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THE ARCHER



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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Balls up: not for this juggler. Photo by John Lawrence

Feel-good festival

By David Melsome

Congratulations to all the festival organisers, all the volunteers, all the stall holders and all the performers who made this year's East Finchley Community Festival one of the best ever.

The feel-good factor in Cherry Tree Wood was sky high all day on Sunday 24 June as hundreds of people flooded in to enjoy live music, superb food and drink, and an amazing array of attractions.

The Archer team was there to capture the fun. See our pick of the best pictures from the day on page 6.

"There's nothing like this festival anywhere else," "Everyone I know is here" and "Everyone's smiling" were some of the comments from visitors that summed up the atmosphere of the event.

Soaking up the sun wasn't really an option on the day so instead festival goers soaked up some excellent performances from truly talented local bands on the main stage, impeccably hosted as always by Antigua Joe, and from some brilliant musicians, singers and dancers on the community stage.

Must-have purchases of the day were the new 'I♥N2' shirts and badges, and a fantastic new addition to the festival was the Phoenix Cinema film tent showing an intriguing range

of short films and features in carpeted comfort.

London's deputy mayor Nicky Gavron, who lives in Highgate, opened the festival by saying it was the kind of community event that made London a great place to live. Her remarks were echoed by East Finchley's Councillor Alison Moore who said it was an example of everyone in the community coming together to stage something unique.

Alongside the entertainment and refreshment, there were stalls giving visitors a chance to learn more about local organisations and the wealth of charities and services that exist in East Finchley to make life better for those in need.

Tell us what you thought of the festival. Email the-archer@lineone.net or write to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA.

Strawberry Vale man wins award

A crusade to clean up the Strawberry Vale estate has won plaudits and an award for one young man.

Vidura Cetrulo was given a Community Recognition Award as part of the Barnet Voluntary Service Council Environment Competition.

The judges said that it was always heartening when an individual emerged with a practical idea and the determination to see it through.

Vidura, who is autistic and needs the support of a carer, decided to launch the Strawberry Vale Clean Up Project and went around clearing up the litter that was accumulating on the estate.

Although he and his mother have recently moved to East Barnet, the judges hoped he would want to continue his good work.

Bus robbers arrested

Two young men were attacked by a gang on a route 102 bus in The Bishops Avenue. The incident happened on Saturday 2 June at around 8:30pm.

The men demanded the victims' phones and other property, claiming they had weapons.

When the gang transferred to another bus bound for Golders Green bus station, police intercepted it and arrested eight suspects. Phones, drugs and property directly linked to the robbery were recovered.

This was the first occasion where the Metropolitan Police Special Constabulary worked directly with Barnet's Safer

Transport Team on joint patrol at weekends.

All the suspects have been bailed to return to police. Any witnesses are asked to contact the Robbery Squad at Colindale Police station on 020 8200 1212.

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Comments to THE ARCHER may be
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USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Councils

Barnet Council:

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

Leisure

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

Transport

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

Hospitals

Barnet General 020 8216 4000
Coppetts Wood 020 8883 9792
Finchley Memorial 020 8349 7500
Oak Lane Clinic 020 8346 9343
Royal Free 020 7794 0500
St Luke's 020 8219 1800
Whittington 020 7272 3070

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AIDSline 020 8363 2141
Alcoholics Anonymous 0845 7697555
Barnet MENCAP 020 8203 6688
Cancer Support 020 8202 2211
Carers' Line 0808 808 7777
Drinkline 0800 917 8282
Drugs Helpline 0800 776600
Health Info Service 0800 665544
MIND 020 8343 5700

OAP's Advice

Barnet Age Concern 020 8346 3511
Contact (N2) 020 8444 1162

Help the Aged 0808 800 6565

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Emergency 999
Finchley Police 020 8442 1212
Mus. Hill Police Stn. 020 8345 2148
CrimeStoppers 0800 555111
Victim Support 0845 303 0900
East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood
Team 020 7161 9014

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Disability Info Service 020 8446 6935
E.F. Advice Service 020 8444 6265
Gingerbread 020 8445 4227
National Debt Line 0808 808 4000
NSPCC 0800 800500
Rape & Sexual Abuse 020 8683 3300
Relate 020 8447 8101
RSPCA Inspector 08705 555 999
Samaritans 08457 909090
Refuge Crisis Line 0870 599 5443



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Councillors' Surgery.

Saturdays: 10am - 11.30am

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❖ Careers advice, Green Man, Com-
munity Centre 020 8883 4916
❖ Toy library, Muswell Hill 020
8444 0244/ 8489 8774

Phoenix Cinema: first the bad news ...

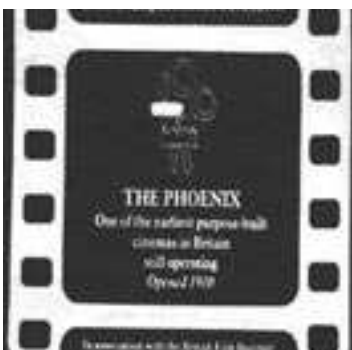
By John Dearing

The Phoenix Cinema has recently been a victim of crime. The British Film Institute Cinema 100 Plaque, which adorned the wall to the left of the entrance, has been stolen in the last month, to the bewilderment of the people who run the cinema.

It was unveiled on 15 September 1996 by the late Bill Owen, star of BBC sitcom Last of the Summer Wine, and reads: 'The Phoenix. One of the earliest purpose-built cinemas in Britain still operating. Opened 1910'. It marked the official celebration of this lovely listed building and was a vital part of its external appearance.

Paul Homer, manager of the Phoenix, said: "We are amazed that anyone would have an interest in it, outside cinematic circles, and saddened that it has been stolen. We would like it back very much."

If anyone has any knowledge of the whereabouts of the plaque, please get in touch with Paul on 020 8442 0442 so it can be returned to where it belongs.



And now the good news...

The Phoenix was pleasantly surprised in May to receive a very generous charitable donation of £10,000. Although the benefactors wish to remain anonymous they have been going to The Phoenix since they were young.

The donation will go towards the improvement of the foyer and other long-term development, as well as some essential behind-the-scenes work.

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Stations to lose ticket offices

Three stations on our branch of the Northern line are to lose their ticket offices. Mill Hill East, Totteridge and Whetstone and West Finchley will no longer have staff selling tickets from March next year.

TfL is closing 40 such offices across the network, saying the majority of passengers now use automated ticket machines or pre-pay Oyster cards.

Critics of the closures say they will leave travellers with no one to turn to if they have a problem with their ticket or fare.

Don't be this week's lucky dip

Barnet Police have warned residents always to be on their guard against pick-pockets. Their advice is never to leave your purse or wallet on show and never leave bags unzipped or open while they're over your shoulder.

The warning comes after two women were charged with theft after allegedly stealing a purse from a woman in the Tally Ho area of North Finchley early last month. The pair were due to appear in court later in June.

