



## Experience that doesn't go to waste

By Diana Cormack

The expertise and experience of older people is being put to good use in an innovative and beneficial way. Prime Thinkers was set up two years ago as a voluntary, non-profit making group with charitable aims. Now 20 problem solvers, idea developers, concept testers and creative thinkers aged over 55 pass on their wealth of knowledge and raise money for Kith and Kids, which supports families living with disability.

A group of eight to 10 thinkers meets monthly in a Muswell Hill café with a variety of advice seekers who may be from companies, voluntary agencies or start-ups. The presenters are given ten minutes to air their problems or ideas. Fifteen minutes of brain storming and debate follow.

After this, everyone participates in a gloves-off discussion lasting 20 minutes, with a final session of evaluating and coming up with the best possible solutions.

Presentations are observed and notes are taken as a spur for further action. The meetings are relaxed and informal, with everyone round the table given time to have their say. A chairperson is there to keep order and ensure adherence to the basic rules of the group. Each presenter

donates £100 to Kith and Kids, with further agreed donations for any subsequent consultation.

### Praise for scheme

Maurice Collins, of Beech Drive, N2, told *THE ARCHER* that more than 30 companies and businesses had sought help from Prime Thinkers over the last year, having heard about them through personal contacts and networks and in the national press. The scheme was short listed as one of the best social innovations for 2008 by the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) and The Guardian newspaper.

If any aspect of this interests you, email [mauricecollins@msn.com](mailto:mauricecollins@msn.com) or phone 07796 991 140 for more information.

## Rosy future for horticultural society

*Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society is celebrating its centenary this year with an enhanced programme of events. Marjorie Harris tells us more. One hundred years ago, just before 20 May 1909, the redoubtable Dame Henrietta Barnett put up posters in the fledgling Hampstead Garden Suburb, inviting residents to a meeting at The Institute to discuss "the Objects and Rules of the Horticultural Society".*

It must have been a successful meeting, because a few weeks later the society held its very first flower show in a marquee on Central Square on August Bank Holiday. Visiting the show cost 3d for non-members and there were eight classes for members to enter. During that first season, several gardens were open to the public, not bad for an area which had been mostly farmland up to two years before.

### The year ahead

By contrast, in 2009 there are 77 classes for members to enter in the society's June show and 99 in the September show. Throughout the year there will be many celebratory events, including special competitions, outings, talks, a band, a Centenary Apple Hunt, a Garden Buddy Scheme, plant sales, open gardens and much more.

On 18 July, the Grand Opening of a new community flowerbed on Willifield Way, NW11, and a Festival of Roses in Fellowship House will take place. As well as our own open gardens event on 21 June, of which 50% of the proceeds will go to the NW Support Group of the North London Hospice, the gardens of 11 members will be open under the National Gar-

dens Scheme.

Society membership costs only £5 per adult (£7.50 per household, children under 18 free). To join, telephone 020 8455 7334, or to find out more about the society's history and activities visit [www.hortsoc.co.uk](http://www.hortsoc.co.uk).

### First event of the spring

On 21 March, the Mayor of Barnet, Councillor John Marshall, will open the special Centenary Spring Show at the Free Church Hall, Northway, NW11. The show will feature an exhibition of Horticultural Society and gardening memorabilia over the last 100 years. Everyone is welcome and non-members pay just £1.00, excellent value when compared to that first 3d in 1909.



Photo shop: Faiza and Kashif Zaidi in their new photo print studio. Photo by John Lawrence

## Green machine

**Kashif and Faiza Zaidi have opened a new photographic service at KF Computers and Imaging in the High Road. Their Fuji digital printing machines use green technology to produce prints without the heavy use of chemicals.**

The printing studio now occupies half of the shop and includes individual kiosks for printing photos from digital cameras along with a giant printer capable of producing professional quality poster prints.

Mr and Mrs Zaidi have refocused their business around photographic and optical goods but still offer their popular laptop and PC sale, repair and upgrade services.

## Do you remember the last London Olympics?

**Did you take part in or attend the 1948 Olympic Games in London? Organisers of this year's East End Film Festival want to host a cross-generational event exploring the world of London during the 1948 Olympics.**

They are looking for anyone who was an athlete, official or spectator, or who was involved in any other way, and who still lives in London. The idea is to create a short film about their experiences, which they are hoping to make the focus of the Festival's 1948 street party this summer.

The East End Film Festival is held annually in Brick Lane. It is eight days and nights of film-focused music and arts. If you, or anyone you know, had any involvement in the 1948 Olympics and would like to take part, please e-mail Aglaia Gelpke at: [Aglaia.Gelpke@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Aglaia.Gelpke@towerhamlets.gov.uk).

## KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

### Intelligent design? Hardly.

**Before Darwin it was easy. God got up one Monday morning and decided to do something useful for a change. By Saturday he'd created an entire universe complete with stars, planets, seas, continents, plants, animals and even man. Not bad for a week's work, so he took Sunday off, probably to do the gardening. Darwin made it all a bit difficult because science and gods don't mix too well and evolution is about science.**

Evolution says we all evolved from single celled organisms that crawled out of the slime, evolved, evolved again, became extinct, fossilised themselves, got dug up and stuck in museums. Those that missed out on the extinction bit kept on evolving until they got to us. This took a couple of billion years and couldn't be done between breakfast on Monday and the time the pubs shut on Saturday night. It's science and I don't argue with science.

But somewhere out there bibles are being waved in the weird conviction that God did it all in six days. What about dinosaurs? These wackos claim that such is the sheer genius of the Almighty that he created the fossils to look 65 million years old when he'd actually made them on the Friday just before going down the pub and left them lying around as a bit of joke. If you believe that one, you'll believe in advertising next.

These guys have answers for everything. Remind them that science proves dinosaurs are millions of years old so God can't have knocked the whole thing up in an afternoon 4,500 years ago and guess what, they've an answer for that as well. They claim God did it in six days, but this wasn't the only one; he'd had a couple of goes first and not liked the results. Makes it sound like some garden makeover programme: "Tonight at nine on Make Yourself a New Garden with Alan Titchmarsh, we help God solve the problem of gigantic reptiles eating the tomatoes and help him transform the Garden of Eden into a family friendly adventure playground." Intelligent design? More like no intelligence, no design.

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