If you or your business can sponsor our trip and work or help us with money or equipment please visit www.withfeeling.org.uk or email kit@withfeeling.org.uk. Together we can do more With Feeling.

Developer gets second bite of the cherry

By John Dearing

Lincoln Parade is a row of shops on the corner of Lincoln Road and the High Road. It has been a feature of East Finchley for decades, but in recent years many of the shops have often been unoccupied.

Since 2000, there has been a succession of applications to demolish these shops and redevelop the site. All the previous applications have been rejected or withdrawn, but the latest one, which proposes that four two-storey "town houses" should be built, went to the Finchley and Golders Green Area Planning Sub-Committee meeting on 20 July, with a recommendation from the Planning Officer to accept the application.

THE ARCHER reported this spring how the owners and customers of the Local Café, on the corner of Lincoln Road and the High Road, were objecting to a development plan for Lincoln Parade that would have cut the floor space of the café and forced it to alter its kitchen.

There were a number of objections to the latest application, a petition with 137 signatures on it and some objectors spoke against it at the meeting. The Sub-Committee rejected the application.

Among the reasons (as posted on the London Borough of Barnet web site) were that it would be

an inappropriate form of development, providing limited amenity space; that it would result in the loss of potential retail uses, and detriment to a local café within an area of primary retail frontage which would result in harm to the vitality and viability of East Finchley Town Centre; and that parking availability and pedestrian safety would be affected.

However, the application was then referred to the main Barnet Planning Committee for reconsideration on 30 August. Councillor John Marshall, the Chair of the Sub-Committee, told *THE ARCHER* that the sub-committee rules allowed for such a referral if at least two members of the sub-committee thought it necessary.

He said that shops in the parade were "under-utilised"; that he thought the decision was not the correct one; that the application ought to be considered by a larger, more representative group; and that an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate was likely to succeed and might result in Barnet Council incurring significant legal costs.

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Did you know...?

Having witnessed many local wrangles with traffic wardens, we thought this snippet from a recent news release from the Conservative party in Barnet might be of interest.

The release talks about a report that "calls for charges and Parking Schemes to be constantly monitored ... this is already done by Barnet, as is giving five minutes' grace for Pay and Display users".

So next time you're a couple of minutes over your time, you'll know the official policy.



Style counsel

By Viviana Lotti

Calling all women with recalcitrant wardrobes full of 'nothing to wear': Finchley now has Fashionfix, a personal styling service for women.

Fashionfix was formed a year ago by North Finchley resident and mother-of-two Denise Pia. She was inspired to start the business by meeting fellow mothers and noticing how little time they had to shop for themselves. Denise has a solid fashion background of over 20 years, the last 10 spent as a buyer, and has run a children's clothing company.

Denise provides a complete fashion styling service, using the shops at Brent Cross Shopping Centre. "It covers all ages and is close by," she explains. She is in discussion with Brent Cross about becoming their resident women's personal shopping service provider.

The personal touch

Denise starts with a friendly phone call to her customer to create a profile comprising size, lifestyle, preferences, needs and budget, which "can range from £100 to unlimited". Customers' requirements vary, from an entire season's wardrobe including accessories, to a complete

outfit for a special occasion like a wedding. Currently, Denise's customers tend to be women in their 30s and 40s, "either career women with not much time, or older mothers who don't have the confidence to know what's in fashion".

Denise then visits Brent Cross to research shops, sourcing the most suitable clothes. Finally, she meets the customer there for four hours of shopping, at the end of which the customer will have a completely co-ordinated, fashionable wardrobe, a heroic feat given the bewildering number of choices available.

Can Denise share any summer fashion tips with our readers? "Dresses," she says immediately. "The dress is the garment of the season."

Denise normally charges £150 for four hours. She is happy to offer a 10% discount to Archer readers. Please contact her direct on 020 8346 1486. Website: www.thefashionfix.co.uk, email: denisepia@fsmail.net.



Patsy Joseph and Paul Harrington welcomed visitors into their rich and varied gardens

Patsy and Paul's enchanting garden

East Finchley's only National Gardens Scheme garden almost didn't open for the first time on 6 August. Water restrictions, health problems and building works dampened the spirits of Daily Mail 'Plantsman of the Year' Award winners Patsy Joseph and Paul Harrington.

But then a visit from assistant county organiser Susan Bennett reassured them that all gardeners were struggling with

the drought and that visitors would sympathise and enjoy their artistry and horticultural skills even if the lack of lushness was disappointing.

Galvanised into action, the couple, bird-keepers at London Zoo, wrought miracles. On the day, the sun shone and 172 visitors were enchanted. The event raised over £600 for NGS charities, including Macmillan Cancer Relief, Marie Curie Cancer Care and Help the Hospices.

The plant stall almost sold out of plants donated by fellow enthusiasts, while visitors, especially those with some knowledge of exotics, were thrilled by the tropical pink flowers of the Mandevilla over-hanging the refreshing ferny passage, the gigantic leaves of the Tetrapanax Melianthus Major and the blue-flowered Pontederia in the wildlife pond.

This was a small garden jam-packed with interest, where minute observation is amply rewarded. Teething troubles over, next year Paul and Patsy promise further developments to look forward to. They are to be congratulated wholeheartedly.

Susan Bennett and Earl Hyde are assistant county organisers for the National Gardens Scheme and would be happy to hear about new gardens in East Finchley to open for charity. Contact them on 020 8883 8540. For more information, visit www.ngs.org.uk

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Language school expands southwards

By Ann Bronkhorst

Light, bright rooms and spanking fresh paint: the building recently taken over by the East Finchley School of English is at the final stage of its conversion, all set to welcome the new intake of students on 18 September.

Christina Lockie, who established the school, retired earlier this year and new owners Fandy and Jason Pratt realised that the premises at the Methodist Church in the High Road would soon need a second 'wing'. They found the right space just a step away, at Southern House, Bedford Road, and even an architect next door to make the dream a reality.