Planning Applications

Barnet Council

42 Bedford Road, N2
Single storey rear/side conservatory.
12 Deansway, N2
New side hipped roof and rear dormer.
1 Devon Rise, N2
Ground floor front infill extension.
11 Greenhalgh Walk, N2
Alterations to roof including side dormer window and roof lights to facilitate a loft conversion.
9 Edmunds Walk, N2
Single storey rear extension, enlargement of patio, replacement pond. Installation of two roof lights to facilitate a loft conversion. Alterations to windows and doors on side and rear elevations.
411 Great North Road (Cherry Tree Hill), N2
Change of use from petrol station to office at ground floor level (B1 use) and nine residential flats including the erection of a ground plus three storey building with 15 car parking spaces, together with associated access, landscaping and amenity space.
19 Gurney Drive, N2
Single storey rear extension including altering first floor door to a window.
29 Gurney Drive, N2
Loft conversion and roof extension to include rear dormer and roof light.
31 Gurney Drive, N2
New crossover. Removal of shrubs to create hardstanding and rearrangement of front garden for parking car. Side and rear extension. Loft conversion and roof extension to include rear dormer and roof light.
10 Totnes Walk, N2
Rear extension and dormer window. Alteration to roof light.

Haringey Council

Clissold Arms, 105 Fortis Green N2
Erection of side extension, new adjacent doors and window to new garden area.
188 Creighton Avenue N2
Erection of single storey front and rear extensions, and erection of rear dormer window with side and front velux skylights. Erection of additional first floor and extension at ground floor level to existing building. Conversion of garage to habitable living space. Alterations to elevations (Revised scheme 22)
22 Fordington Road N6
Erection of rear dormer window to rear section of side roof.
72 Great North Road N2
Creation of vehicle crossover to a classified road.
3 Ringwood Avenue N2
Erection of two front dormer windows and one ground floor front bay window.
Land between 72 & 74 Twyford Avenue N2
Residential development comprising nine units to include four three-storey five-bed, four part one, part three-storey five-bed and one two-storey four-bed dwellings. Provision of one tennis court and one pavilion to rear of site (amended scheme).
Flat 8, Whittington Court, Aylmer Road N2
Replacement of existing windows with double-glazed UPVC windows.
Flat 16 Whittington Court, Aylmer Road N2
Replacement of existing wooden windows with UPVC double glazed windows.



Green fingered volunteers needed for parks scheme

Barnet Council is looking to reinvigorate its tree warden scheme to create a new army of volunteers to plant and maintain areas of community woodland in Barnet parks and open spaces.

As part of a four-year plan for local open spaces, sections of 20 Barnet parks have been earmarked for conversion into 'semi-natural' meadowland, including Lyttelton Playing Fields, off Lyttelton Road.

The council is hoping to find a group of tree warden volunteers for each park to help shape them as community woodland areas.

Barnet has been involved in the tree warden scheme for more than ten years. However, numbers are said to have dwindle

over the years and the council is hoping more people will now get involved.

Councillor Matthew Offord, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, said: "Being a tree warden can be incredibly rewarding and is an easy and practical way to be 'green' and play a small part in tackling climate change."

To find out more about being a tree warden, call 020 8359 7838.

Also, see Letters, page 11.

A sign of the times

By Diana Cormack

At the recent launch of CCTV cameras in East Finchley, Councillor Brian Coleman (Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Community Safety) said: "The roll-out of another batch of CCTV cameras will send out a clear message to those engaged in anti-social behaviour and street crime. If you break the law in Barnet, you will be caught on camera."

Not everyone was listening or maybe they just didn't agree, for on the CCTV warning notice opposite the tube station someone has clambered up to write the comment "U wish". THE ARCHER wonders if they were caught on camera?



This says it all! Photo by Diana Cormack

Donkeys return for Muswell Hill Festival

Cherry Tree Wood will again host the Muswell Hill Festival which this year takes place on Sunday 16 September from 12 - 6pm.

The 31st festival will be heralded the day before in Muswell Hill Broadway, with an invasion of parachuting teddy bears, launched from the roof of St. James's Church.

On the day itself, there will be the usual Donkey Derby and dog show in Cherry Tree Wood, along with several well-known music and dance groups, plus a number of north London craftspeople.

Organisers are looking for

local businesses to sponsor a donkey and provide jockeys to race. There is also an urgent need for general sponsors and advertisers, along with volunteers and stallholders to run the event.

Anyone who would like to help should contact Alison Wynn on 020 7183 3832 or mobile 07808 364033. All proceeds from the festival will go to the Hornsey Trust for children with cerebral palsy and their educational services.



Above: Tonia and instructor Steve about to leave the plane - and right: in flight



Tonia falls from 10,000ft

By Daphne Chamberlain

Customers of TD Hair Designers will recognise Tonia, photographed on her way to raising £400 for Noah's Ark Children's Hospice. It was her first parachute jump, but those folded hands in the first picture are not clasped in prayer. She was just getting into the right position.

"You have to keep your hands in front of your chest, your eyes closed and your head back as you leave the plane. Otherwise you can go into a tailspin," she said. "When you're clear, you bring up your arms on either side."

Leaving the plane was what she had feared most, but after hanging about for over eight hours waiting for clouds to lift, she just wanted to get on with it. "Once I was out of the plane it was freezing cold and so windy I couldn't hear anything, and my mouth dried up completely.

We came down from 10,000 feet at 120mph, and the parachute opened at 5,000 feet. When the chute opened, we slowed down and I could look around. That was great."

Tonia was one of about 15 brave souls who made the jump, for various charities or just for fun, at the North London Parachute Centre in Cambridgeshire. She jumped with instructor Steve, who reassured her that all would not be lost if he blacked out. In an emergency, an automatic

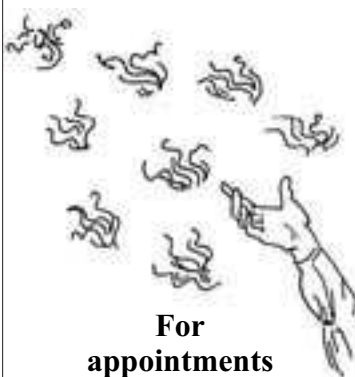
sensor on his belt should open the parachute. Would she do it again? "Yes, I think I probably would."

Tonia chose to jump for Noah's Ark because it's a children's charity, and also a local one, which doesn't get as much publicity as some others. It is dedicated to establishing a hospice service for children with life-limiting conditions in North London and South Hertfordshire. For further information, visit www.noahsarkhospice.org.uk.

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Child receiving Bobath therapy. Picture courtesy of Bobath Centre.

Bobath is centre of excellence

By Ellen Galloway

This year the Bobath Centre on East End Road celebrates its 50th anniversary. The Centre, which moved to its present site in 1991, treats 300 children and 50 adults with cerebral palsy every year.

Founders Mrs Berta Bobath and Dr Karel Bobath grew up in Berlin where Berta trained as a gymnast and Karel as a doctor before fleeing Germany for England in the 1930s. Here they began developing what is known as 'Bobath therapy', now world-famous. The Centre still develops their ideas today through research, treating patients and running training courses for already qualified therapists.

It takes around six years to become a Bobath expert. As Kevin Gillespie, the fundraising manager in East Finchley, points out, it is a long-term commitment. He says: "You become a Bobath therapist for life; you don't just dip in and out."

Chris Barber, a leading therapist at the Centre, worked with the Bobaths and is equally at home treating children or adults. She also travels the world lecturing on Bobath therapy.

Costly one-to-one treatment

The permanent brain damage caused by cerebral

palsy affects children in many different ways. Therapy at the Bobath is on a one-to-one basis, helping children with everyday tasks. Physiotherapy helps strengthen or loosen muscles to ensure balanced development, and speech and language therapy with specialist equipment is available.

