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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Rescue plan for abandoned park pavilion

By Diana Cormack

After more than 20 years of lying derelict, the pavilion in Cherry Tree Wood may be transformed. It was last used as a children's nursery and had changing rooms at the rear for football teams. Now Sally-Anne Wigfield, who runs the park's kiosk cafe, has put forward proposals to Barnet Council which could turn the decaying building into a brand new community facility with a strong emphasis on education and health.

New position

In poor condition and with the suspicion of asbestos, the pavilion would need to be carefully demolished. A new eco-friendly building compatible with the park would be sited slightly to the east of the existing one, bringing it closer to the playground. While watching their children play, parents could enjoy healthy drinks on the terrace.

With major trees retained, screening would be provided by the present plants along the park boundary. No windows would overlook the boundary fence but there would be a rear delivery door with footpath access only.

Sally-Anne, of Beresford Road, told *THE ARCHER*: "No traffic. I want people to walk here." Delivery and servicing would operate as they do for the existing kiosk, which would probably remain open.

Healthy food

Sally envisages a one-stop shop for good health and fitness, with a nutritionist on hand to provide dietary advice and where children could learn how to grow and cook their own food. Based on her own "t5" eating plan, a colour-coded tapas style counter would provide quick, healthy meals using a sushi bar service style, with the plate colour representing food balance instead of price. The same room would house a café for snacks, salads, drinks,

etc. A separate mobile-free sound proofed room would be sectioned off for such things as reading and relaxation. Upstairs space could be rented by local yoga practitioners and used for art exhibitions and public meetings.

The plans are on display in the park at the Lazy Sally kiosk, where people can leave their comments. Architect Chris Hampson says that so far they have received nothing but support. "It is a real plus for East Finchley and Cherry Tree Wood."

What do you think of these plans? Visit the kiosk or let *THE ARCHER* know. Our contact details are on page 2.



How the pavilion in Cherry Tree Wood will look under the redevelopment plans. Image courtesy of Chris Hampson.

Park House to let

Since the sale of Park House on the High Road opposite East Finchley tube station fell through (see last month's *Archer*) an estate agent's sign has been put up advertising office space to rent.

Barnet Council told *The Archer*: "We are currently reviewing our options with regard to Park House. These could include a short-term let, given the conditions of the property market."

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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.*

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Council Tax 020 8359 2608
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East Finchley Library 020 8359 3815
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❖ Careers advice, Green Man, Com-
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❖ Toy library, Muswell Hill 020
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While the mice are away

When you are on holiday, your home can be vulnerable to the attention of burglars, but there are many ways to reduce that risk.

Make sure your home looks like someone is living in it. Curtains closed in the daytime tell the opportunistic burglar that your home is unattended. Use automatic timer-switches to turn your lights on when it goes dark.

Cancel any milk or newspapers. Cut the lawn before you go. Don't discuss holiday plans with strangers and don't put your home address on your luggage when you are travelling to your holiday destination.

Think about using the Royal Mail's "Keep Safe" service.

They can keep your mail for up to two months.

If you usually leave your very expensive pedal cycle or lawn mower in the shed, consider bringing it into the house.

Just before you leave for the airport or to beat the rush hour traffic to the coast, take a couple of minutes to walk around the house making sure all windows and doors are locked. Check for valuable items, such as laptops, on open display and conceal them.

If your house has a drive, persuade a neighbour to park their car on it while you are away.

Planning Applications

Barnet Council

75 Abbots Gardens, N2
Loft conversion and dormer extensions to rear roof slope.

18 Baronsmere Road, N2
Single storey rear/side extension. Alterations to windows.

18 Cherry Tree Road, N2

Ground floor rear extension.

208 Creighton Avenue, N2

Conversion of garage into habitable room. Creation of balcony at first floor level at rear. Roof extension involving rear dormer windows to facilitate a loft conversion. New front porch. Alterations to windows.

156 East End Road, N2

Single storey rear extension to accommodate additional storage space.

3 Elm Gardens, N2

Demolition of existing rear extension and garage. Erection of new rear extension and new detached garage at rear of dwelling.

Oak Lodge School, Heath View, N2

Extension to existing main entrance area, relocating school offices and provision of a 'Community Room' and internal reconfiguration of existing staff facilities. Infilling of courtyard area providing additional classroom space and flexible teaching space.

Phoenix Cinema, 52 High Road, N2

Erection of a detached timber

shed in a rear yard.

201-203 High Road, N2

Change of use from B1 (office) to A1 (supermarket). (205Sqm.)

Chapel at junction of St Mary's Road and Lower Road, Islington and Camden Cemetery, High Road, N2

Addition of Photovoltaic panels to roof of chapel.

46 and 48 Lankaster Gardens, N2

Single storey rear extensions to both properties

Garage adjoining 82 Leicester Road, N2

Construction of first floor over existing single storey building and conversion into one bedroom house.

36 Leopold Road, N2

Single storey rear extension.

Haringey Council

2 Bancroft Avenue, N2

First floor side extension.

70 Twyford Avenue, N2

Alteration to front elevation, change garage door into window, internal alterations to improve insulation, appearance of garage and garage to be used as habitable room.

27 Twyford Avenue, N2

Alteration of hipped roof to gable end, erection of two rear dormer windows, erection of first floor extension over garage to front and erection of single storey rear extension with conservatory.

Deliverers wanted

Could you spare 30-45 minutes a month to help us deliver THE ARCHER? We're a community newspaper and we rely on volunteers to distribute the paper to 9,500 households in the East Finchley area.

We currently have a few rounds that aren't being covered, and we'd like to get THE ARCHER to people in those roads again.

Copies of the paper would be brought directly to your door around the start of each month and you can deliver them in your own time.

Here are the rounds that currently need covering:

• Manor Court (Aylmer Road)/Mansfield Heights (Great North Road).

• Widdecombe Court / Widdecombe Way.

• The Grange (three rounds)

We also need drivers who could deliver the papers to our distributors, typically eight or nine 'drops'.

If you can spare a little time each month to help with our deliveries, it would be much appreciated. Please contact us at the-archer@lineone.net or 08717 334465.

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Pavement culture 'at risk'

By Daphne Chamberlain

At a Council meeting last month, East Finchley councillor Colin Rogers asked the Cabinet to "do all it can to support the vibrancy of our town centres" and raised the issue of the so-called pavement tax.

He warned that small traders felt seriously threatened by the need to pay for display space outside their premises, criticised the Council for not talking about the effect the tax would have on local centres, and said that consultation was "minimal".

The Labour Group have requested a written review of the new policy, which does not differentiate between the size of business premises or the amount of litter and anti-social behaviour which they could attract. Labour also want to know how the policy will be used against traders who put up permanent display structures or use too much of the pavement, and how many additional officers would be needed to make

it work.

Curb on town centres

At the meeting, the pavement tax issue was part of a general debate about town centres, and Opposition councillors were accused of "making a big fuss about it".

Council policy is to develop four key centres: North Finchley, Edgware, Chipping Barnet and New Barnet.

However, Barnet Cllr Macdonald said that Chipping Barnet still saw itself as a market town, not a city suburb, and that New Barnet traders were threatened by Tesco and Asda being allowed to build close by Sainsbury's.

Cllr Kath McGuirk maintained that what people wanted were smarter, cleaner, safer

local centres, with different shops and a café culture.

Seen and heard Clean up after yourself

One Monday in June, a reader observed a refuse collector smoking while collecting refuse in East Finchley and then flicking the cigarette onto the ground while he continued emptying the wheelie bins into the Council's vehicle. On the side were the words: "Keeping Barnet Cleaner".



Antigua Joe performing at The East Finchley Festival in June. Photo by Alison Roberts

ARCHER Calendar 2009 - send us your photos!

THE ARCHER is launching its own 2009 calendar and every penny raised will support the work of East Finchley's 'good neighbour' charity, Contact.