Their dream does not stop at the new premises, however. The school's reputation for focusing primarily on the students' needs rather than on financial gain is important to Jason and Fandy. Any development, they say, must not compromise the school's record of excellent teaching, personal attention, friendly atmosphere and affordable prices.

They believe that the East Finchley School of English, like many other businesses, could become more involved with the local community. So a quarterly newsletter starts this month and sponsorship of local events is a possibility. Another is finding host families locally, especially in the summer months. Having a foreign student to stay can be a valuable experience for the hosts as well as the student.

A wide range of students attends already though the core, perhaps, is of locally based 'au-pair' girls. Because of Jason's previous work in financial services the school also aims to attract students of Business English and to provide corpo-

rate training. Here in London the appetite for learning English or for improving a specialised use of English seems insatiable.

Fandy, who is originally from Shanghai, China, met her English husband when both were studying for their MBAs. She says that their marriage is

an example of how a shared language can bring together people from different cultures. Maybe Southern House will see some other interesting partnerships between fellow students in the years to come.

For more information, contact www.efse.co.uk

Brookland Infant School rises to the challenge

By Diana Cormack

With the new academic year underway, motorists will have seen an inevitable increase in traffic as parents ferry their children to and fro on the "school run". Road users may find the effect of these extra vehicles a problem, but they are not the only ones to suffer. At the schools difficulties can arise, particularly when large numbers of parents are attempting to park and manoeuvre in the vicinity.

Brookland Infant School has what headteacher Sheila Abbott describes as a "challenging entrance". As well as being very concerned about the safety of the hundreds of children who use the narrow roads and small junctions, Sheila wants the school to live in harmony within itself and with its neighbours. To this end Brookland Infants has, with the help of Community Liaison Officers, produced an information pack for parents. This contains maps and guidelines for dealing with the situation and lists the school's expectations for both parents and children.

Changing habits

Whilst realising that some people do need to use a car, the pack suggests that chil-

dren should walk to school whenever possible. "This is an on-going project, not just a walk-to-school week," Mrs Abbott told *THE ARCHER*. "In some ways, we are trying to change the habits of a lifetime." By promoting this healthy lifestyle she hopes to bring about a beneficial change for everyone involved, one that will also reduce pollution levels, so helping the environment.

In thanking all those who have supported her scheme Sheila made special mention of the Home Beat Officers and the local residents' association. This year she hopes to maintain and build upon the definite improvement that she saw happening around Brookland last term.

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YOUNG ARCHER

Why Little Miss Muffet ran away

By Diana Cormack

The change in our weather is bringing new wildlife to Britain. Plants that usually grow in hot countries are thriving here, fish from warmer waters are swimming round our shores and we are seeing insects that we only used to see when we went abroad.

One of these is a French spider-eating wasp which has been found near Sandy in Bedfordshire. It is smaller than the British wasp and is black in colour. This wasp attacks those spiders which hunt their prey on the ground, rather than using webs, and paralyses them with a sting. Each spider is then sealed in a tunnel with a wasp egg laid on it. When the egg hatches, the larva uses the living spider for its food!

Wouldn't Miss Muffet have loved that? She hated spiders.

"Little Miss Muffet
Sat on a tuffet,
Eating her curds and whey.
There came a big spider,
Who sat down beside her,
And frightened Miss Muffet away."

However, if the following story is true, Miss Muffet had good reason to dislike spiders.

Her real name was Patience Muffet and she was the daughter of Dr Thomas Muffet (1553 - 1604). He was a medical doctor who was fascinated by insects and spiders. In those days spiders were thought to be helpful in curing illnesses. If people had a high temperature they would wear a spider in a nutshell and swallowing a spider wrapped in a ball of breadcrumbs or butter was believed to help people get better.

Dr Muffet was interested in finding out whether spiders could be used to cure the common cold. It is said that when his daughter was ill he used to treat her with spiders, though we don't know exactly what he did. Swallowing them like medicine certainly wouldn't have cured a tickle in her throat!

Spider jokes

Why did the spider buy a car?
So he could take his friends for a spin.

Why do spiders like ducks?
Because they have webbed feet.

What did the spider say to the fly?
I'm getting married. Do you want to come to the webbing?

What happens when a spider gets angry?
He goes up the wall.

How do you spot a modern spider?
Instead of a web he has a website.

Fill it, snap it

More than £250 of goodies are up for grabs just for putting out your black recycling box and taking a photo.

Barnet Council wants residents to send in amusing and innovative photos of them putting out their full black boxes as part of a drive to encourage more recycling.

Simply send your photo to: competitions@barnet.gov.uk or post to Recycling, London Borough of Barnet, NLBP, Oakleigh Road South, London, N11 1NP. The winning entry will receive a black box full of goodies worth over £250. Closing date for entries is 31 October

2006. The competition is open to Barnet residents only. Visit www.barnet.gov.uk/recycling or call 020 8359 7400 for full terms and conditions.

Just the ticket

By Diana Cormack

Regular commuters on the Northern Line can probably be forgiven for finding little to generate excitement in the environs of East Finchley tube station. However, there are younger members of the community who look at it in a very different way.

With transport featuring as part of the national curriculum, station staff have played host to infant school children, some of whom may never have been on a tube train before. Not only were the young visitors able to go on one, but they were also taken to stand next to a train at the trackside rather

than at platform level, and to wonder at the size of it. They were highly delighted to hear the noise of a train and to feel the ground shaking as it roared by. And the station's statue of Archie proved to be very popular too.

The children really enjoyed looking around the station supervisor's office, particularly at the cameras showing various views of the vicinity and they were thrilled to be given a video of their visit to take back to school. Schools need to contact London Underground and/or their local station if they want to make an educational visit.