Once a patient is referred to the Bobath by their GP there is an initial assessment lasting two weeks. Even after a subsidy of £15 per session this block of 30 sessions still costs £3,300.

The centre costs around £1.2 million a year to run. So every year it needs to raise around £200,000 in order to subsidise treatment.

The Bobath sees itself as part of our community and treats many people from the local area. One of its major fundraising events this year is a children's Big Fun Run and family entertainment taking place in Cherry Tree Wood on 8 July.

For more information on the Centre, visit www.bobathlondon.co.uk.

Free pet services at RSPCA

By Caroline Broome

If your dog needs neutering and you have been putting it off because you are on benefits and are concerned about the cost, stop worrying and act now. You can take your dog along to the RSPCA Small Animal Clinic in East Finchley and get a voucher entitling your dog to a free neutering or spaying operation at selected local vets.

Summer is also the time to look out for fleas on your pets. To stop major infestations taking hold, visit the clinic for subsidised flea control treatments from a professional vet.

RSPCA Small Animal Clinic is located in Park Road and opening times are Mondays and Thursdays 6.30pm - 7.30pm. You can also telephone the clinic for advice on 020 8365 3910 during opening hours.

On Saturday 7 July the clinic team will be running a stall at the annual Finchley Carnival in Victoria Park N3, where they will be selling soft toys, paperbacks and bric-a-brac to raise funds.

In the case of an animal emergency contact RSPCA Harmsworth Hospital on 020 7272 6214.

Top of the crops

Hairdressing salon 202 has been recognised for the high quality of training it provides. A certificate of merit awarded by the London Borough of Enfield "for providing training and support for learners working towards a work based learning qualification with Enfield Training Services" is on display in the window at 202 High Road.

Kelly Leach, creative director at the salon, told *THE ARCHER* that they had received it ahead of hairdressing chains prominent in the district. She also said that they are looking to recruit youngsters of 16 and over who want to become hairstylists. You can find out more by phoning the salon on 020 8444 3384.

Did you know...?

'Restaurant' is the most mis-spelled word in online search engines.

How to recycle when you live in a flat

By Daphne Chamberlain

Barnet residents have been praised for their recycling efforts by Councillor Matthew Offord, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport. He has also said that the task is to get the message across to people who live in flats, encouraging them to recycle as much as those living in houses. Flat-dwellers, however, argue that most of them have got the message, but it is still harder for anyone living in a block to recycle than it is for their neighbours in houses. Throughout the borough, one in 10 blocks are still without either black boxes or communal bins.

Barnet Council told *THE ARCHER* that all Barnet Homes (in other words, those managed by the council) that can accommodate recycling facilities now have them. There are various reasons why some blocks do not have communal facilities. Lack of space is the most common, though a Barnet spokesperson said they always try to find a solution.

Even in blocks with communal bins, a common complaint is that they are either too small or too few. In addition, they will take only paper, cans and glass. So, unlike black box owners, flat-dwellers with communal facilities have to take other recyclable materials to public bins or the council dump.

This winter, the council commissioned teams of recycling promoters to visit more than 15,000 flats with communal recycling bins, offering information leaflets and free reusable bags for storing recyclable items.

Registering for a box

Individual flat-dwellers without communal bins can register, free of charge, for their own black box. This can be put outside in a suitable spot for collection. However, that scheme will only be operated if there are no more than 12 flats in a block.

You can register your flat by calling 020 8371 3670 or email barnet@ectrecycling.co.uk. For general recycling enquiries, call 020 8359 7400.

Shop smartly and reduce your waste

On average you produce your own weight in rubbish every seven weeks but avoiding unnecessary packaging can be difficult.

The good news is that there are really simple ways of reducing that waste. Barnet Council has created a list of ten steps to smart shopping that everybody can practise.

- Step 1: Take your own material or reusable bags to the shops.
- Step 2: Choose products according to their packaging, in the following order: no packaging e.g. loose fruit and vegetables; made of cardboard or sustainable materials; plastics as a last resort. Ideally, you should avoid buying individually wrapped and packaged products.
- Step 3: Choose refills, products that can be reused and concentrates; buy in bulk, as this can give you more product for the amount of packaging.
- Step 4: Buy energy efficient light bulbs and rechargeable batteries. This saves money in the long term and is better for the environment.
- Step 5: Sign up to a vegetable box service. It's affordable, uses

no packaging and is delivered to your door.

- Step 6: Have your milk delivered to your doorstep. This will reduce the amount of plastic waste that you create. To find a milkman in your area write to 'Find a milk man', 93 Baker Street, London W1U 6QQ stating your name, address and postcode, or email these details to info@dairyuk.org.
- Step 7: Buy products that will last and are made of recycled or sustainable materials.
- Step 8: Avoid buying disposable items e.g. paper napkins and plastic cups. Use reusable cups and cloth towels and napkins.
- Step 9: Buy a lunch box or, better still, reuse a plastic container.
- Step 10: Ask store managers to stock products with minimal packaging, paper bags and a good selection of loose fruit and vegetables. Tell them if you think a product has been over packaged.

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ALL WELCOME



Grand challenge for leukaemia

By Sue Holliday

It was like a breath of fresh air when I heard about three young ladies setting themselves a challenge and it certainly renewed my faith in the younger generation.

Rachael Finn, Elena Vasilious and Jude Fung, all 26, have been friends since meeting at Fortismere School when they were 11. Now they are setting out to raise £10,000 for the Leukaemia Society UK by walking 60 miles through the Grand Canyon.

The idea came from another fund raising event they took part in. It made them want to keep fit and do something worthwhile with their spare time.



L-R: Jude, Elena and Rachael

They told me they had not realised it would take up so much time or be quite so difficult, but they have learnt new skills just trying to raise money, such as event management and marketing.

Their Grand Canyon trek will be no holiday as they will be experiencing extreme

weather and walking over difficult terrain, sometimes at high altitude.

Events they have organised to fund their challenge include a car boot sale, paint balling, packing bags at the checkout in Sainsbury's, to name just a few. Still to come are a five-a-side football tournament, a horse racing night, a murder mystery event and an Ebay sale.

To give a donation or find out more about this enterprise visit their website at www.tengrandcanyon.com.



Deb Pothan prepares to say goodbye to the children of Holy Trinity. Photo by Mark Franklin.

Happy memories of Holy Trinity

By Rebecca Kellaway

After six years at Holy Trinity School, deputy head teacher Deb Pothan is saying a sad farewell to pupils, staff and parents, as she and her family prepare to move to Chelmsford, Essex.

She said: "It has been a wonderful time for me. The staff are amazing and the most hard working bunch I have ever worked with, the kids are really fab and I have good relationships with the parents. I will miss everything about Holy Trinity."

Mrs Pothan arrived at Holy Trinity in September 2001 only expecting to do one term's supply cover in the Reception class. One term turned into another and when a permanent job came up she applied and was appointed.

Since then she has taught throughout the infants with particular responsibility for numeracy and religious education. It was just after she

was appointed deputy head in the autumn of 2005 that the school received an "outstanding" grade in their section 48 religious inspection.

Head teacher Tim Bowden said: "Deb is an outstanding teacher and deputy head. She has been a fantastic support to me and to her colleagues. Her enthusiasm is legendary and she has a real gift to inspire each and every child."