We need you to send us your photos. There are no rules about what you can submit but we're looking for images of places or people: anything that shows something unusual or beautiful about East Finchley.

THE ARCHER Calendar 2009 will be on sale at local outlets and online, thanks to the support of Photobox.co.uk. Look out for more details in our next issue.

We're accepting photos now and the final closing date for entries is Wednesday 17 September, after which our judges will choose the 12 images to make it into the calendar.

If you have a suitable image, please email it to the-

archer@lineone.net. Digital photographs only, please, as we cannot accept prints. Feel free to send us low resolution versions, but we will need a high resolution version if your picture is selected. Mark your message 'Archer calendar' and tell us where and why you took the photo.

Why we're supporting Contact

East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact was set up in 1985 to improve life for the community's most vulnerable members. Most of its clients are elderly or disabled and live in N2.

Volunteers help the house-

bound at home by visiting for a chat, reading to them, translating, filling in forms, tidying up the house or garden, caring for pets or doing a bit of shopping. Some elderly or disabled people just need a friend to keep them company on a short walk or accompany them to a hospital appointment.

Contact organises all this, as well as a weekly lunch club at the Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale, and a free shopping bus to Tesco in Colney Hatch Lane on Thursdays and Fridays.

Contact provides many other services and can be a vital source of human contact for people who live alone or far away from family members.

The charity, based in Church Lane, needs to raise funds constantly to keep its services going. We hope your support for THE ARCHER Calendar 2009 will help them in their much-needed work.

Antigua Joe severely injured in street attack

East Finchley Festival favourite Antigua Joe was badly injured in a street attack just one week after performing on stage at this year's event.

The singer - real name Conrad Joseph - had performed at a gig in Torquay, Devon, and was returning to his car when he was allegedly set upon by four men. One of them is also thought to have poured a liquid over his car.

Conrad, 56, suffered head and facial injuries in the attack, including a broken jaw, and was taken to hospital.

Sadly, his injuries prevented him from singing at his stepdaughter's wedding in early July and may also put his summer professional engagements at risk.

Conrad is recovering at home in Wiltshire but friends and family say he doesn't know when he will be able to perform in public again. Four men have been arrested and charged in connection with the attack.

Antigua Joe's Jamaican music has been a crowd-pleaser at the annual East Finchley Community Festival for seven years or more. He was on and off stage for more than six hours in the sunshine at this year's event.

Well-wishers can send emails or cards to THE ARCHER and we'll pass them on. Email the-archer@lineone.net or write to THE ARCHER, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA.

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Safety messages for secondary school

The risk of carrying knives was the subject of a student drama in Barnet's junior citizen scheme and has been filmed for showing at schools across London.

Year 6 pupils from schools in Barnet took part in the scheme run by Barnet Police at Avenue House in East End Road.

The event was aimed at giving personal safety advice to children about to move on to secondary school in September. It tackled knife crime, fire safety, internet safety, first aid, stranger danger, and using public transport safely

and responsibly.

Chief Inspector Ben Bennett said: "This event has given us an excellent opportunity to reinforce the key safety messages that young people need, especially with the current concerns about knife crime, as well as giving them a variety of skills that they can take back to their families to improve safety at home."



Police passed on personal safety messages to children about to start secondary school. Photo by Timothy Clarke

Have your say on the CPZs

By Diana Cormack

In early July, residents of East Finchley received a questionnaire from Barnet Council about reviewing the area's three Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs).

An "all-day" zone operates along the High Road from Creighton Avenue to the tube station between 8am and 6.30pm, Mondays to Saturdays. An "amended time" zone operates in those areas on both sides of the High Road in the vicinity of Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute from 10am to 6.30pm, Mondays to Saturdays. A "one-hour" zone operating from 2pm to 3pm, Mondays to Fridays, exists in the remainder of N2 bordered by Durham, Hertford and Park Roads; Trinity and Elmhurst Avenues; the Leys, Greenhaugh Walk and Vivian Way.

Should CPZs change?

Our current CPZs were "designed to allow local people

improved parking opportunities in areas affected by various causes of high-density parking". As conditions can change over the years, Barnet feels that it is time to find out if the needs of local people are still being met. By gathering opinions and information from those who live, work and have an interest in East Finchley CPZs, Barnet Council hopes to make the changes necessary to bring them into line with present day needs.

Forms had to be returned by 31 July and, once the responses have been analysed, everyone consulted will be informed of the outcome along with an outline of any changes the council intends to propose.

Girl Guide group for East Finchley

By Diana Cormack

On 4 September, a Girl Guide unit will be launched locally, led by Antonia Dietmann of Western Road. Antonia joined the Brownies at the age of seven and has remained involved in the Guide movement ever since, becoming a leader at the age of 15. Now she is able to offer her 20 years of Guiding experience to girls in East Finchley.

Antonia is delighted to have found two other volunteers to assist her. Lucy Williams, who teaches at Martin Primary School and is an old university friend of her husband, and Kristy Bradnum, who offered to help at this year's community

festival. Meetings of the 4th East Finchley Guides are to be held during term time at Holy Trinity Church in Church Lane.

Guides are part of the largest organisation for girls and women in the UK, and almost half of all women here have been involved in Guiding at some time during their lives. As well as HM the Queen, other well known former Guiders include Kate Moss, Cat Deeley, Davina McCall and Emma Thompson.

Have a go and have a say

The activities on offer are numerous. According to their own publicity:

"Guides is fantastic, hilarious, crazy, fab. You go on trips and camps and try things like

clothes design and abseiling and you have a say and do stuff that makes a difference too. But the best part is you get to hang out with your friends and be yourself."

Antonia told *THE ARCHER* that Guiding is a really great way for girls to develop confidence, build their self-esteem and try out new things in the freedom of an all-girl environment. Those aged 10-14 are welcome, as are 14-25 year olds for the senior section. This is bound to be popular, so don't delay. Call Antonia on 8444 1473 or email 4theastfinchleyguides@googlemail.com. To learn more about guiding visit www.girlguiding.org.uk/guides.

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Ambitious plans for the Phoenix

By Helen Drake

If East Finchley were a country, the Phoenix Cinema would be a national treasure. Nearly 100 years old and still standing, its exterior may be in need of a facelift, but its reputation for showing the best that arthouse cinema has to offer remains intact. With its centenary celebration imminent, the Trustees have ambitious plans to restore the outside of the building to the structure it had in its early golden days and to develop the site to include a café and exhibition space.

Survival story

At a "Meet the Phoenix" event in May, aficionados stepped back in time with Gerry Turvey, retired film historian and Vice Chair of the Phoenix Cinema Trust, to discover that the Phoenix (or Coliseum as it was known then) was one of only two new-build cinemas in the area when it first opened in 1909, with a screen originally positioned in the opposite direction to where it appears now.

The auditorium was built to accommodate an orchestra as local cinemas at this time competed to produce the best live music. When talking pictures arrived the Phoenix, always at the cutting edge of contemporary culture, emerged triumphant as the first local cinema to install sound.

After an Art Deco refurbishment in the 1930s (and another incarnation as The Rex), the Phoenix survived the drop in cinema attendance, which began in the 1950s, to rise from the ashes when the Phoenix Cinema Trust was

formed in 1985. The charitable trust has three aims: to offer the best in independent cinema; to serve the local community; and to sustain and make accessible an historic building.

Responsive programming

Fast forward to 2008. The Phoenix has the latest digital technology and knows its audience. If a film hasn't proved its worth after three days it will be taken off and replaced. Similarly, said Jason Wood, the film programmer, if you missed a particular film and think it should come back, let him know via the comments book in the foyer and he'll see what he can do.

Manager Paul Homer revealed that a first application to the English Heritage Lottery Fund for restoration funding has already been made, with a second stage planned if the first application is successful. Work would then start in autumn 2009.

For more information call the box office on 020 8444 6789 or go to www.phoenixcinema.co.uk.