A letter from one school, Moss Hall Infants, showed their appreciation:

"We thoroughly enjoyed seeing all the different things at East Finchley Station and were bowled over by the time and effort you must have given to planning our time there. The consensus was that this was probably one of our best school trips ever for children of this age. We felt we all learned a lot as well as enjoying ourselves".

That says it all. Well done, East Finchley station staff!

Big Brother, but not as we know it

By Helen Drake

The main hall at Martin Junior School vibrated with music at the end of the summer term as Year 6, including every pupil, performed their traditional leaving show. Staff and pupils had reworked the TV show Big Brother into an imaginative twentieth-century history lesson with lots of singing and dancing thrown in.

As the familiar music pounded out, children dressed in black and white with dark sunglasses re-created the usual opening scenes of the show. Davina (Chae Aujla) introduced the house mates as they bounded on to the stage: Winston Churchill (Ashley Cartwright), Roger Bannister (Justin Goshorn), Elizabeth Taylor (Megan Hallett), Johnny Rotten (Louis Masseron), Margaret Thatcher (Lydia Francis), David Beckham (Julian Moir) and Krishna Bhagat from Martin School playing himself. Each character represented a decade from the last 60 years and set out to convince the audience that their decade was the best.

Each day in the Big Brother house, one character gave a thumb-nail sketch of their decade: the horrors of the war years, the adjustment to peace time, the arrival of the jukebox, the jubilation of England winning the 1966 World Cup, the introduction of decimalisation, Monty Python's Flying Circus, privatisation, the dot.com revolution and the birth of e-bay. "The future only looks scary because you can't see it" was the message for Krishna who represented the present day and was the winner of this version of Big Brother.

The audience was taken on a musical journey through the decades starting with Vera Lynn, Gracie Fields and the Land Girls singing "Wish me Luck (as you wave me goodbye)", and ending with the Spice Girls' "Wannabe". The finale of "We go Together" from Grease brought the house down, although the programme warned "You might get an overwhelming urge to roll back the years and strut your stuff. Don't do it - did the critics in Year 5 make of "Big Brother"? Dario St Jerry thought it was "really funny and cool. It should go on show for the general public". Max Derraji praised "the



Margaret Thatcher (played by Lydia Francis) talks to Big Brother in the Diary Room.

Picture by Helen Drake

talent, the team work, the hard work and the funny storyline. They did not make one mistake. I also liked the singing and dancing because they kept the beat going." Yonatan Suissa said the show was an "inspiration". He thought the Spice Girls were "played very well by the Year 6 girls", and he particularly liked the Monty Python sketch. Overall "I would give it 10/10" he said.

After school art classes

By Diana Cormack

During the first week in August, Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute ran a special Art and Craft workshop for children aged seven to 12 years. Tutor Jenny Rymer had chosen the theme of Treasure Island, with galleons, maps and treasure chests featuring largely in the excellent work produced in the studio at Park House opposite East Finchley tube station.

The good news for local children and parents is that Jenny will be running an after school Art Workshop throughout the year, starting on 25 September. It will be for ages 8-11 years and will be held on Mondays from 4.30-6.30 pm during term time.

For further details please phone 8829 4141 or visit the Institute at 11, High Road, East Finchley.



Treasure chest made at the summer workshop. Photograph by Diana Cormack.

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Visitors always welcome



Back to school

Returning to school can really be a 'pain in the back' for thousands of school kids. Nicky Sharp gives some top tips to make sure your children stay healthy.

It is estimated that as many as 70% of school age children could be at risk from back pain as a result of carrying heavy and poorly designed school bags.

Problems often arise because children fall victim to peer pressure and to fashion, and carry trendy but poorly designed school bags, slung over one shoulder or carried in one hand by the straps.

Figures from a study published in the Scandinavian Journal of Rehabilitative Medicine have shown that 68% of children using hand held school bags, and 53% of children carrying a bag on one shoulder experience back pain, mainly as a result of muscle strain, distortion of the spine's natural 'S' shaped curve (scoliosis), raised and rounded shoulders.

Rucksack is best

Research shows that using a rucksack can reduce back pain by more than 23 per cent, provided it is worn correctly over both shoulders.

Choosing the right rucksack

Choose a rucksack with a moulded frame and adjustable shoulder and hip straps. The weight of the rucksack should sit just above the child's waist so the weight rests on the pelvis, not on the shoulders or spine.

The rucksack should have

different compartments to spread the load, be made of lightweight material and the back should be padded for comfort.

When fitted correctly the rucksack should contour snugly to the back rather than hang off the shoulders.

How to pack the rucksack

The rucksack should weigh less than 10% of the child's weight. Ideally a 40kg child should carry no more than 2-3kg.

Pack the heaviest items so they are closest to the child's back. If the heaviest items are packed further away this throws out the child's centre of gravity causing unnecessary back strain.

Make items as secure as possible. If items move around whilst being carried they also upset the centre of gravity. Use separate compartments wherever possible.

How to lift

Lift the rucksack with both hands, ensuring that the back is kept straight, the knees are bent, and the rucksack is kept close to the body. Use the power of the thigh muscles to lift, not the back muscles.

Registered osteopath Nicky Sharp practises at Nova Dental Care centre in East End Road. To make an appointment, contact her on 020 8815 9433.



From the left, Rosie Townsend, John Wade, Azra Nath, Katie Dawbarn (Deputy Headteacher of Martin Infant School), Amanda Neilson, Amanda Walker and willing children pose by the new climbing frame. Picture by Helen Drake

The Great Outdoors

By Helen Drake

Everyone's memory of their first day at school is very special. For the children starting this September in the Reception classes at Martin Infant School, the new dedicated playground created specially for them will be something they will remember for the rest of their lives.

With the help of a substantial donation from the parent-teacher association (PTA), members of staff were able to purchase the equipment needed to create an outdoor classroom including a climbing frame suitable for five-year-olds.