Children's tributes

While she will be missed by the whole school community, most of all she'll be missed by the children. Here are their favourite memories:

Sam Mugridge, nine, said: "She is always in a good mood, she is enthusiastic about everything, she made me laugh."

Joe Lawrence, seven: "She does good impressions and she's the best storyteller, even when she's read the book hundreds of times before."

Georgia Hunt, five: "Sometimes when she's doing the register and drops her pen she calls herself a silly billy. That makes us laugh."

Alice Chapman, seven: "I liked being in Reception with Mrs Pothan, we did lots of fun activities."

William Chapman, six: "Mrs Pothan is a very jolly teacher"

Lois Lawrence, 10: "She is a wicked drawer and can draw cartoons of any animals you want. She's especially good at cats."

This summer the Pothan family are moving to Chelmsford where Mrs Pothan's husband, Father Simon, has been appointed Canon Precentor, which gives him responsibility for music at Chelmsford Cathedral.

Mrs Pothan will be saying farewell to the whole school community at a special assembly and coffee afternoon in July.

Did you know?

If there are no copies of the Metro left at the High Road entrance to East Finchley tube station in the morning, take a look at the newspaper vendor's stall. He sometimes has a pile of them at the far end of his table. They are usually stashed upside down or with a few copies of another paper stacked over them.

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Party in the park

The East Finchley Community Festival in Cherry Tree Wood on Sunday 24 June was a massive success. Hundreds of people flooded into the park as soon as the event kicked off at 12pm and, despite the uncertain weather, hundreds more were still there six hours later enjoying everything the festival had to offer.

THE ARCHER's photographic team were there throughout the day. Here's our selection of some of the sights that made it such a fun festival.



Above: A little bit of rain didn't dampen the festival spirit.
Photo by Toni Morgan



Above: The parade arrives.
Below: A performance by Symphonic Wind Orchestra of North London (SWON). Photos by Toni Morgan



Above left: A magnificent totem pole painted and constructed using cardboard boxes by visitors to the Community Focus art tent. Above right: Vermin control on Holy Trinity School's Bash the Rat game
Below: A chance to practise tai chi amongst the festival mayhem. Photos by John Lawrence



Left: Antiqua Joe in fine form - photo by Toni Morgan.
Above Martin O'Donnell with N2's most desirable item of clothing - photo by Sarah Conway.
Below left: Fun for the kids - photo by Sarah Conway.
Below right: London's deputy mayor Nicky Gavron kicks off the day on the community stage - photo by John Lawrence

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Feis-ty dance festival

By Ellen Galloway

For the second year running, Bishop Douglass RC School has hosted a major Irish dancing competition. Around 1,000 girls and boys, including three world champions, competed on four dance floors in the school's sports hall on 9 - 10 June.

The Seamus and Marie Moore Memorial Feis was organised by John and Phyllis Brooks, of the Brooks Irish Dance Academy. Accompanied by

pianists and accordion players, dancers competed in front of a panel of three judges.

Eight adjudicators were present in total, among them Kevin McCormack from the show *Riverdance*, and John Brooks' son Kevin, who for seven years also toured with the show.

John Brooks is proud of how Irish dance has moved with the times and said: "As with any discipline you have to have a proper costume." Clearly a lot of work goes into the eye-catching dresses worn by female



Irish Dancers. Photo by Ellen Galloway.

competitors. One elaborately embroidered second-hand outfit was advertised for sale at £550.

There is no lower age limit for the competition, with the youngest age group aimed at the under sixes, but contestants have to train hard. Some children train for 10 hours a week to achieve the standard seen in the contest, which is perhaps why this particular event has steadily grown in popularity and is now an established event in the Irish Dancing calendar.

Phoenix in June

By Paul Homer, manager of the Phoenix Cinema.

July seems to be European month at the Phoenix. We kick off with *The Golden Door*, an Italian film about a family leaving home to seek a better life in the New World. It premiered at Venice this year and should be one of the must-see films of the year.

While there have been many American films about the rise of Italian culture in the States, mainly from a gangster perspective, this is one of the first to look at it from the Italian side without the romanticising that is all too common and frustrating.

We're showing the biopic of Edith Piaf *La Vie En Rose* from 6 July, an unflinching portrait of her incredible and troubled life. To coincide with the film an accordion player will be hanging round the cinema for a couple of days, so keep an eye out for that.

Moliere comes to the Phoenix on 13 July, an account of what he was up to when he mysteriously disappeared for a few weeks in 1645. Moliere comes across as a wonderfully witty and handsome man, very much the toast of French society, in a great performance by Romain Duris. You may have seen him in *The Beat That My Heart Skipped*, so popular with Phoenix audiences early last year.

Finally in July we play *Private Fears in Public Places*, based on the Alan Ayckbourn play but with a Gallic twist.

Look out also for a special event on 29 July when we'll be debating the erosion of human rights in the UK and the worldwide decline of democracy in a talk accompanying the double bill of *Taking Liberties* and *The War on Democracy*.

Contact our box office on 020 8444 6789 or visit www.phoenixcinema.co.uk.

A real page-turner

By Andy Shirlaw

At last, East Finchley has an independent bookshop again. Black Gull, on the High Road, will have its formal launch party early in July, having already received a warm welcome.

Chris Overfield, the owner, has been in the book business for 30 years. He started with a stall in Camden market and has a shop at the West Yard, Camden Lock, which is also open seven days a week.

Chris looked at various locations for the new shop but he said that East Finchley had more of a community feel to it and he had never before experienced this kind of enthusiasm and support. He said: "I prefer the feel of East Finchley to Muswell Hill as the Broadway is very homogenised."

Chris also plans to showcase artists' work starting with architect David Wild, who has a passion for Russian constructivist collages, and Merrill Rauch, who creates surreal assemblages of disparate objects.

Black Gull will have storytelling sessions for children on Sunday afternoons and a book club on a weekday evening,

as well as book launches. Chris will be assisted by his partner Janna Overfield, Brian Schwartz and Jean Hart.

Chris said: "We get a lot of books from house clearances and we get calls from people when they are moving; that is a good source for us. What we are trying to do is sell interesting books which have an intrinsic value."

Black Gull has antiquarian books dating back to the 17th century, signed books and rare or first editions. You could spend hours browsing and would surely discover several gems amongst the thousands of books.

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It takes 75kg of raw materials to make a mobile phone.

Young cricketers live locally

By Diana Cormack

One of the most notable results in the Cricket World Cup, which took place in the West Indies earlier this year, was Pakistan's defeat at the hands of Ireland on St Patrick's Day. Though not usually noted for its cricketing prowess, Ireland has some young players of great potential and two of them are living in East Finchley.

Until the end of the season they are renting a house just a stone's throw from the Middlesex Cricket Academy in East End Road. Though they occasionally train there, they are more likely to be found in the nets at Lord's, the world famous home of Marylebone Cricket Club.

Twenty-one year old Eoin Morgan, born in Dublin, and twenty-two year old William Porterfield, born in Derry, opened the batting for Ireland. Both these left-handed batsmen play for Middlesex.

They share the house with another cricketer, twenty-two year old Shaun O'Brien, who plays for Marylebone and is training to play for Middlesex. Shaun was born in Liverpool but, as his parents now live in New Zealand, he escapes the English winter by spending the time playing cricket over there.

Who knows, one day these three talented players might be selected for the England squad.