Kim Rooney, John Hegley, and the winner of the first prize Tony Flynn. Photograph courtesy of Kim Rooney

National prize for Northern line poet

East Finchley resident Kim Rooney has won second prize in the English Association's 2007 Fellows' Poetry competition. The award was presented by poet John Hegley, one of the judges, at the Association's AGM on 21 May at the British Academy in London.

The winning poem, 'At the end', was described by Hegley as 'spare' and reminiscent of the work of artist Giacometti, famous for his surreal sculptures.

"I think that sums up my poetry well," says Kim. "I'm minimalist and like to keep my poems short."

"I've been writing poetry for a long time, but have only recently started to enter competitions. I

think it might be something to do with living in East Finchley. I moved here just over a year ago with my husband Mark, a painter, and it's got such a creative vibe.

"I do find myself writing poems on the Northern line, when I

can get a seat! The morning commute can be eerily meditative."

A graduate of the University of East Anglia's MA in Life-Writing, Kim is a former BBC online journalist. See her winning poem below left:

Vanishing plates

By John Dearing

For those of you lucky enough to have the luxury of a car and to have negotiated favourable loan rates with your bank to fill the thing up with petrol, this may be of interest to you.

Manufacturers of number plates now need to be registered and there is much stricter control. As a consequence of this, there has been an explosion in the theft of number plates from motor vehicles, particularly of the "stick-on" variety.

These are not actually

affixed to the vehicle, using screws, they are just glued on, and it doesn't take much to lever them off. If your car has stick on number plates, you might want to consider fixing them correctly using screws. Better still, use tamper-proof screws if you can obtain them.



Alarming Crack Photograph by John Dearing

Cracking news

By David Tupman

In recent months, passers by noticed a large crack in the tube bridge over East Finchley High Road that carries underground trains out of the station. Speculation was rife that the infamous earthquake of spring 2008, felt in some parts of N2, had caused a fissure to the brickwork.

Engineers were baffled but repairs have now been carried out following concerns raised by THE ARCHER. Fans of the Art Deco statue Archie, approaching his 70th birthday, can rest assured that he will not be toppling down from his monumental plinth. Nor, as one local wag put it, is Archie cracking up.

At the end

*At the end
they brought lipstick
for mouths empty
of everything
lips pursed
in the last bone-break
shit-pit fall
smudged red*

*a girl
not yet my mother
waited for her lipstick ration
the grief from Daddy*

*it came with gas
and pills
it came and stayed*

*my mother lingers
on to get her lipstick ration
she waits
for Daddy
till bone-break
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Sunday 3 September 1939 is the day Britain entered World War II. Two readers remember what life was like in the war years.

Library blackout

By Brian Wilkins

The other day I visited East Finchley Library. That piece of earth-shattering information is of no interest to anybody, until I add that I live over 40 miles away in Elstead, Surrey, and I last visited the library in 1947.

The library is exactly as I remember it 60 years ago except that it seems much smaller (but then I have grown bigger) and what is now the music library was a study room. When I first went there in 1942, it was only four years old.

In those days, Finchley was a borough in its own right with its own mayor and running its own affairs, nothing to do with Barnet. It built a series of splendid public library buildings, completing the ones at East and North Finchley before the outbreak of war in 1939.

We lived in 1 Windsor Road, Church End (since demolished to make way for a small block of flats) and my brother and I attended the Woodhouse Grammar School and used the library regularly.

Gifts for the forces

The chief librarian then was Jane Brown and we got to know her quite well as she and father co-operated on a number of educational matters. Among

other things we were involved in a scheme to provide books for members of the armed forces.

Typical of the public response in wartime, books of all sorts came in by the thousand and the hall above the library was taken over as a sorting station. My job was to put a stamp on the title page which read, as far as I can remember: "A gift from the people of Finchley to the men and women in the forces". I wonder if any of these volumes survived the war.

During the war time blackout the library caretaker went to great trouble to black out the large windows and then went outside to inspect his handiwork. What he had forgotten was the row of skylight domes, like a battery of upward-facing searchlights, the blacking out of which presented him with a considerable problem.

I greatly enjoyed my nostalgic visit and my thanks go to the library staff for welcoming me so warmly.

The day the guns roared

Bernard Shannon lived in Church Lane for 50 years before moving to the Isle of Man. Here he remembers factory life during the war.

The year was 1940, Britain was in big trouble, and that included East Finchley. We knew what to expect if the Nazi hordes ever got here. Britain was under air attack night and day, and military hardware was desperately needed.

The order went out that all factories must work on during air raids, and henceforth there would be two shifts worked, 12 hours a day and 12 hours a night, seven days a week non-stop. There would be draconian penalties for any unauthorised absence without a medical certificate.

I was 17 years old and chose the nightshift at Simms Motor Units, Oak Lane, by then switched to making military components. It would be hard to explain to modern generations just how strength-sapping those hours were. Apart from the constant air raids, the grind of long nights seven times a week left no room for anything else but sleep and hasty meals. Each morning I practically fell into bed comatose, sleeping even through air raids. Then it was back to the factory.

Despite this I had determined that some break in the pattern, however small, must be created. Every Wednesday afternoon I would set the alarm clock for 1.30pm and force myself to rise and get to the Rex (now Phoenix) Cinema to see the weekly film.

On one occasion I arrived at the cinema and was shown to a seat. The main film was a war movie about the RAF and I was soon absorbed in it. I was somewhat surprised to

feel a hand upon my shoulder. It turned out to be the manager. The practice was that in the event of an air raid the cinema lights would go on for three minutes to allow those who wished to, to leave, but the manager whispered that this had not been done because I was the only person in the entire cinema. He asked if I wished to leave and seemed mightily relieved when I said I did not. I was rather surprised to find I was the sole audience. In the dark one imagines there are people sitting all around.

Now, whatever shortages of equipment Britain had, they did not include anti-aircraft guns. There were guns on every open ground in East Finchley, not only in Cherry Tree Wood and various school playing fields but even on small patches of ground. When they opened up the noise was deafening.

In the cinema on screen British bombers were just diving on their target amid intense anti-aircraft fire and at precisely the same time all the guns in Finchley opened up. As the roar of guns swept across the cinema from front and behind I remember laughing aloud. It seemed so ludicrous, me sitting all alone in the darkened cinema with the roar of guns all around, and I suppose it was!



Visitors looking at David Godny's prints. Photo by Ann Froomberg

Open all arts

By Daphne Chamberlain

"This is the best one yet. We've had so many people coming in." The words of jewellery-maker Monica Peiser, summing up the first two weekends in July, when East Finchley Open, a group of local artists and craftspeople, opened their homes to display their work.

I caught up with Monica, textile designer Ann Froomberg, and multi-talented David Godny in David's Creighton Avenue house. I heard Monica discussing a commission for earrings, renewed acquaintance with Ann's fabulous hand-painted silk scarves, and studied the effects that David can produce by painting similar scenes in different mediums.

David also showed ceramics and photographic prints of wildlife and landscapes. One ibex on a precarious perch above a breathtakingly high drop is now on display in my home.

Unpressured

A growing number of us are agreeing that spending an hour or so in attractive surroundings, discovering artwork at leisure and chatting to its creators, with no pressure to buy, is a very nice way to spend a summer afternoon.

There was at least one venue in easy reach of everyone in N2, while there were outposts in N3 (for the second year running) and in N12. The North Finchley venue featured four artists in different years of the same photography degree course at Middlesex University. They included Craig Johnson, who

has just graduated with honours, and guest artist John McCafferty from Community Focus. John showed watercolours, and photography taken using a specially adapted tripod for his wheelchair.

If you missed the pleasures of the Open weekends, make a date for the EFO Winter Fair, which will be in Martin Primary School on Sunday 16 November. You won't be able to loll in someone else's garden with a glass of ginger ale, but there will be refreshments and an array of potential presents. Discover more about the EFO at www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk.