Azra Nath and Amanda Neilson, Chair and Vice Chair of the PTA, said: "We are so grateful to all the parents, carers, staff and members of the local community who have helped us raise this money, particularly the fantastic support we have received from local businesses."

Foundation skills

Why is an outdoor classroom so important? Kevin Ancomb, Head Teacher at Martin Infants, explained: "There are six key areas of learning in the Foundation Stage, of which Physical Development is one: hence the climbing frame. This will develop co-ordination, confidence, turn taking, fine and gross motor skills, all in preparation for, and complementary to, the other five key areas of the Foundation Stage, which include Language and Literacy, Mathematical Development and Knowledge and

Understanding (for example, Science). The outdoor classroom will be set up to teach all these areas".

Over the following year the outdoor classroom will be developed further with the addition of other equipment such as water trays and sand trays.

At the end of the summer term, Amanda Walker, manager of Prickett and Ellis, Rosie Townsend, former manager of Budgens, and John Wade, the new manager of Budgens, were invited as special guests to the school to see the new climbing frame and to receive a formal thank you from the PTA.

Amanda Walker, who grew up in East Finchley, said: "Prickett and Ellis are happy to support the local community", and Rosie Townsend said: "We've been supporting the school for over two years and are happy to continue that support in the future."

Allotment hat-trick

By Richard King

East Finchley Allotments have won the award for the best-kept allotment site in Barnet for the third year in a row. The 12-acre site with nearly 180 plots is one of the largest in Barnet. Members were particularly pleased that their hard work had been recognised again.

The area has been used as allotments since the First World War. It forms part of East Finchley's "big green space" which includes Martin School field, Coldfall Woods and playing fields, the Fuel Lands allotments and the Islington and Camden (St. Pancras) cemeteries.

While each of these has its different uses, together they represent several hundred acres of open space and woodland providing a variety of habitats for wildlife and, like the central London parks, helping to improve our air quality.

The secluded allotments site was used as a filming location for a previous series of the BBC's *Raising the Dead*. The allotment holders, though,

prefer to spend their time raising vegetables! If you're interested in having an allotment on the site, contact the membership secretary Janice Monaghan on 020 8351 2836.

Festival meeting

The East Finchley Festival Steering Group is reviewing this year's festival and planning for next year at an open meeting on Thursday 21 September. Anyone is welcome to share ideas and opinions, and offers of help would be welcomed. The meeting is at 7pm at The Green Man Centre.

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

A single life

As the latest series of Big Brother crashes mindlessly into the buffers the morons in some think-swamp have discovered who is to blame for global warming. And, guess what, it's not 4x4s double parking outside schools or too many sheep farting too much methane into the atmosphere; it's people who live alone.

In their warped world singles use up more packaging, heating, water and lighting than couples or families or the entire Big Brother household and have to be stopped now. The future has got to be communal. A bit like Big Brother really.

When you leave home you usually end up sharing some slum with a bunch of friends, then you either shack up with your lover and create a love nest or with your best friend and create a slum. A serious case of men and women behaving as badly as possible without getting arrested. But there comes a time when you've had enough of someone else leaving the top off the toothpaste and the only solution is to go solo.

Going solo means never having to say sorry when you fall drunkenly in through the front door at dawn. Going solo means having the chance to be as selfish as you want when you want. Going solo means eating what you want when you want. So what if everyone else reckons your cheese and chocolate pizza is a dietary disfunction too far, they don't have to eat it.

Not anymore. Instead, the choice will be: shack up with your lover, preferably having signed a civil contract or forced yourself into a cosy little marriage, or else get stuck in a government approved version of Big Brother. Well, what an option. Let's look at the 22 social deviants with their collection of weird and wacky character defects. Never mind Mikey who switched from one blonde to the next faster than a rat up a drainpipe, or Nikki who gave eating disorders a bad name and deserved to be evicted twice, or the bizarrely named Spiral, or the winner of the Kit Kat free entry ticket, called Susie, who actually said she was only there for her 15 minutes of infamy. The only way I'd want to spend time in a crowded space with any of them is if I was armed with a combination of high quality narcotics and a machine gun.

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Regular Events

SPORT & FITNESS

❖ **Finchley & Hornsey Ramblers Group** Call Vivien 8883 8190
 ❖ **Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club**, Summers Lane N12. New and experienced bowlers welcome.
 ❖ **Keep fit for the Retired** Wednesdays Christ Church N12. Ring Bridie 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.

DANCE, DRAMA, ART & MUSIC

❖ **Art Classes.** For info call Henry on 020 8888 5133.
 ❖ **Ballroom dancing classes**, beginners and improvers. Phone 01707 642 378
 ❖ **Club Dramatika** drama club for kids. Call 8883 7110.
 ❖ **East Finchley Writing Workshops.** Creative writing, poetry and prose Contact Dennis Evans 8346 9528.
 ❖ **Finchley Jazz Club** - 4 & 18 Sep at 8pm, 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 feature a different band each month. See www.swamprock.org.uk or call Carole 8810 7454 or Neil 01727 830280
 ❖ **Symphonic Wind Orchestra** Contact Caroline Egan 8340 2706
 ❖ **Tap Dance** for children beginning at Old Barn every Monday, Contact Sharon 8349 4613

CLUBS & SOCIAL

❖ **Contact Lunch Club** Tuesdays at the Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book.
 ❖ **East Finchley National Childbirth Trust**, Contact Jane on 8883 4340
 ❖ **East Finchley Writers** meet weekly at The Old White Lion. Call Lilian 8444 1793
 ❖ **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.
 ❖ **Highgate Film Society**, contact Admin Office 8340 3343 or email: admin@hlsi.net.
 ❖ **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 John 8883 8114.
 ❖ **Stepping Stones**, interactive play session for under 3's. Karen 07957 278860.



Rich Hall in *Levelland*. Photo courtesy Theatre Tours International.