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Molly makes an outstanding pupil

By Helen Drake

“Surprised, happy and a bit shocked” was the reaction of Martin Junior School pupil Molly Hogan when she was announced as the 2007 winner of the Lynn Cornelius Award for Outstanding Achievement at a special assembly on Friday 8 June.

Headteacher Maggie Driscoll, said that Molly had been chosen by the staff to receive the prize because she “personifies the values of Martin School” and explained: “Molly strives for excellence in all areas; she is a great sportswoman but can also take losing; she’s a good friend and is considerate; she has brilliant manners and is reliable and conscientious”.

Molly, who will be start-

ing at The Latymer School in September, was presented with her trophy by last year’s winner Susannah Fleiss, who is also now at Latymer, and Robert Winton, ex-parent and current Secretary of the Finchley Society, who has sponsored the Award.

Pupils in the audience were left with this thought: next year, do your best, and it could be you.



Molly Hogan, the 2007 winner of the Lynn Cornelius Award for Outstanding Achievement with her trophy. Picture by Helen Drake.

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Junior bookworms run wild

Is your child a keen reader who loves books? If the answer's yes or you simply want a good day out, why not go along to The Big Wild Read, the UK's largest promotion of children's reading, happening in East Finchley Library and across the borough this summer.

During the summer holidays, children are being asked to take on the challenge and read six books by different authors.

There are great incentives and rewards, including certificates and medals, free DVD loans and a big finale prize draw. For those who like an extra challenge there's the

Mega Wild Read that includes writing six reviews.

However, no one will leave empty handed and for those who can't manage six books there are rewards for everyone who reads two or more.

This year's challenge will also run in conjunction with a range of supporting activities on wildlife, including seed plant-



Summer Reading at Barnet Libraries. Picture courtesy London Borough of Barnet

ing, games and art activities, so it truly is a fun day out for children of all ages.

Children can register free for The Big Wild Read at any Barnet library from 14 July. For more information on East Finchley's activities, contact our local library on 020 8359 3815.

Seen but not heard

By Sheila Armstrong

On 5 June, the Phoenix Cinema hosted the screening of a unique film made by youngsters from the Thomas More Estate, East Finchley.

The film allowed them to voice their frustrations about the lack of play facilities in the area and complaints about antisocial behaviour. The young people concerned have deservedly been awarded Bronze Youth Achievement Awards accredited by UK Youth.

The community regeneration team of Servite Housing, who manage the estate, was a driving force behind this innovative venture in which young people scripted, shot and acted in the 16-minute film.

It attempted to put across the viewpoint of the youngsters on the estate and hopes to be a vehicle for the start of a dialogue with others concerned.

Nothing to do, nowhere to go

Residents, Safer Neighbourhood Scheme members, representatives from Servite Housing and others interested in provision of facilities for young people in the borough were present at the screening.

During the Q and A afterwards all sides exchanged views, so beginning, it is hoped, discussions about improving the diminishing provision for young people in the borough and East Finchley in particular.

Several local residents tackled Servite about the sale of the estate's community centre to the HGS Institute some years ago. The building is now for sale again as the Institute have recently vacated it and moved to their new building in the heart of East Finchley.

Talking to *THE ARCHER* afterwards, Dadia Conte, from Barnet Voluntary Service Council, expressed a willingness to help by offering the mobile youth facility Rolling Base.

Issues were aired but not resolved; all seemed agreed, however, that everyone should be involved in any future discussions and that the film screening was a good starting point.

Spiderama
by Ashley



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Bishop Douglass aims for respect

By Diana Cormack

Respect was the theme of this year's activity week at Bishop Douglass School. Students from Years 7, 8 and 9 were able to select from a wide range of events both on and off site organised by head teacher Angela Murphy, deputy head Deborah Henderson, head of PE Steve O'Brien and head of Art Andy Fyfe.

Activities on site at the school in Hamilton Road included art, dance, drama, film, business enterprise, technology, website design and producing a newspaper to report on the week's events.

Off-site ventures offered Year 7 three days in Paris, Year 8 a week in Prague and Year 9 a week in Paris. Nearer to home, some Year 8 and 9 students spent a week biking in Hertfordshire. There was a sports-based afternoon when archery, bowling, golf, ice-skating, rock climbing and swimming were available.

To finish the week, Friday's special assembly had the theme of respect and celebrated all that had been achieved. Judging by some good feedback from outside the school, pupils made a positive impact as well as benefiting from their experiences. Staff feel it was a real success and look forward to next year, when they hope to increase the number of activities and have more of a community-based project.

**KALASHNIKOV KULTUR**

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

The ageing of rock

Welcome to rock without the roll, welcome to the new age of caring, sharing soft and cuddly nostalgia. Welcome to Spinal Tap meets Time Team, welcome to the seven ageing rockers, packaged, explained and gift wrapped for *The Seven Ages of Rock* on BBC2 on Saturday nights. Or, to put it another way, rock is dead.

Every time someone decides to turn rock'n'roll into the new history they end up removing anything exciting and unpredictable and producing a bland mixture of talking heads and film clips. So you get old men reminiscing about their dangerous youth and some professor of applied narcotics trying to analyse it to death.

They started with Jimi Hendrix, but it was hard to recognise Jimi from the ponderously reverential race through the life and career. It tried to explain the unexplainable and ended up missing the point. Hendrix was exciting because London had seen nothing like him before. He was the real deal, a black American blues guitarist pushing the limits that Brits like Eric Clapton were trying to find. He was exotic, cool and exciting, unlike the programme which was simple and dull.

As the hot air brigade dragged their way through the rest of British rock they did the same thing to punk and heavy metal and Bowie. It was remake and remodel time, the same clips of Johnny Rotten, the same disconnected slices of Bowie and the same drug crazed stories of Ozzy Osborne snorting his own weight in cocaine. Each week they got closer to today and closer to parody. It's like they never realised that Spinal Tap was meant to be funny, and if they did, they still missed the point.

But maybe that is the point; maybe all they were trying to do is give people too bored to bother going out to find something new a safely sanitised way of spending Saturday night. Maybe they are just incompetent. After all, there are hardly any rockumentaries that get it right but, if you want to see it done properly, go and see Julian Temple's film about Joe Strummer, *The Future is Unwritten*, because that makes as much sense as rock'n'roll ever needs to make.

Brush with Goldfinger

By Janet Maitland

Urban legend has it that Goldfinger, the notorious James Bond villain, is named after the Modernist architect Erno Goldfinger. Bond author Ian Fleming was one of the Hampstead locals who protested in vain when Goldfinger proposed demolishing a row of Georgian cottages to build his state-of-the-art house in the 1930s.

The house in Willow Road is now owned by the National Trust and is protected, like all its properties, "for ever, for everyone".

This was just one of the surprises to emerge at a presentation by Mike Watts to the Finchley Society on 31 May uncovering the secrets of the many National Trust properties in London.

The Trust is most often associated with opulent stately homes in the countryside. However, many of its London properties are small and quirky, such as the George Inn in Southwark, the last remaining galleried inn, and the "Roman" bath in Strand Lane, a workplace for prostitutes in the 18th century.

Some of the houses are even quite homely. Thomas Carlyle's house in Chelsea, for example, still contains the sofa his wife Jane bought second hand for £5. By contrast, Osterley House in Isleworth is a voluptuous monument to conspicuous consumption. Originally a modest Elizabethan house, the makeover by Robert Adam in the 18th century ensured that every overblown feature is startlingly impressive.