Rolling back the years

By David Tupman

Local train enthusiasts had a rare treat on Sunday 29 June when famed rolling stock from 1938 passed through East Finchley station. This treasured four-car warhorse of the Northern line was celebrating the 70th anniversary of its introduction just before the Second World War.

Those on board the train sank back into fine red and black upholstery seats arranged against subtle green carriage interiors, comforted by shovel-like lampshades offering subdued lighting. Journeying non-stop between Morden and High Barnet,

travellers on the train watched bemused passengers at intermediate station platforms as the veteran train, in her red livery, sped by.

Travellers had the rare experience now of being able to open train windows to enjoy a blast of cool air. It was generally agreed that the 1938 rolling stock was a better ride than the modern 1996 trains with their hot interiors, poor

ventilation, noisy air fans, brash lights and irritatingly repetitive audio messages.

Although phased out of regular use in 1988, the 1938 trains spent many decades in service travelling what was for many years the longest continuous underground tunnel in the world: the 17 miles and 578 yards between East Finchley and Morden via Bank.

Parking bay disabled

An ARCHER reader has been keeping an eye on the disabled parking bay outside 100 Church Lane.

It has been impossible for any blue badge holders to use it on various occasions because priority was given to a fully loaded skip on 25 June, a large quantity of sand on 2 July and a stack of wooden planks across it on 11 July.

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Did you know that petitions have 'sell by' dates?

By Janet Maitland

When local residents heard that their protest against the opening of a supermarket in Stag Court on the High Road had been successful, they thought that was the end of it. The planning application was withdrawn in March after 321 people signed a petition opposing it. It has now been resubmitted and Barnet Council is acting as if the previous protest did not happen.

Phil Prentice, who lives opposite Stag Court, said: "Are the developers going to keep putting in the same application and withdrawing it until everyone just gets tired of objecting?"

Council's comment

"Although Barnet is aware of the public opposition to the previous application, this cannot be carried over to the new application," said a spokesperson from Barnet Council. "The previous application was withdrawn and is therefore closed."

The spokesperson said one of the main considerations in the new application would be to assess the impact of the proposed supermarket on the vitality and viability of East Finchley town centre.

Limited consultation

Businesses and residents

within a 50 metre radius of the site were notified of the application. The consultation therefore excluded most of the High Road, and the whole of the old village in and around Church Lane.

"This will have a direct impact on our business," said Harish, manager of Galaxy Store on Church Lane, "but we didn't know anything about it."

Barnet Council responded that anyone wishing to object can do so, including people who have not been formally consulted by letter. It said a site notice had been erected outside the premises and details were available on the council website www.barnet.gov.uk.

When *THE ARCHER* checked the exterior of Stag Court in early July, there were To Let signs, but no notice about the proposed supermarket.

Hole-y mess

By Janet Maitland

When a large hole appeared in the pavement in Aylmer Road towards the end of May, Neville Robinson had a strong sense of déjà vu. Last August he had reported water gushing out of the pavement in exactly the same spot, just by the entrance to Whittington Court.

"It took four weeks for Thames Water to repair the leak despite my phone calls," said Mr Robinson, "and that was at a time we were all supposed to be saving water."

This time the problem was a gas leak. When Mr Robinson rang the National Grid gas company to complain that the repair work was blocking the entire pavement, he says that it took 10 days for a truck to arrive with signs advising pedestrians to walk inside the boundary of Whittington Court.

Two months later...

THE ARCHER checked the hole on 1 July. It was still there, so we contacted the gas company.

According to a spokesperson for National Grid, they were not called to the gas leak until 4 June. He said: "To access the leak, we had to break a BT utility cover that was built over our gas pipe. The leak was repaired the following day. We are unable to reinstate the area fully until BT repair the box. We will continue to contact them."

After *THE ARCHER* explained the position to BT, the problem was investigated. "We have raised a fault to get the utility cover repaired as soon as possible; the matter is now in hand,"

said a spokesperson.

Mr Robinson's reaction to this protracted problem? "The Mayor of London should do something about the multitudinous holes in London's roads," he said.

Kieran: The Karate Kid

By Helen Drake

How does it feel to be a world-class athlete? For most of us it is something we can only daydream about. For 11-year-old Martin Primary School pupil Kieran Nunkoo, it is a reality.

With many previous high-ranking wins under his belt, June 2008 has been a particularly successful month for Kieran who took the Bronze medal at the World Championships in Sweden, the silver medal at the Karate Commonwealth Games in Scotland and the Gold at the British Amateur Martial Arts Association (AMA) competition in Sheffield. He is the youngest member of the AMA British squad, and this year he has won a medal (eight in all) in every competition he has entered, a unique achievement in his age group.

When he was six, Kieran's parents took him to karate lessons at the David Lloyd Club, but it was winning his first medal at the age of nine that built up his confidence to continue with the sport. Now a well-known figure on the karate circuit, Kieran practises two to three times a week either at the club or at home with his dad, and is very proud of his achievements. Aside from karate and art (his favourite subject) Kieran is passionate about cricket and is in the Year 6 cricket team at school.

Looking to the future

With Friern Barnet School beckoning in September, Kieran's ambition is not only to continue winning medals internationally when he moves into the older age groups, but also to get involved with other sports at secondary school.

So back to the original question: How does it feel to be a world-class athlete? Over to Kieran: "Really proud. Amazing. I can't really describe it as the feeling is overwhelming."



A proud Kieran with his medals. Photo by Helen Drake

If you are inspired to follow in Kieran's footsteps, go to www.ashinokai.co.uk for more information on their classes at the David Lloyd Club.

Barnet Senior Volunteers

Barnet's Retired and Senior Volunteers contribute significantly to the quality of life in this borough. They have fingers in many pies, and always welcome new members.

Their next meeting is on Tuesday 7 October, at 2.30pm in Barnet Library, Stapylton Road. It is open to everyone. More information from RSVP Organiser Bill Ibbotson on 020 8440 1291 or at bill.ibbotson@btinternet.com.

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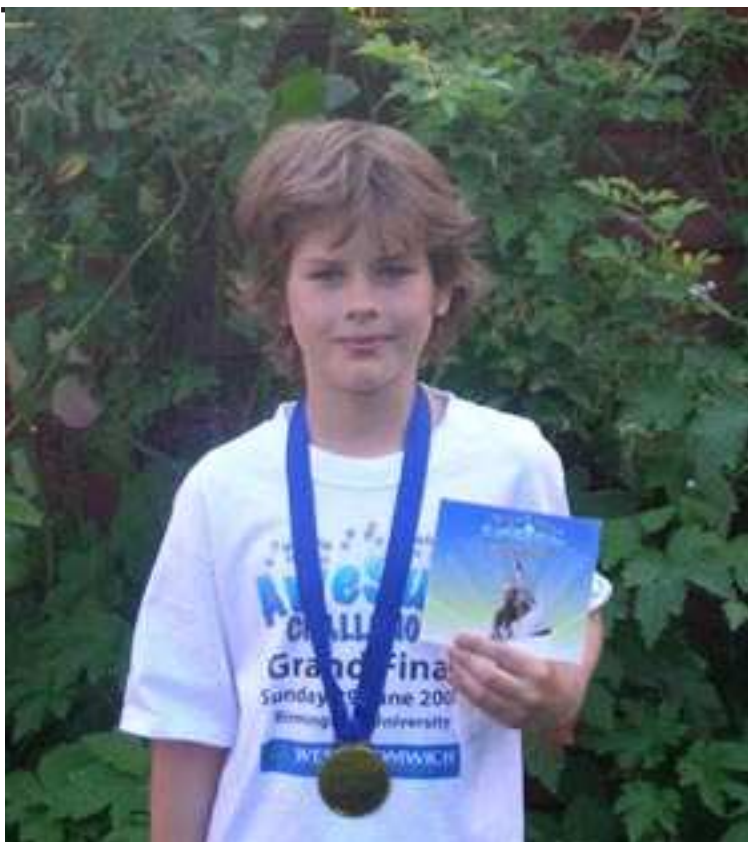
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The Awesum mathematician, Miles Johnson. Photo by Kate Fuscoe

Awesome achievement

Eleven-year-old Miles Johnson beat children from across the UK to take part in the Grand Final of "The Awesum Challenge", a national maths competition held at Birmingham University on Sunday 29 June.