Rich Hall on the level

By John Dearing

Rich Hall's first full-length play *Levelland* had its London preview at artsdepot in Finchley in the last week of July before going to the Edinburgh Festival.

Hall has appeared on TV programmes such as *Have I Got News For You* and *QI*, and is known as a deadpan comedian with a sharp turn of phrase. *Levelland* marks a departure from his usual territory.

It is a dark, dramatic, satirical thriller, set in a radio studio in West Texas in the near future. Wayman Tisdale (played by Hall) is a syndicated phone-in show host who takes calls on the issues of the day, and then rubbishes the callers. Fuel shortages and price rises have reached the point where the American love affair with oil is causing real grief, with the National Guard (a notorious military police force) shooting looters at petrol stations.

A succession of selfish, whingeing, extreme right-wing callers produces a variety of crack-pot solutions, but Tisdale is adamant that there will be no invasions of oil-producing countries, no nukes, no genocide. "We just go in and assume control...simple as that."

Into Tisdale's ivory tower comes Scrope, a violent young drifter who claims to have the gift of divining and says he is on the run from those who would exploit this gift. Tisdale's sarcastic doubt is challenged, first by the arrival of Dimitry, a superficially kindly, confessional figure, and then Guffy, a vicious bully.

Tisdale is not a particularly lovable character, mentally barricaded in his own rather surreal little world, living on tinned peaches, running his self-important, abusive radio show while outside the oil runs out. Suddenly the world comes to him in the form of Scrope, a perverted messianic figure exploited by Dimitry whose be-suited figure is a metaphor

for capitalism, and abused by Guffy who represents authoritarian, military government. The crazy callers illustrate the man on the street as unreconstructed bigot.

Levelland is a thought-provoking, dark vision of the near future. There are some nice one-liners - "You have to stand for something, or you will lose everything" - numerous witty rebuffs to the idiot callers, and complex dialogue that is performed extremely well. The scale of the production is pitched just about right. However, it is hard to generate any sympathy for any of the characters as they are just too flawed, and the somewhat unsatisfactory ending leaves the play rather unfocused. Is this how a second coming would pan out, or is it inevitable that those with a message are always imposters?

Oh, by the way, watch out for loud bangs!

Wonderful Whetstone

Interested in hearing about a neglected part of the borough? Then come to John Heathfield's talk to The Finchley Society "I told you Whetstone was wonderful" at Avenue House, East End Road, at 8pm on Thursday 28 September.

The illustrated talk will explore the delights of Whetstone and include people, historical buildings and archaeological exploration.

John Heathfield is a well-known local historian and lecturer who has written more than 20 books and 400 articles.

Entry to the talk is free and non-members are welcome.

Phoenix rising

By Sheila Armstrong

Our Phoenix Cinema goes from strength to strength. As well as regularly showing a good varied selection of films old and new, there are now other innovations. We've had the World Cup live for free on the big screen this summer, free films for kids in their summer holidays and the end of July saw the second successful year of the Phoenix's Short Film Fest.

It was organised by Ava Grauls, a graduate in Media from Westminster University, who was assisted this year by fellow graduate Ziortza Fernandez. With entries from as far away as Iran and Cuba, 65 young film makers took part showing not only live action films but experimental animations. Prizes were again provided by the White Lion pub.

And the winners were ...

The winner for best animation was *Me, Myself and I*, directed and produced by Holly and Shaun Leong-Williams, portraying how opinions change as we grow up.

Best live action was won by *The Cost of Living*, directed by Max Hochrad, in which a cheap apart-

ment turns out to have the knack of making money for its tenant.

Ava and Ziortza are grateful to all the staff at the Phoenix for their support and of course to the White Lion pub. And they are already working on next year's festival.

Open House

By Sheila Armstrong

Two local buildings in this year's Open House weekend are the artsdepot in North Finchley, open on Saturday 16 September from 11am-5pm, and our own Art Deco Phoenix Cinema, open on Sunday 17 September from 10am-2pm. Both have disabled access. You can get further details from www.openhouse.org.uk.

What's On...

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

Saturday 2 September:

Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society Flower Show, 3-5.30pm at The Free Church Hall, Northway, NW11. Teas, some plants for sale. Contact 020 8455 8741 for more details.

Sunday 10 September:

Evening concert at **East Finchley Methodist Church**, High Road, 8pm; **Jane Whitehouse**, flute, and **Christine Greig**, piano. Free admission with a collection for Amnesty International. Full disabled access.

Thursday 14 September:

The Highgate Film Society's fourth subscription season starts with a FREE introductory evening, showing Chaplin's *Easy Street*, followed by *Il Postino*. Refreshments available. 7.15 for 8pm, at Highgate Literary & Scientific Institution, 11 South Grove, N6. Call 8340 3343 or email: admin@hlsi.net for more information

Thursday 28 September:

Illustrated talk by local historian **John Heathfield** on the people, buildings and history of Whetstone; Avenue House, East End Road, 8pm. Hosted by **The Finchley Society**, entry is free and non-members are welcome.

Sunday 15 October:

Garden Suburb Ward Lib Dems outing to Hever Castle, Kent. £26. Non-members welcome. Coach leaves Golders Green Station 10.30am. Booking forms available by contacting 020 8455 6507 or www.fgglibdems.org.uk.

Tuesday 17 October:

Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society Autumn Lecture. **Jean-Jacques Amand** speaks on 'Spring Bulbs' at Fellowship House, Willifield Way, NW11 at 7.30pm. Some bulbs for sale. Non-members £2 at door. Contact 020 8455 0455 for more details.