Mike Watts told his audience that the Trust believes in a "dialogue between past, present and future", each generation giving its own meanings to historic houses.

Friends open precious boutique

By Diana Cormack

Having moved into Creighton Avenue at the age of 12, Martha Behiri describes herself as an East Finchley girl. Though she continued her education in a neighbouring borough, her own children have been brought up and educated locally. Now they are older, Martha has taken the plunge and changed her occupation to something that has interested her for many years.

Twenty-seven of those years were spent working at managerial level for a building society, but last October Martha joined forces with her friend Dia Anastasi to find suitable premises for a fashion boutique. By chance they discovered that the tailor at 27 Fortis Green Road (next to the Children's Book Shop) was closing and launched their business there in May.

Though small, the shop's design and décor have been meticulously planned to maximise its potential. Clever use of lighting, and mirrors make it feel spacious and airy.

The name of the boutique, *Aziza*, comes from Dia's country of birth and in Swahili means "precious". This is how they want their customers to feel so they have selected finely crafted couture pieces from around the world, putting great emphasis on how the garments are displayed. On the home front, they also stock bustiers made by one of England's few remaining companies, Vollers of Portsmouth.

Aziza aims to provide exciting and glamorous evening wear and to be a place where "every woman will find a piece to make her feel special at any celebratory event". They also offer a free dress-finding service. Opening times are daily from 10.30am - 5.30pm and on Sundays from 11.30am - 4.30pm. Call 020 8444 5007 for details.



Martha Behiri in Aziza. Photo by Diana Cormack

Suburb celebrates 100 years

By Daphne Chamberlain

A good crowd enjoyed a sunny Sunday afternoon in Central Square to celebrate the centenary of Hampstead Garden Suburb.

The Henrietta Barnett School Big Band started off proceedings with a swing and a guest saxophonist for *In the Mood*, none other than Suburb resident Professor Robert Winston.

There were gleaming vintage cars, Henrietta Barnett roses, a Punch and Judy show, prize-winning scarecrows, food stalls and an exhibition in the Free Church detailing the growth of the Suburb.

This stressed Henrietta Barnett's concern that town planning should be for everyone in society, including children, the elderly, the sick and handicapped, the poor and "the naughty".

This wasn't a festival. It was what it set out to be: a relaxing picnic, on the grass and around tables, with neighbours chatting together. Henrietta would have approved of that.

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- ❖ **Friends of Cherry Tree Wood.** Visit info@cherrytreewood.co.uk or call 020 8883 7544.
- ❖ **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.



Youth Music Centre of Hampstead Garden Suburb about to give one of their prize winning performances. Picture courtesy North London Festival.

Scintillating Festival of Music

By Betti Blatman

Young musical talent was on show at the North London Festival of Music, Drama and Dance. During April and May, competitions were held for piano, singing, instrumental, speech and drama culminating in the Prizewinners' Concert on 20 May at the United Reformed Church in Muswell Hill.

The Festival is well known for its high standards. One contestant, Lisa Akhmetova, 12, came all the way from Barcelona "as it had been highly recommended".

This is the third Festival I have attended and once again I was delighted by the performances of the Nakata sisters, Makoto, 13, on violin and Asagi, 12, on piano.

The winners of certain

classes during the course of the Festival are recommended to compete for the President's Prize. Adjudicators Hilary Stuart and Timothy Barratt were highly impressed with the splendid pieces of music. They presented first prize to Joo Yeon Sir, playing Waxman's *Carmen Fantasie* on violin and commented that, although a difficult piece, every musical detail was beautifully played.

Second prize went to Asagi Nakata playing JS Bach's *Sarabande (French Suite)* and Chabrier's *Danse Villageoise* on piano. Her playing was described as sounding like an orchestra.

Additional prizes went to Nathalie Chalkley, soprano, and Alan Chu, piano.

Lynne Featherstone, MP for Hornsey and Wood Green, presented the awards. She said this was her first invitation to the Festival and she was thrilled with the talent on display, which raised the profile of classical music. She praised parents' encouragement, teachers, accompanists and organisers and volunteers for making it so successful.

For further information, contact the Festival Administrator on 020 8886 7237 or visit www.northlondonfestival.org.uk

Run off with the circus

Children have a chance to unleash their inner acrobat, clown or stilt walker when a circus extravaganza comes to artsdepot in North Finchley later this month. Caught in the Act is a circus show for all the family, with daredevil artistry, comedy, acrobats, jugglers and aerial artists.

The line-up of performers includes aerialist Ilona Jantti, who trained in Sweden and Finland and will be showing off her skills on the aerial hoop and rope.

Each day of the show's visit there will be free activities for everyone to enjoy, including acrobatics, plate spinning and much more.

The same week, artsdepot will be running Cirque Depot, where children aged

six upwards can go along and learn real circus skills from trained performers.

Caught in the Act will be performed on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 July at 3pm and 7pm. The free activities run both days from 11am - 2pm.

Cirque Depot runs from



On the ropes: acrobat Ilona Jantti will be in Caught in the Act. Picture by Matt Hennem

Wednesday 25 - Friday 27 July. Times vary according to age group.

For tickets, and to book summer school places, contact the artsdepot box office on 020 8369 5454. For more information, visit www.artsdepot.co.uk.

Tons of money

By Daphne Chamberlain
Wife: "Who do we owe money to?" Husband: "Everyone we've ever dealt with."

Wife's response to this is to fake husband's death, bringing him back as a long-lost relative who would inherit the money that has just been left to them, but without any obligation to pay off debtors.

Naturally, as this all happens at the beginning of *Tons of Money*, the Guild Players' most recent production, we know there are more complications ahead. Two other men claim to be the long-lost relative, and his real widow "recognises" the impostors but humours the genuine one as a harmless lunatic.

This 1920s Aldwych farce, revised by Alan Ayckbourn for the National Theatre, demands that the audience suspend all disbelief. Even when one character after another seems, in the words of one of them, to have "the brain of a very, very small potted shrimp".

Some of the biggest laughs came from the out-and-out slapstick scenes. The acting was excellent but perhaps the play could have been taken at a slightly faster pace.

The Guild Players vary productions to suit all tastes, and welcome feedback from their audiences. They perform in Finchley Methodist Church Hall, Ballards Lane, N3.

For more information, visit www.guildplayers.org.uk or call 020 8346 6337.

What's On...

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

Sunday 8 July

Big Fun Run for children aged 5-15 in aid of the Bobath Centre for children with cerebral palsy, Cherry Tree Wood.

Sunday 8 July

Hermitage Quintet plays Brahms and Schubert, East Finchley Methodist Church, 8pm. Free admission with collection in aid of East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact Centre. Fully accessible to people with disabilities.

Thursday 12 July

Special free live performance of *Chansons Realistes* by accordionist Fifi Le Mer and violinist Charles Louis D'Ince ahead of a screening of *La Vie en Rose* (15), an account of the life of Edith Piaf; Phoenix Cinema, 5pm.

Friday 13 July

Open day for Memory Lane Singing Club, St Mary's Hall, Hendon, 11.30am - 1.30pm; come and enjoy the fun and make new friends; all levels of singing ability are welcome - no auditions. For more information, contact Kay on 020 8882 0636 or Jean on 020 8445 3970.