An annual event sponsored by the West Bromwich Building Society and The Mercian Trust, "The Awesum Challenge" is an online game developed to focus on financial literacy for Key Stage 2.

An incredible 100,000 children clicked on to the challenge, with more than 5,000 completing it. Miles, a pupil at Martin Primary School and the only Barnet pupil in the final, reached the top 20, a great achievement.

In the Great Hall

"When I heard I was going to Birmingham to take part in the Awesum maths challenge, I had a mix of feelings: excitement, nervousness and surprise," said Miles. "I hadn't expected to come in the top 20 out of 5,000 kids."

"On the day we had a huge breakfast but I was too nervous to eat much. We drove to Birmingham University, a large red-brick complex like the Great Hall in the Harry Potter films."

"My stomach was all knotted, and when we entered a large hall with a kind of TV studio feel, my nervousness got even worse. But soon I'd made some friends and began enjoying being there. We sat ourselves down at tables with laptops and began the challenge. Basically, in a time limit of 10 minutes, we had to answer as many mental maths questions as possible."

"I actually got my best score ever in that round, but I came 9th out of 20 people, when I needed to get in the top 8 to go through. After about an hour and a half everyone got their prizes: a big shiny gold medal, £50 voucher for WH Smith as well as a book and the Awesum Challenge game to play on our computer. These were given to us by Hannah England, the quickest 1500m sprinter in England and an almost certain for the Beijing Olympics. Overall this was an amazing experience and I just hope I can do as well as this in the future."

Barnet Music Festival

If you've never been to the Barnet Primary Schools' Music Festival you're missing something very special. Celebrating its eighth year, the 2008 Festival took place at artsdepot in North Finchley between 9 and 13 June and involved 66 primary schools (more than 2,000 pupils) and five secondary schools.

Emma Galletti di Cadilhac, aged 11, describes the experience:

I was a member of a small choir from Martin Primary School that attended the festival. We were accompanied by eight other schools and we all sang together, as well as doing our own performance piece. Martin Primary sang the Tallis Canon, a four-part harmony.

All the schools had to be there in the early afternoon for rehearsals and had to stay put until our seven o'clock performance. We were all very nervous, but when we saw the sea of beaming parents, friends and relatives the nerves disappeared. All the schools sounded spectacular, and I truly believe that every person there, singing or not, had a night to remember.

YOUNG ARCHER

Playing it back

By Diana Cormack

Vish Patel, of Strawberry Vale, has no doubt about the value of youth clubs. As a teenager he regularly attended the Herbert Wilmot Centre. Now Vish has decided to give local children something he would like to have learned at their age.

For well over a year he has been working at The Monday Club teaching DJ skills and other related activities. These include creating and recording music, MCing, rapping and singing. The main aim is for children to produce their own work and some youth club members are now involved in making their own albums. They also learn how to set up and use the high quality equipment Vish provides. He acquired it by saving up and by getting a government grant from a scheme intended to promote new ideas and initiatives.

Funding is vital and Vish told *THE ARCHER* that he could not have done all this without the help of The Green Man Community Centre, where he is able to store his equipment and have a base for working at other youth clubs and schools.



Andre Clemenson gets Vish Patel to listen to his composition. Photo by Diana Cormack

As well as holding workshops, events. Known as DJVUK, he is also available for parties, Vish can be contacted on 07914 849172.

Woodcraft Folk visit Coldfall Wood

By Molly Windust, aged 8

On Tuesday 24 June 20 children from the Elfin Group of the Woodcraft Folk were shown around Coldfall Wood by Linda Alliston, who is a Friend of Coldfall Wood. She told us that the wood is 500 years old and 14 hectares big. It was created when the ice age began.

Coldfall Wood used to be extremely dark and overgrown, but was coppiced 18 months ago, so now the light is let in and you can see more. The light makes things grow, such as nettles, and insects and butterflies love this. The felling and coppicing left lots of tree trunks and insects inhabit these, which is good for the birds because they eat the insects!

There was a big problem in the past with the stream smelling horrible. The Friends discovered that washing machine water and toilet water were coming into the stream from the neighbourhood. They soon stopped this. The Friends planted a reed bed to filter out pollution, and herons and frogs have come to live in this.

The trees now have bat boxes on them to encourage bats, and now Coldfall Wood has over 130 different species of insects.

There is another problem at the bottom of the wood. Water collects there and makes a swamp, which is fun to paddle in, and I did this with my friend, but unfortunately it encourages rats and pigeons. The pipes are blocked under the swamp and it looks bad and smells horrible too. The Friends have asked for £85,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to unblock the pipes.

I like Coldfall Wood because it is alive with animals and insects and parakeets, and the birds are lovely. I walk my friend's dog there and he loves it. We all need to take care of these special woods!

New head teacher for Martin Primary School

Martin Primary children, staff and parents will be welcoming a new head teacher when they return to school after the summer break.

Helen Morrison has been the Deputy Head at Gospel Oak Primary School in Camden for the past six and a half years.

Parents and carers were told that she has an excellent record as a teacher and leader, is a qualified Ofsted inspector,

and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge, particularly of school improvement and the raising of academic standards. She has also been highly successful in developing strong parental and community relationships.

PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

Holy Trinity

Year 1 children were given an eco-friendly bag to take home after a talk about how plastic bags can damage our environment.

More than 150 people attended the school open day and gave very positive feedback to the children and teachers.

Restaurant Ecole served the children with a delicious summer barbecue. They also had ice cream one day as a special treat.

A bike trader board in the playground enabled people to sell or exchange bikes.

The school, which is one form entry, collected the amazing amount of nearly 20,000 Tesco Computers for School vouchers.

Martin School

For the first time (and in the year of their amalgamation) the school won the athletics cup at the Barnet Primary Schools annual meeting.

The school choir performed with the North London Chorus, repeating an event that proved popular with parents and children last year.

The Summer Fun Day raised over £3000 for school funds.

Year 5 children were offered the chance to participate in Barnet's summer cycling skills training sessions.

Some Year 4 children were selected to spend a day at the Beckham Academy where they collected points as a team for football-related maths work, science (fitness) and English (acting as reporters) before taking part in a football competition with other schools.

Year 2 thoroughly enjoyed a sleepover arranged for them by the staff.

The PTA organized discos for all the children on a non-uniform day at the end of term.



KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Gone (with the wind)

It's over, the musical of the film of the book of the myth of the 'Old South' has crashed into oblivion and joined the great pantheon of theatrical failures. Yes, the idiots who decided to turn *Gone With The Wind* into a musical have had to close it due to everyone else's lack of interest. It's not the first time that bright ideas have turned out to be as dim as a blown out candle when headbutted by reality, but every time it happens I just have to laugh.

At least *Gone With The Wind* lasted longer than *All Bob's Women*, which disappeared so fast that it left nothing but a bad smell and posters on the underground. But few can match the theatrical car crash that was *Fields of Ambrosia*.

This American bright idea was all about a woman on death row and the efforts of a reformed executioner to save her from frying in the electric chair. It went down well in New York, but not in the West End, where even the most low-rent theatre critic loathed it. It staggered along for 23 performances before good taste got the better of it, 22 performances too late for most people. But there's worse to come.

Now that World War Two is disappearing into memory the coke-fuelled crazies are crawling out of their bunkers with whole new lows in the taste stakes. We've had *Sophie's Choice - The Opera* and now we are going to have *Imagine This*. Well, I'd rather not imagine a fun-filled musical about life in the Warsaw Ghetto. I don't care if it comes with high-kicking Nazi stormtroopers or if there's a tender love song as the hero is dragged off to a death camp, I still think it stinks. Maybe the weird and deranged writers who came up with this one don't realise that *Springtime for Hitler* is meant to be a joke. Then again, maybe that's their next easily missable production.