Coming up at artsdepot, North Finchley:

Fri 8 Sep to Thu 5 Oct: The Barnet Open showcases the work of local artists; **Thu 14 Sep, 6-8pm: Public Art Unveiling** of works by *Richard Sharples*, *Katie Mills* & *Nic Sandiland*; **Thu 14 - Sat 16 Sep: Stepping Out** by **The Impact Theatre Company**; **Sat 16 Sep: Open House**; **Sun 17 Sep: Comedy Show: "Fun!"** by **Shazia Mirza**, 8.30pm; **Sun 17 Sep: Jaleo Flamenco:** Andalusian dance, song & guitar, 8pm; **Sat 23 Sep: SPICE:** an evening of cabaret, 8pm; **Sun 24 Sep:** Irish singer **Cara Dillon**, 8pm; **Tue 26 Sep: One Man Star Wars Trilogy**, one man show by **Charles Ross**, 8pm; **Thur 28 Sep: Jongleurs on the Road:** stand-up comedy, 8pm; **Fri 29 Sep: Heart 'n Soul Unplugged:** Pino Frumiente, Lizzie Emeh & Mark Sneed plus band, 8pm; **Sun 1 Oct: The Sounds of Jazz** with **George Melly**, **Jacqui Dankworth** & **Digby Fairweather**, 8pm; **Thur 5 Oct:** Verses & Verses by **Robert Hylton**, 8pm; **Sat 7 Oct: Moon Play**, Studio Theatre, 7pm; **Simon Amstell**, Pentland Theatre, 7pm.

Is 2006 the year you learn how to surf the web and use email?

The Green Man Community Centre offers a wide range of courses to help you make the most of new technology. If you just want to learn how to use email or even get a professional qualification we have the course for you.

Learners study at their own pace with a friendly tutor on hand to offer help and advice if needed.

For more information about the courses on offer call Helen on 020 8815 0703.

The Learning Centre is managed in conjunction with Barnet College



Letters to the editor

Festival should be free to try new ideas

Dear Editor

I am extremely disappointed with your article regarding this year's community festival (*THE ARCHER*, August 2006) which contained a number of inaccuracies.

The Happy Go Lucky Dance group was not abruptly cut from the programme as they had not been booked. In May they wrote requesting funding to appear and demanding a free stall. They were answered within a fortnight and the committee declined the offer.

I am also confused as to why North London Performing Arts were disappointed. We have no record of them applying to perform at the festival. I contacted NLPA after reading the article only to be told they had not applied to appear at the festival for a number of years! Before publishing this inaccurate nonsense, it would have been sensible to ask us to respond.

It is very sad that so called professional arts organisations, with teams of full time paid staff in bright shiny grant and council tax funded facilities should use *THE ARCHER* to attack a volunteer led and directed community arts group.

The festival organisers must be free to look at ways of making the festival better. Some changes may work; others may not be successful.

If your readers are interested in helping us plan next year's event (including the second stage) we would be delighted to see them at our review meeting on Thursday 21 September at the Green Man Community Centre starting at 7pm.

Yours faithfully
Martin O'Donnell
On behalf of the festival committee

Editor's reply:

THE ARCHER would like to make it clear that the original story was printed in response to complaints and comments about the booking system at the East Finchley Community Festival made to us by some of our readers. Our reporter Daphne Chamberlain contacted Mr O'Donnell several times to give him the chance to respond to the claims. The comments he gave us were reported accurately in the article.

Our festival is fantastic

Dear Editor,

I am writing to complain at the negative and carping tone used in the article published in *THE ARCHER* referring to the Community Festival.

We are extremely lucky in East Finchley to have several strong voluntary and community organisations working for the good of us all. Two of the most important are the Community Festival and *THE ARCHER*.

Having said this, for once I totally disagree with *THE ARCHER*. The festival was and is fantastic. Year after year it delivers fun amidst a valuable chance for the whole community to get together and get involved.

Sometimes the balance is too much one way; sometimes it goes a little too far the other way. But one thing is certain, it is democratically run and if you want to change any aspect of it then get involved yourself. Don't whine from the sidelines, but make a difference yourself by helping contribute to the planning of next year's festival.

As to the truth of the allegations, well I don't know myself and what's

more I'm pretty certain that neither does *THE ARCHER*! Did these organisations apply in time? Did they bother to check and confirm the arrangements; or did they perhaps just hope that all would go all right on the day and leave the work to other people?

I cannot imagine how many long hours of graft that Martin O'Donnell and his large team of unpaid volunteers put in; but I for one congratulate them on the results of the efforts - a wonderful free community festival.

Yours faithfully,
Peter Hart
Elmhurst Court, N2

Missed booking

Dear Editor,

I refer to your letter from Carolyn Pickles in last month's *ARCHER*. I feel sorry for the Dance Group that was unable to play at this year's East Finchley Festival. If the group had been 'practising their dance routine for months and months' surely Community Focus's administrators should have applied to take part in the June festival a bit earlier than May?

Apparently, 'buses, carers and rota systems had been sorted out' but not the booking of a performance slot. Now I know artistic types aren't ones for making a drama but really!

Yours faithfully,
Michelle Eldrett
Colney Hatch Lane, N10

Frightful and execrable

Dear Editor

I wonder if you knew about Lord Cooper, the proprietor of the newspaper in Evelyn Waugh's *Scoop* (1938). He lived in a "frightful mansion" in East Finchley (page 14 of the 2003 Penguin edition), which by page 215 has become "his execrable country seat at East Finchley".

What did Evelyn Waugh have against us?

Yours faithfully,
Wendy Fox
Shakespeare Gardens, N2

Tennis charges are a right racket

Dear Editor,

I have lived in East Finchley for many years and one of the best things about living in this great place was the free tennis courts at Cherry Tree Wood. Imagine my surprise when I went for a quick game the other week and was told that I had to pay £5.10 for an hour's play.

I know that the only reason we weren't being charged all that time was because there was no one to take the money, but I'd had a taste of a real public amenity and I started to think that this was a very good thing.

I spoke to Barnet Council and they merely said that "the courts need upkeep" and that "it's a good revenue earner". Quite frankly, that is something I did not want to hear. I pay council tax for amenities such as these courts (which aren't even in great condition), so I think this charge is an absolute disgrace.