Saturday 14 July

Barnet NCT nearly new sale; lots of bargains for pregnancy, baby and young child; 10.15 am-12 noon (10 am early entry for NCT members with card), Finchley Sea Cadets Hall, 184A Long Lane, Finchley N3 2RA (close to Squires Lane junction); admission: £1 (children free). Sorry, prams and pushchairs must be left outside the hall.

Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 July

The Circus Space present a summer circus extravaganza *Caught in the Act*, a circus show for all the family, 3pm and 7pm, plus free circus activities for children, 11am-2pm; artsdepot, North Finchley. Box office: 020 8369 5454.

Wednesday 25 to Friday 27 July

Cirque Depot summer school for children; artsdepot, North Finchley. For details, contact the box office on 020 8369 5454.

Weekends throughout July and August

Guided walks in High Barnet and Monken Hadley: Barnet Ghosts, Battle of Barnet etc. Further information from Paul Baker on 020 8440 6805.

Coming up at artsdepot, North Finchley

Thursday 12 July, 8pm, Craig Hill & Janey Godley; Friday 13 July, 8pm, Andrew Maxwell and Zoe Lyons; Saturday 14 July, 8pm, Russell Kane and Russell Howard; Thursday 19 July, 8:30pm, Zoe Rahman.



Letters to the editor

Inconvenience of traffic calming outweighs benefits

Dear Editor,

Referring to Gill Steiner's article (*Traffic calmed by speed tables, THE ARCHER*, May 2007), it seems that she believes that the steps taken by the Council in Woodside Avenue to attempt to slow down the traffic are both the answer to the problem and the solution desired by the residents.

As one of the residents most affected by the mini roundabout, as it has made difficult my means of access and egress from my property (and I am not the only person affected), I have been in lengthy correspondence both with the Council and the Local Government Ombudsman.

The council proposal consisted of 20mph 'entry road surfacing and signing', also of a 'mini roundabout, vehicle activated sign, priority give way buildout, pinch points with raised tables, zebra crossing, and waiting restrictions'.

The Woodside Avenue Residents Association surveyed residents' opinions in Woodside Avenue but not those in Fordington Road and Lanchester Road, who were also substantially affected. Nevertheless, many of the residents of those two roads made their views known to the Council and, so far as the roundabout is concerned, 75% were against and 25 % for.

The Council's consultation responses were difficult to interpret as questions were not asked about each individual feature of the proposed scheme but only for or against the whole scheme. Of the responses received by the Council, only 12% were in favour, 52% against and 36% in favour of some aspects only.

A substantial part of the £120,000 cost of the scheme was financed by Transport for London to promote safer routes to schools. Many of the measures introduced are still being ignored by drivers but the roundabout is much appreciated by parents bringing their children to school by car as they can now turn round at the roundabout.

That small benefit for parents not living in the area and who only travel to school during some eight months of the year was not the object of the exercise, especially bearing in mind the great inconvenience caused to residents.

Gill Steiner is right in saying that the noise generated by some lorries bouncing off the speed tables can be terrible and indeed those living in the vicinity will confirm that to be the case. She is wrong, however, in concluding that at long last the road commands the respect from drivers that it deserves. A large proportion of drivers even now only slow down when they absolutely have to.

Yours faithfully,
Paul Rees
Fordington Road, N6

Dangerous bridge needs traffic lights

Dear Editor

I write in response to the letter and information about the East End Road bridge (*The Archer*, June 2007) and your invitation for suggestions to improve its safety.

I use this bridge at few times each week on foot and I am terrified each time I cross it. I try to wait for a lull in the traffic so that I can get across without a car, bus or lorry passing within inches of my person, often at speed. I am frequently surprised by my miscalculations and the futility of

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, on request at publication.

trying to outwit the traffic.

I like the suggestion from Barnet that they might consider widening both pavements, thereby creating a narrower roadway. This ties in well with my own suggestion which is to operate a traffic light system which allows only one line of traffic at a time to cross the bridge. This would slow down the traffic slightly but would enhance the safety of pedestrians.

Alternatively, as suggested by Barnet, we could wait for 'accident justification' and, when enough people have been injured or killed, to say nothing of traumatised, the money might then be found to rectify the problem.

I hope you will put forward my suggestion to Barnet. Meanwhile there is a forum for complaints on www.barnet.gov.uk/contact-us.htm or by email on first.contact@barnet.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully,
Jan Levin
Church Vale, N2

How tree wardens were axed

Dear Editor,

I am very surprised to learn that Barnet Council is advertising for "more" tree wardens, intimating that their current members are "dwindling". Maybe your readers would like to know why members dwindled.

The tree warden scheme started in Barnet just over 10 years ago, and those of us who volunteered were given support from Barnet Tree Department for lectures and guided visits to local woodlands, parks and open spaces. We collected seeds, grew these at home to a certain height, and transplanted them to a nursery behind Fellowship House in Hampstead Garden Suburb, with the intention of transferring them to parks, etc, where necessary.

We planted several new millennium woods in the borough, including Lyttelton Playing Fields, Underhill and Grahame Park, where we tended the baby trees at weekends. We were always vigilant, reporting any dangerous or diseased trees, or those needing attention.

But around 2002 the Council started an economy drive, and the tree wardens were casualties. No more accompanied plantings, no more guidance and, worst of all, we were told that we should insure ourselves whilst carrying out any duties on Council property.

It was therefore decided that, as we had no venue for meetings and no Council support, we could no longer carry on with our work. We did not "dwindle". We were forced to discontinue.

I now assume that Barnet Council are desperately looking for unpaid labourers to salvage the consequences of their failings. I won't be rushing to join them.

Yours faithfully,
Pamela Kent
Hamilton Road, N2

Bernhard Herzberg: 1909-2007

By Ann Bronkhorst
Bernhard Herzberg, Britain's oldest university student, died peacefully at his home in Fairlawn Avenue on 16 May, a little over a month before his 98th birthday.



He was an inspiration to many because of his determination to study, undeterred by age; in his 80s and 90s he took BA and MA degrees and had just completed his final MA dissertation. In the words of his son, Paul: "He was driven by the idea of intellectual self-improvement and a hunger for knowledge."

Bernhard grew up in Hanover, Germany, as a far from conforming Jew who recognised the danger in the rise of Nazism. He emigrated to South Africa in 1933 and fought in World War Two to liberate Fascist Italy.

An incident described in his memoir reflects the ironies of his life: billeted with an illiterate Italian family, he read aloud for them from the Latin family bible. "To them it seemed extraordinary that 'Il Ebreo', in the uniform of a South African soldier, had studied Latin in a German school and was sitting among them."

During his long life, most of it spent in Africa, there were many journeys, troubles and upheavals. Bernhard consistently opposed injustices such as Apartheid but took an independent path personally and politically. He was a remarkable man, and not just because he was the oldest university graduate in Britain.

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Any reader who feels strongly about any matter is invited to use this "Soapbox" column.

Please note that opinions expressed are those of the writer alone.

Stub out this control freakery

By Ricky Savage

Hi there, social pariahs, fancy popping outside for a quick cigarette? Meet me on the corner behind the bike sheds for an illicit puff because that's all you can do now. Our 150-year love affair with nicotine is coming to an end as the happy-clappy, smiley, tree-hugging, do-as-you're-told brigade try to force everyone to be healthy-living, non-smoking, non-drinking, drug-free drones and I don't like it.