All is not lost in the land of the musical, not when the future holds *Brokeback Mountain: The Musical*, something that will be so seriously camp on more than one level that the only thing to do will be to buy a tent.

Rare breed spotted

By Ann Bronkhorst

Artists aren't rare in East Finchley; last month's Open House weekends revealed more than 40 of them. But it is rare today to meet an artist who is the founder of a group with political as well as artistic significance.

Charles Thomson, who lives and paints in a 19th century cottage in East Finchley, is the founder of The Stuckists, a few like-minded artists who agreed, in 1999, that they were opposed to much fashionable conceptual art. "We were," he says, "contrary to and defiant of the whole art establishment." Now the movement is international and has a place in art history.

Petition to Prime Minister

Two issues continue to be the focus for Stuckists' mockery and anger: the Turner Prize (remember those demonstrators dressed as clowns?) and the Tate. Sir Nicholas Serota, Tate Galleries' director for 20 years, is strongly criticised by the Stuckists, who have exposed the Tate's purchase of its own trustees' work. Charles Thomson claims Sir Nicholas "regularly extracts large sums of money from the government and members of the public on the pretext of buying art that meets a public demand". By the end of August the next director must be appointed, or perhaps reappointed, so Charles has set up a public petition to the



Stuckist founder Charles Thomson challenges Tate director. Photo by Ann Bronkhorst

Conjure up the magic of theatre

This summer brings a unique opportunity to learn about one of the backstage crafts that create the magic of theatre: Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts is running an exciting one-week course about the art and technical skills of theatre lighting design.

Keen beginners or those with basic experience will be able to get their hands on professional lighting equipment and enjoy the chance to put on a full-scale production.

Famous names who have been through Mountview's doors include Connie Fisher, star of *The Sound of Music*, and Leanne Jones, who won a best actress award for her role in *Hairspray*.

The course is being run by lighting director Matt Veitch, who lives in Kitchener Road. He's passionate about what he does and convinced that the course could open the door to many a successful career.

"Lighting is an essential part of stage design. It creates mood and atmosphere and helps you conjure up some incredible images. It's about dark and shadow as much as it is about colour," he said.

"This course is for someone who wants to gain some practical know-how. We'll help students understand electricity and they'll get their hands on the lighting kit, as well as designing for a show."

Courses run in the first two weeks of August but Mountview plans to run more in the near future. The academy is not far away, between Alexandra Palace and Wood Green. For more details, contact 020 8826 9217, email cadev@mountview.org.uk or visit www.mountview.org.uk.



Matt Veitch. Photo by John Lawrence



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- ❖ **East Finchley Writers Group**, Weds at the Old White Lion. Contact Carola 8883 5808 or Lilian 8444 1793.
- ❖ **East Finchley Poetry Writing Workshops**. Monthly on Saturdays. Contact Dennis Evans 8346 9528.
- ❖ **Finchley Jazz Club: All Stars Special** 4 & 18 August at 8pm, Wilf Slack Cricket Pavilion, East End Rd, N3.
- ❖ **Line dancing** Tuesdays from 8.30pm at The Constitutional Club. Call Maureen 8440 8530.
- ❖ **Memory Lane Singing Club** - friendly singing club meets every Friday in Finchley. Call Valerie 8458 4508.
- ❖ **Over 50s Tea Dance** at Christ Church, North Finchley. Every Weds, 1pm. 020 8444 0280.
- ❖ **Learn to sing** at Finchley Methodist Church, Ballards La. Call 8888 4412.
- ❖ **Street Dance** every Tuesday at Old Barn for children of various ages. Contact Lorna 07976 203669.
- ❖ **SwampRock** Louisiana dance club live music events. Carole 8810 7454 or www.swamprock.org.uk.
- ❖ **Symphonic Wind Orchestra** Contact Caroline Egan 8340 2706
- ❖ **Tap Dance** for children at Old Barn on Mondays, Call Sharon 8349 4613
- ❖ **Traditional Music** in the Alexandra pub, Church Lane from 8.30pm on the last Thursday of every month.

CLUBS & SOCIAL

- ❖ **Bingo Club** Mondays 7-9pm, Green Man Centre, Contact: Jan 8815 5459
- ❖ **Contact Lunch Club** Tuesdays at the Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book.
- ❖ **EF National Childbirth Trust** contact Joanna 8883 0941 or joanna-brunt@cybergal.com
- ❖ **Finchley & District Philatelic Society**, Contact Brian 8444 3251
- ❖ **Friendly Rubber Bridge** at The Old Barn. Contact 8349 4613
- ❖ **Friends of Cherry Tree Wood** www.cherrytreewood.co.uk or call 8883 7544.
- ❖ **Haringey Recorded Music Society** informal meetings locally. Call David Mouldon on 8361 1696.
- ❖ **Highgate Film Society**, call 8340 3343 or email: admin@hlsi.net.
- ❖ **North London Bridge Club**, Muswell Hill. Contact 8348 3495
- ❖ **Jewish Friendship Club** for over 60s, Tuesdays 1-3pm at Muswell Hill Synagogue, Tetherdown. Call Anita Shaw 8886 6140.
- ❖ **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.

Entente cordiale

By Ann Bronkhorst

Until 16 August, artsdepot in North Finchley is hosting an exhibition of remarkable prints by French artists. It's a chance to see work by Bonnard, Gauguin, Manet, Matisse and Toulouse-Lautrec in the quiet, uncrowded setting of the Apthorp Gallery, just a bus ride from East Finchley.

Visitors to the exhibition, which is free, also receive two-for-one vouchers for the Cezanne exhibition at the Courtauld Gallery, Somerset House, in the Strand. This is because a relationship has been established between the famous, and central Courtauld and our own North London arts centre.

Rarely seen prints

The first 'feelers' were put out two years ago by Tracey Lazarus, visual art programmer at artsdepot, who had studied at the Courtauld. While artsdepot has hosted touring exhibitions from, for example, the Tate and Hayward galleries, this one is a first: a group of works specially selected for artsdepot, some of which had not been displayed in public for many years.

The choices were made by curator Sarah Hyde and the Courtauld's own prints specialists. There are no startling displays of colour and most of the pictures are fairly small. Up close (and here you *can* get up close) they are subtle, varied and full of human interest, from the compelling near-caricatures of dancers and singers by Toulouse-Lautrec to the delicate suggestions of female flesh tones achieved by Matisse.

Playwrights wanted

A call has gone out for playwrights to enter a competition in celebration of arts charity Community Focus's 30th birthday year.

To highlight the diverse work of writers in London, CF is inviting budding playwrights aged 16 and over to create a new play on the theme of '30'.

Entrants can submit work in one of two categories: the CF New Writers Award for all entrants over 16 and the Emerging Writers Award for adults with learning difficulties.

The judging panel will include representatives from Channel 4, Empire Magazine and Private Eye. Judges will be looking for an original script and for plays that approach the theme of '30' in an interesting and imaginative way.

A shortlist of four writers will have extracts from their plays read by actors at the CF Playwriting Awards Evening on 24 October 2008.

Entry is open to unpublished writers over the age of 16. CF will accept one act plays, 30 minutes in length, to a maximum of 15-20 pages. For the Emerging Writers Award, CF will accept one act plays, 8-20 minutes in length, to a maximum of 5-15 pages. All plays should be connected to the theme of '30' and typed in Arial font, 14 point.

Closing date for entries is 29 September 2008. Entrants can download guidelines and an application form at www.communityfocus.co.uk.

Most of the works were made in the late 19th century and reflect the period in several ways: Japanese influences on artistic techniques; the raffish world of Parisian nightlife and the stage; the longing for an idealised primitive paradise. Technically, most are lithographs, with some etchings and a series of powerful Gauguin woodcuts. The accompanying labels, by Sarah Hyde, provide accessible and helpful information.