The Government is continually campaigning for 'Sport-for-All' and is concerned that our children are overweight and don't do any exercise. This will just exacerbate the problem and make the sport elitist and inaccessible to those who can't afford the charges. And we wonder why we don't have a Wimbledon champion. The courts are more or less empty since the charges were introduced. Who knows, the locals might boycott

the courts completely, so then I guess it won't be the "good revenue earner" that was described to me.

By the way, why do the council charge for the courts and not the children's playground? That needs upkeep too doesn't it? Come on Barnet Council, get your stories straight.

While we're at it, why not make all of Barnet's tennis courts free, not just the ones in Cherry Tree Wood? I wonder if the council would be brave enough to agree to that.

Yours faithfully,
Anita Rai
Ingram Road, N2

Donkey ban drives me up the pole

Dear Editor,

Readers of *THE ARCHER* doubtless have many issues about which they disagree with their local authority Barnet. Personally, as a resident of Haringey, I have observed the manifestation of madness throughout the borough, while observing several common sense measures taking place in Barnet.

I support and enjoy participating in events that encourage local communities to get together, so I'll be at the Muswell Hill Festival on Saturday 17 September selling plants and promoting the Muswell Hill Horticultural Society and the National Gardens Scheme.

The festival will take place in Cherry Tree Wood and will feature a Donkey Derby. Why, I hear you wonder, is the festival and Derby not being held in Haringey's award-winning flagship (justifiably so) Priory Park?

The answer is because Haringey considers the fundraising attraction, the Donkey Derby, to be cruelty to animals and has banned it in the borough.

If Haringey is so concerned for the well being of animals, why doesn't it do more for the two-legged kind? The suffering caused by the lack of public conveniences in Muswell Hill is notorious - how London expects to cope during the Olympics with the dearth of such vital facilities baffles me.

We do have lovely new Heritage lampposts in Muswell Hill but I think the council would slap an ASBO on me the instant I cocked my leg against one!

Yours faithfully,
Susan Bennett,
St Regis Close, N10

Join our campaign for better buses

Dear Editor,

In her letter to *THE ARCHER* (July 2006) Helen Day gives us yet another example of the poor 263 bus service which the people who travel north/south through East Finchley have to endure.

Perhaps Ms Day and your readers would like to know about our group, East Finchley Buswatch, which is recognised by Transport for London and affiliated to West Haringey Buswatch. We actively campaign for improvement in the bus routes which serve East Finchley.

Ms Day is not alone and if she would like to join us she will be very welcome; the more people who become actively involved the better. If Ms Day would like to call me on the number given below I will give her an information sheet which gives guidance on who and where to contact to make complaints.



A craftsman at Gilbert and McCarty (stained glass restorers) working on one of the three damaged windows at All Saints Church (see letter below). This firm put back the glass on Big Ben when it was last reconditioned and did restoration work at Windsor Castle after the 1992 fire. Photo: M. Bronkhorst

A stain on our lovely church

Dear Editor,

Although I don't worship at All Saints, Durham Road, I feel some affection for this late Victorian church. It is one of the most handsome buildings in East Finchley and, over the years, has served as a kind of community centre: the venue for many community occasions, the annual Arts Festival, public meetings and concerts. Remember the launch of the WOW campaign?

I was shocked to learn recently that the church and its congregation must find £3,600 for repairs to smashed and damaged stained glass windows facing Durham Road. This is because, over the years, local children have thrown stones and kicked balls in front of the church. If only their parents and neighbours would remind children that the church grounds aren't a playground. If only, when damage is done, the parents could be expected to pay.

I've made a small donation towards the restoration of the windows and hope other residents will do too. After all, we don't have to wait for the National Trust to help save our architectural heritage.

Yours faithfully,
Martin Bronkhorst
Durham Road, N2

Animal identities

Dear Editor,

With reference to your article 'How en-deering' in the August issue, the photo of a newborn muntjac deer at Golders Hill Park looks more like one of the maras that share the enclosure with deer, alpaca and birds.

Yours faithfully,
Ann Daubercies
Manor Park Road, N2

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

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be reviewed or printed. Contact details can be withheld, however, at publication.

We ask all your readers who use the local bus services not to stand around grumbling at bus stops, not to give up and say "What's the use?" but get going - join us in our campaigning. The louder our voice the more clearly we'll be heard.

If any readers would like to know more about our group, or would like our information sheet, please ring 020 8444 6824 or email hazel.burnett@freeuk.com.

Yours faithfully,
Hazel Burnett
Leslie Road, N2

You'll never walk alone

Dear Editor

We are a small group of walkers who meet on the first and second Monday of each month at 10 am at Cherry Tree Wood café and we are welcoming new recruits. There is no charge and walkers vary in their mobility so that if they are unable to do the whole hour they can stop whenever they wish.

Yours faithfully
Pam Carpentir
Stokes Court, N2

Clean up begins at home

Dear Editor

I was most interested to read Diana Cormack's article, "Clean up closed down", in July's edition of *THE ARCHER*, on the community-minded volunteers who have sought to clean up graffiti in the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green areas.

How frustrating that Bill Jago and Jack Whitehead's generous efforts have been frustrated by unspecified health and safety rules. I walk along East End Road every day and wish that more private individuals would make the effort to remove graffiti from their own homes or premises, their boundary walls and the areas immediately in front of them.

What would only take one coat of paint and a few hours to fix has, in some cases, been untouched for over a year, detracting substantially from the attractiveness of the area. Barnet Council also offers to clean private property at a discounted rate, so there really is no excuse.