I know smoking is bad for you, I know that 14 pints of lager and a chicken vindaloo are not the healthiest way to get through life, but we seem to be heading for a society that wants to put health warnings on everything. Bottles of wine are going to have health warnings and 'safe drinking' means never getting drunk.

In America all women of childbearing age are called pre-pregnant and apparently shouldn't drink anything stronger than water in case it harms the child they might have in the future. You cannot advertise cheese at times when children might be watching TV because it's too high in fat. Next stop will be health warnings on butter.

I do not want to live in a squeaky-clean, risk-free society of perfect people smiling happily as they sip their fat-free, caffeine-free, low calorie drinks and eat medically recommended organic fat-free lettuce. I do not want to have to apply for a licence to have more than 14 units of alcohol and I particularly do not want to be told how to live my life.

I can live without smoking in pubs, cafes and restaurants, but I do not want to live in a controlled, DNA-tested brave new world where personal freedom has ceased to exist. So now that smoking is banned can we call a halt to the social control before we find that milk carries a health warning?

A second taste of Brazil

Edir Oliveira da Cunha, of Tarling Road, has decided to change the name of her café-restaurant at 289 Regents Park Road. To reflect the ambience and atmosphere accompanying her authentic home cooked Brazilian food so appreciated by clients, Pizzico is now called Casa Brasil.

Unique to the area and with new opening hours of 11am – 6pm Tuesday to Thursday, 11am – 9pm Friday to Sunday and holidays, booking is especially recommended at weekend lunchtimes. You can bring your own bottle and pay corkage. Phone 8371 1999 or email casabrazil@hotmail.co.uk.

Edir's has a recipe for us that is as simple as they come. Popular with both children and adults, she has called it after the name under which she is now trading.

Edir's Doce "Casa Brasil" (serves 4-6)

Ingredients: 400g tin of Carnation milk, Exactly the same quantity of fresh whole milk, 2 eggs, A soup spoon of salted margarine or butter.

Method: Mix together or liquidise all the above and place in an oblong Pyrex dish. Cook in a pre heated oven at 200C, Gas Mark 6 or 7. Remove when brown on top (approximately 40 minutes). Serve when cool or, better still, refrigerate and eat the next day.

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Susan Bennett and Earl Hyde share a cuppa with Charlie Dimmock in their Muswell Hill garden.

Gates open on great gardens

This year, the National Gardens Scheme celebrates its 80th birthday with 3,500 gardens opening for charity but unfortunately not one in East Finchley.

Last year, Paul Harrington and Patsy Joseph opened their prizewinning garden in Elm Gardens and raised over £650. This year they are raising a family but hope to return to the scheme in 2008.

Meanwhile we can look to our neighbours in Muswell Hill for inspiration.

On Sunday 8 July, historical Railway Cottages at Alexandra Park Station open their gardens as a group. A step back in time,

one has topiary created by the original railway worker occupant. Another has transformed a back yard into a plant-lovers' paradise, and charming front gardens will be on show too.

On Sunday 22 July, Muswell Hill's most famous garden, created by artist owners Earl Hyde and Susan Bennett, will open. Chosen by the NGS to launch its 80th birthday celebrations, headed by TV gardener Charlie Dimmock, their garden appeared on ITV News.

Unique architectural features include a baroque temple, pagodas, and a new Gothic wall with stained glass window saved from the porch of the long-demolished Methodist Church in Colney Hatch Lane.

Earl and Susan are also the assistant county organisers for the scheme and are always on the

look out for new gardens. Contact them on 020 8883 8540. Visit the website at www.ngs.org.uk.

Summer openings

Sunday 8 July, 2-6pm, Railway Cottages, Dorset Road and Bridge Road, N22; admission £3.50, children free; home-made teas and plant sale.

Sunday 22 July, 2-7pm; 5 St Regis Close, Alexandra Park Road, N10; admission £2.50, children free; home-made teas, plant sale, open studio.

Sunday 2 September, 11-4pm, Golf Course Allotments, Winton Avenue, N11; admission £2.50, children free; autumn show, refreshments, produce sale, grand tour.

Sunday 16 September, 2-6.30pm, 6 Methuen Park, N10 (Chelsea medallist Yulia Badian); admission £2.20, children free; teas, plant sale.

Remember: testimonies of the survivors

By Ann Bronkhorst

Remembering isn't the same as not forgetting. It is more conscious and sometimes more painful. On 4 June, at the New North London Synagogue, East End Road, a remarkable production had its final performance. *Remember*, a dramatisation of survivors' testimonies, faced us with the necessity of remembering the Holocaust.

The play was devised by Mark Sell, head of Performing Arts at Finchley Catholic High School, and performed by a cast of (in his words) "phenomenally-talented children" from years 7 to 10, including six girls from St Michael's Catholic Grammar School.

This experience did not feel like a school play, however. On arrival, each member of the audience was given a white rose with the word "Remember" spoken plainly and intensely; that intensity set the tone for the whole production. The young figures holding candles around the darkened hall conveyed stillness and inwardness but, later, showed performance skills ranging from the fierce partisan song *We Are Here* to the energy and expressiveness of their ensemble speeches.

Against a backdrop suggesting the gates of Auschwitz and a huge image of Jews, young and old, seemingly being herded towards us, the individual stories were told. A young flower seller tried to comfort an old man who had failed to save his grandchild. An SS officer, appalled at atrocities he had witnessed; cynical, sneering Nazi soldiers; the agony of a Jewish policeman who "wheeled and dealt" to save lives: the range

of testimonies was surprising, and created a many-layered emotional experience.

Bearing witness

Perhaps most compelling was the testimony of Elisabeth De Jong who had survived the 'medical' experiments in the infamous Block 10. Scarlett Neville spoke the role with quiet composure while managing to convey the weight of what was unspeakable.

Later, answering questions from the audience, the young actors were aware of having travelled on what Mark Sell described as "emotional journeys". Daniele Boeri, 12, who played the flower seller and spoke much of the linking narrative, admitted that learning Hebrew phonetically for songs like the *Ani Ma'amin* had been at first "like learning gibberish"; the power of the music "did it in the end", said musical director Des Yarde Martin.

For Conor O'Sullivan, year 7, "*Remember* meant more to us than just words and stories", especially after the performance at Auschwitz on 25 May. For Jack Cronin, 15, "Going to Auschwitz was a real wake-up call." In the final words of the play: "Cambodia, Bosnia, Ruanda, Darfur...REMEMBER."

Missing moth

By Diana Cormack

It is not unusual to see notices put up by the owners of missing pets. However, a notice on display in Summerlee Avenue at the end of May could have made passersby wonder if it was actually 1 April, because it was appealing for help to find a missing moth.

Below a large picture of the creature - a special Japanese variety - was the information that it was three weeks old and answered to the name of Ginger. The public were asked to search their sheds and other likely places for a moth to hide and to treat the moth with care and not swat it.

Slits had been cut at the bottom of the notice to create tear off pieces bearing the names Cindy, Ginger and a mobile phone number. *THE ARCHER* rang this number to pursue the story, only to hear the message, "The number you have called is not recognised".

Although we know of other people who saw the notice, which was not on display for long, we do not know what effect it had. Was Ginger found? Was he ever really missing? If you have any more information on this subject or indeed if you are Cindy herself, please get in touch. Our contact details are on page 2.

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