This exhibition may be 'the start of a beautiful friendship' between artsdepot and the Courtauld. Certainly it's attracting North Londoners and, says Tracey Lazarus, it's been "super-busy". The run has been extended to Saturday 16 August, 12-4pm daily, and on selected evenings from 6-8pm. For details call artsdepot on 020 8369 5454. At the Courtauld the Cezanne exhibition continues until 5 October.

August at the Phoenix

By Paul Homer, Phoenix Cinema manager

Some things are so audacious, so incredible that if you saw them in a film you wouldn't believe them. So when you see *Man on Wire* it's hard to believe that it's true. Philippe Petit not only managed to do a tightrope walk between the twin towers of the World Trade Centre but to do it entirely without consent, smuggling all the equipment he needed into the towers and launching his daring stunt in guerrilla fashion. It was such a daring feat that it rightly grabbed the world's attention.

We're delighted to be welcoming Simon Chinn, the film's producer, to the Phoenix on Friday 1 August at the 6.30pm performance to discuss Philippe and the making of this film. This is an event not to be missed.

I really enjoy the films of Shane Meadows; he's a sure sign that there are good things in the British film industry. His films may not always quite satisfy but they have a clear voice, great characters, witty dialogue, cool soundtracks and a willingness to explore dark issues. I'm very much looking forward to his new film *Somers Town* opening on 22 August.

Set in the Somers Town area near Euston the film follows two teenage boys, Tommo and Marek, who come to London from Not-

tingham and Poland respectively, as they make sense of their new worlds. This film, for many, is even better than Meadows's surprise hit last summer, *This is England*.

We have a full month of double bills on Sunday afternoons this August. One I'd like to draw attention to is on 24 August: two films by Guy Maddin, *My Winnipeg* and *The Saddest Music in the World*. Guy Maddin is an exceptional filmmaker, intellectually curious, a lover of archive film who writes his own soundtracks. His films may not always be what you might expect but are quite brilliant.

Our box office is on 020 8444 6789 or visit www.phoenixcinema.co.uk.



The children of the Kaos choir put on a fantastic show. Photo by John Lawrence

Signing and singing

By Julia Cooper

Children from the Kaos Signing Choir were in fine voice and hands at a recent fundraising concert at St Mary's School, Hornsey. They even let a few adults share the limelight in an uplifting show that left everyone smiling.

The choir unites deaf children from the Blanche Neville School for Deaf Children, Highgate, with hearing children from Highgate Primary School and various others from the Kaos after-school workshop groups, all under the direction of Suzy Davies and Ali Jackson.

The group of 100 seven to 18-year-olds sign and sing with equal love and passion. It may sound an unusual combination, but their witty, catchy songs are truly brilliant, lyrically and musically.

Titles such as *Veggie Aliens* *With Attitude* and *Rock Boots* are just part of their repertoire.

Visual X factor

The songs may be aimed at children, but equally delight parents. In performance, the

signing visual element adds the 'X' factor lacking in standard ensembles.

Hearing members of the audience can even pick up the odd sign or two if they watch closely. Know the signs for pink lip-gloss, candyfloss and a dead hamster? Lots of people left the show with those very signs firmly installed in their vocabulary, and who knows

when they'll come in handy?

In a very hot, sweaty and packed school hall, the adult branch of the choir - the Angels of Kaos - proved themselves worthy singing mates with some professional harmonies. When it came to signing, however, as with all new skills, the children eclipsed the grown-ups totally. Good to know some things never change!

What's On...

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

Wednesday 13 August
Highgate Wood, birds of prey display, 11.0am - 3.0pm

Saturdays in August
Literary walks in Hampstead and Highgate. **Saturday 16 August: *Romantics of Hampstead*. Saturday 23 August: *Hampstead between the wars*. Saturday 30 August: *Coleridge at Highgate*. All walks start at 11.30am. Advance booking**

essential. Contact 020 8340 7178 or visit www.literarywalks.co.uk.

Sat 13 & Sun 14 September
Come to the **Swamp Rock Cajun and Zydeco Stage** at the **Thames Festival** at London City Pier. 12 noon - 9pm, non-stop music and dance with nine bands, dance instruction and DJs Flying Home and Lil' Queenie. Admission free. More info on website, www.swamprock.org.uk.



Letters to the Editor

Pavements are safe at night

Dear Editor,

I read your article in THE ARCHER about the tax on using the pavements in East Finchley.

It would be a shame if traders had to stop this, as it gives the village such a nice friendly feeling. It also stops a lot of crime, as the place is so alive at night. I am never afraid to walk up the High Road at night.

I think the council should pay the traders for the lovely look it gives. It is like a continental village, and people get to know each other just by seeing them all the time. I think there is a bit of jealousy there by Barnet. East Finchley is so much nicer.

Yours faithfully,
M.C.Gallacher-Mackay,
Leicester Road, N2.

Tax will create a ghost town

Dear Editor,

Barnet's Licensing Team should listen to the traders and not charge for use of the pavement outside their premises (THE ARCHER, July 2008). It doesn't make sense. As your article stated: "Part of the rationale for the charge is to discourage traders from cluttering the pavement and obstructing pedestrians." Then they contradict themselves, as they are quite happy to let them use the pavement as long as they pay a licensing fee.

Pavements are wide in East Finchley and it is not really an issue. You are more likely to fall over a broken paving stone in the street than be obstructed by traders' goods. So let's not damage the image of East Finchley by taxing local traders. Let's see displays of shops goods and allow

cafés to continue with tables placed outside and not turn East Finchley into a ghost town.

Yours faithfully,
Maggie Golden,
Sylvester Road, N2.

Tax pavement use: within reason

Dear Editor,

The pavement tax you refer to in your July issue is yet another 'catch-penny' by Barnet Council. It seems that one of the reasons for this stupid tax is to reduce pavement obstacles for pedestrians (not a problem in the High Road). If so, those pavement stalls or tables and chairs which do not unreasonably restrict pedestrian movements should be free of the tax. Much is written these days about how London is becoming 'continental' - if not if Barnet can help it.

Yours faithfully,
Alan Grant,
Hertford Road, N2.

Pavement palaver

Dear Editor

After reading your front page article "Pavement tax protest by traders" (THE ARCHER, July 2008), I wondered if Barnet Council will also be charging Domino's or Pizza Hut for parking their mopeds on the pavement outside their shops in their crackdown on unlicensed street trading to make pavements more pedestrian-friendly?

I cannot understand (or accept) that traffic wardens employed in East Finchley can overlook the mopeds parked on pavements without issuing penalty notice charges (which is also a loss of revenue to Barnet Council). After all, traffic wardens will penalise motorcyclists when they have parked

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

one wheel slightly on the pavement! I was advised by Barnet Council's Enforcement Department that "due to the limited resources, it may not be possible to send Enforcement Officers every day and as such the mopeds continue to park on the pavements. The legislation that governs Barnet Council's ability to issue penalty charges does not facilitate parking attendants issuing verbal/written warnings to individuals who are not observed to be parked in contravention of restrictions."

Perhaps there's one rule for some and another rule for others?

Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied.

Local supermarket is badly needed

Dear Editor,

East Finchley is a pleasant place to live, with its excellent tube connections, wonderful primary schools, hard-working Safer Neighbourhoods Team, decent restaurants and haphazard bus service. What it clearly lacks, however, is a supermarket. Iceland is fine for fish fingers and bargain crisps. Budgens isn't bad as an over-sized corner shop with a particular specialism in wildly expensive craft-baked pies. Tony's Continental is lovely for a treat or an olive cornucopia. And I like the idea of having a fishmonger, even if I'm too intimidated by a wet fish counter actually to go in there. But nobody is able to do a weekly family shop in these places. And, if they do, they've clearly got more slack in their family budget than we have. It's frustrating enough to see large planning applications such as that from Waitrose turned down, but even more so to see a proposal for a small supermarket on the long-empty Stag Court site being subjected to the same old "protect our village atmosphere" campaign. East Finchley may boast a cheery local character who roams the streets shouting "The best of luck" but that - combined with a fishmonger, a baker and a greengrocer - does not a village make. As somebody without the resources to own a car, or the eyesight to drive one, I'm resigned to schlepping to Tesco in Finchley Central to drag competitively priced nappies back down Long Lane.