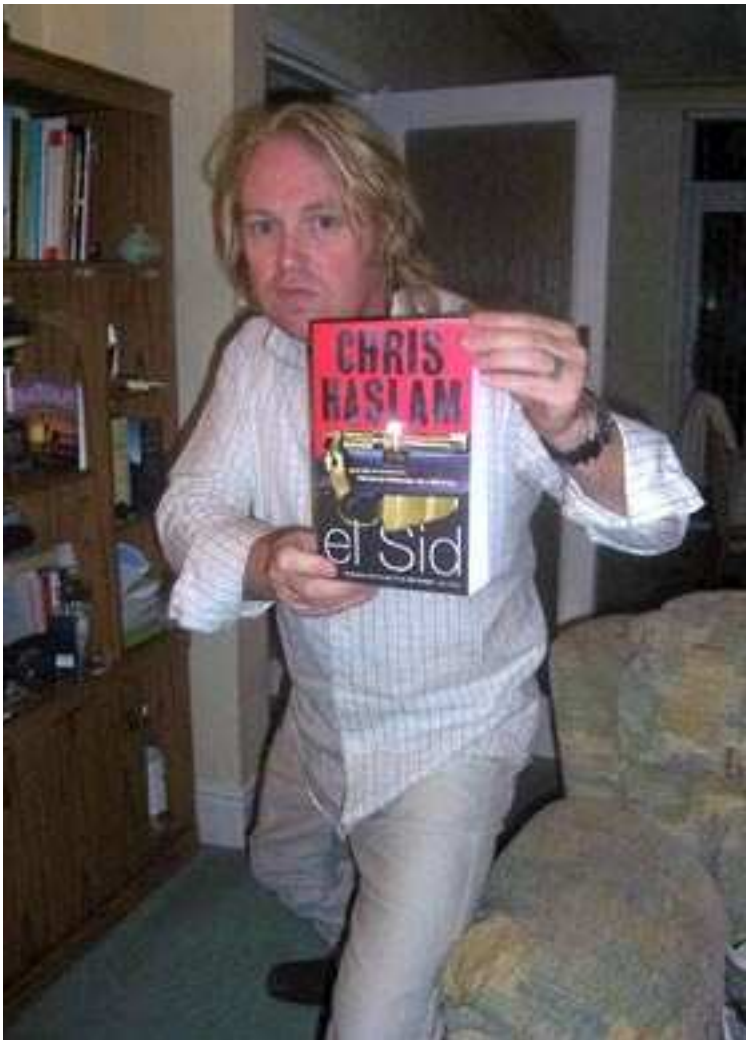
Name and address supplied



Win an essential read

By Diana Cormack

On the strength of his two previous novels, East Finchley author Chris Haslam has built up a growing reputation for comic thriller writing. Chris, who is a travel writer for the *Sunday Times*, lives in Creighton Avenue with his wife and three children.



Is this a hold up? Chris Haslam with his latest novel.

Photo by Diana Cormack

His first novel, *Twelve Step Fandango* (2003) was the only British nomination in the Best Paperback Original category of the USA's prestigious Edgar Allan Poe award.

His second, *Alligator Strip* (2005) had the same anti-hero Martin Brock. Critic Matthew Lewin wrote that Chris has "that rare talent of being able to combine seriously funny stuff with a truly engrossing thriller".

His latest book *el Sid*, published this August, deals with the search for a stash of gold secreted away during the Spanish Civil War. Seventy years on, International Brigade veteran Sidney Starman recruits a pair of hapless hands, Lenny Knowles and Nick Crick, to help him find the hundred missing boxes of bullion. One newspaper reviewer has described it as "essential summer reading."

Readers can find out if they agree with this, because Chris has given *THE ARCHER* two signed copies of *el Sid*. To win them, two correct answers to the following question will be drawn out of a hat:

Which ex-British government minister's father was himself a refugee from the Spanish Civil War?

To enter, send your answers with contact details to The Archer, PO Box 3699,

London N2 8JA or email the-archer@lineone.net by Saturday 30 September. Good luck!

The man who created Archie

By John Lawrence

This fascinating photograph, printed here by kind permission of London Transport Museum, dates back to 1940 and shows the sculptor Eric Aumonier putting the finishing touches to his famous statue at East Finchley station.

Aumonier perches atop a ladder on top of the station entrance to brush up the sheet lead that covers Archie's beech wood interior and his steel skeleton, twice the size of a living man.

Unveiled on 22 July 1940, Archie cost £245 and is thought to have been originally one of a series of designs to enhance the newly built underground stations of the 1930s.

The sculpture was intended as a powerful symbol of the area around this part of the Northern line. Finchley was once on the edge of the royal forest of Enfield, where hunting with bow and arrows was commonplace. London Underground also saw his dynamic pose as reflecting the speed and directness of underground travel.

Eric Aumonier was commissioned to do other work for London Underground, most notably some of the statues in and around St James's Park station and the London Underground headquarters that



Eric Aumonier puts the finishing touches to the Archie statue at East Finchley station in 1940. Picture courtesy London's Transport Museum © TfL

rise above it.

Among his other works are the Empire relief panels on the former Daily Express building in Fleet Street.

When Aumonier began suffering ill health, he and his wife

moved to New Zealand. He died there in 1974.

You can order a copy of this photograph, or any from the London Transport Museum archives, by visiting their website at www.ltmuseum.co.uk

Grab the chance to learn

Did you know that Barnet College holds free classes in East Finchley? The courses are ideal for adults who want to return to learning after a break and can help you to gain confidence and boost your skills.

Classes are designed to provide chances for further study and to increase your job opportunities. They are informal and welcoming with friendly and experienced teachers. Subjects include Improving Your Maths and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

All the community courses are free and are for a few hours each week, normally during school hours. They are held at local and convenient venues.

This September they will be at The Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale, and the Grange Community Flat on the Grange Estate.

If you are interested or would like to have a chat about what's on offer contact the course organisers Jan Brennan on 020 8266 4284, Janine Casey on 020 8266 4339 or Sally Holder on 020 8266 4021. They advise that there may be a high demand for places.

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