I suppose I can see how there's an argument for resisting a big, big store on our doorsteps. But please can those of us on the Church Lane end of East Finchley at least be allowed to have a local supermarket at our end of the High Road? There is a real need for it, in this household at least, and I'm sure it won't prove too disruptive to those playing cricket on the idyllic East Finchley village green or sipping tea while admiring the thatched Tudor splendour of the Local Café.

PS: I have no association with this planning application.

Yours faithfully,
Alan Crockford
Trinity Road, N2

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Cyclists saddle up for mini Tour de France

The annual summer barbecue at Holy Trinity School had a French flavour this year, with everyone going cycling mad to coincide with the Tour de France.

Children and adults alike got a chance to compete for the fastest lap and the slowest lap as well as the formidable Turbo Challenge: a kilometre in the fastest time.

The less energetic could sit on the school field and enjoy the barbecue food and the special French tarts for dessert.



Daniel Weir, of Year 5, takes a corner in the fastest lap competition. Photo by John Lawrence

Tesco or not - the name is not the issue

Dear Editor

A new supermarket on the High Road (THE ARCHER, May 2008) would surely be a step in the wrong direction for East Finchley.

My partner and I live in Creighton House overlooking Stag Court, and we moved here because we knew and liked the area. East Finchley has a great village feel, quite distinct from other areas such as North Finchley or Golders Green. We protested against the supermarket in March. The planning application was subsequently withdrawn but has since been resubmitted.

Our fear is that further growth of the shopping area could tip the balance and end up quite fundamentally changing the nature of the area. Certainly a new supermarket is going to lead to more noise and disturbance nearby. And more traffic: Finchley High Road is already congested during peak hours, and an additional supermarket will surely add to that.

Parking is another issue. It's clear that no provision has been made for any additional parking for customers.

Fellow residents of East Finchley I have spoken to feel the same way about this proposal, and the fact that Barnet Council will not take into account the petition of 312 people who protested against the supermarket when the first application was made in March, simply because the application was withdrawn.

As the consultation period will be over once this edition of THE ARCHER is published, local residents who were unaware that a further application had been made might want to write to the Chair of the Planning Committee at Barnet to protest that their views have been ignored for purely technical reasons.

Write to Planning Services, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP, quoting planning application F/01379/08.

Yours faithfully,
Dr Phil Prentice,
Creighton Avenue, N2.

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.



Time I stopped whining

By Dawn Powell

For several years now, I have been dreading the day I turn 30: I view it as the deadline for achieving all of my life ambitions. Each birthday is a depressing reminder of all that I haven't done and that time is running out. But this year, when I turned 28, I had an epiphany: I should really learn to shut up and quit whining. Firstly, I am perfectly capable of getting what I want in life and, secondly, 30 is a ridiculous time limit. Thirdly, and most important of all, if I put even half the energy that I put into feeling sorry for myself into helping others, I could make a real difference. And that's why I joined Amnesty International.

Amnesty International has been campaigning for human rights for the past 47 years. It has helped to get a United Nations resolution to work towards an arms trade treaty, got thousands of people who have been unfairly imprisoned released, and generally told the Robert Mugabes of this world that their abominable behaviour won't be tolerated. A recent crusade was to secure the release of two leaders of the human rights group Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), who had been denied bail after being arrested for protesting against the violence surrounding the elections in Zimbabwe. Amnesty International petitioned Zimbabwe officials and sent messages of support to the women; in short, made it clear that these two prisoners could not be locked up and forgotten. Jenni Williams and Magodonga Mahlangu have now been freed, something that might not have been achieved without the work of Amnesty International.

In a very small way, I played a part in this work and it feels fantastic to be part of an organisation that is changing the world for the better, one step at a time. For more information, visit the St John's Wood Amnesty International group website, <http://stjohnswood.amnesty.org.uk>

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Martin Primary School Athletics show off the winning trophy!

We are the champions!

By Euan Cormack and Freddie Girling (both aged 11)
On 2 July the best athletes from Martin Primary School went to Cophall for the Barnet Schools Athletics tournament.

In the morning the field events took place. There were four events in this section. Gideon Wallace won the Year 6 boys' high jump. Arfeen Dar came first in the Year 6 boys' shot put and Freddie Girling won the Year 6 boys' long jump.

After lunch the rest of the day was spent on the track events. We won too many races to count but we seemed to do better at the sprinting than the long distance.

All the way through every-

one was cheering on their team mates. Most people lost their voice, except Kir, who found herself a very loud horn.

All this work paid off as Martin Primary finished the king of the track, 3rd in the field and the overall Champions!!

John Jackson, PE Co-ordinator, said: "It was a great team performance where everyone was supportive of each other. I felt very proud of all the children and I'm already looking forward to defending the trophy next year."

New nursery places at children's centre

By Lisa Omar

Newstead Children's Centre in Fallows Close recently celebrated the opening of its new nursery provision. The June celebrations started off in a wonderful atmosphere with music, a bouncy castle, children's face painting, games and lots of fun activities for all children and parents.

Newstead will now be providing nursery places for 13 two-to-three year olds and 13 places for three-to-five year olds. Children can attend the nursery all year round or term times only. Parents can choose as many or as few sessions as they wish for their child. Fees are set at an affordable rate in line with the childcare element of Working Tax Credit.

Newstead Children's Centre is managed by Barnet Council and is registered with Ofsted. Other services that it provides include a childminding network, parent and toddler drop-in sessions, adult education courses and access to midwives and health visitors.

Newstead is open from 8am to 6pm giving parents the opportunity to return to work

or further education. For further information, contact Mrs Sharma on 020 8359 3460.

Slot car racing gives a real buzz

By John Lawrence

When I received an invitation to join the Finchley Manor Scalextric Club at their weekly meeting, I imagined enthusiasts would turn up with their 'figure of 8' box sets and spend hours setting up their tracks and getting them to work properly like I used to do when I were a lad.

Not so. I walked into the club and was confronted with a mini-Silverstone. Six lanes and 50m of high-adrenaline computerised racing track stretched out in front of me, complete with starting lights, crash barriers, model vehicles and a spectators' stand.

These slot car fanatics are a friendly bunch but they take their hobby very seriously. Many of the racers are European standard and have taken part in six, 12 and even 24-hour endurance races, most recently in Paris where they got a podium finish third place.

The size and complexity of the permanent track is incredible. It took six months to construct and contains 760 pieces of track, with umpteen metres of wire hidden underneath.

Getting back your childhood

Club member Ian Newstead explained the appeal: "A lot of the members grew up with Scalextric. Then they met a girl and went off it. When they had kids, they came back to Scalextric again and found they still love it."

"I love the competition and the racing. It's a relatively cheap hobby and you get so much of a buzz out of it."

The club's track fills a building at the garden centre on East End Road. Racers can monitor their lap times via computer and, for special races, they even have a Murray Walker style commentary.

New members of all ages are welcome to join. The club meets on Tuesday evenings from 7.30pm to 10.30pm. For more details, contact Ian on 07861 688521 or visit the website www.fmssc.org.uk.



Club members compete for the best times on the massive Scalextric track. Photo by John Lawrence

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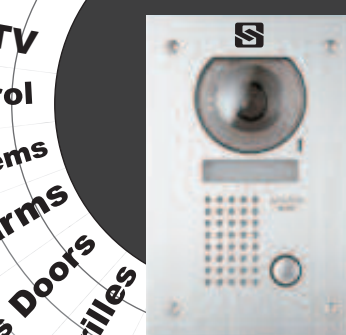
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