



Anna Finn has run 100 marathons.

Ten marathons in ten days

Anna Finn has become the world's youngest woman to have completed 100 marathons, making her a full member of the 100 Marathon Club. Anna, of Manor Park Road, has been in training solidly throughout the winter. Her next challenge this month is to run ten marathons in ten days in the 10 in10 around Lake Windermere in Cumbria.

Her training is punishing. This year, she has run a marathon, sometimes two, almost every weekend. She also tackles ultras, runs ranging from 27 to 100 miles. All Anna's running helps to raise funds for Brathay, a charity helping disadvantaged or vulnerable young people to make positive choices in their lives. You can make a donation at www.justgiving.com/annafinn10 in 10.

Enthusiasm in the third age

Eight people ranging in age from 60 to 84 are meeting together for the morning in Highgate Village. One of them lives in sheltered accommodation, several live on their own. But they haven't come for a cosy coffee morning or an occupational therapy group. This group meets every week to talk about life, art and politics.

This week's topic, Modern Art and how to look at it (or try to!), is introduced with great enthusiasm by Agnes and is followed by an equally enthusiastic discussion. This is only one of the interest groups which meet under the auspices of the North London University of the Third Age (NLU3A) every day of the week. There are more than 60 groups on everything from Bridge and Bonsai to Theatre Visits and Yoga, via Greek and Roman Plays and

Walking the Thames. But, in spite of the name, these are not university courses. They are a form of learning which enables people to share lifelong interests and skills and to find new activities. Above all, they enable people to get out and mix with others in a stimulating environment.

Further information about all the NLU3A groups and other activities is available at www.nlu3a.org.uk or from Ora Warren on 020 8349 3324.

Explosive device found

By Janet Maitland
A potentially explosive device was discovered in the park on Oak Lane on 8 April. The emergency services were called by a local resident at about 6pm when they saw what looked like a grenade lying on the grass.

The fire crew cordoned off the area round the object and called a specialist police team. While police officers assessed the device, fire officers widened the cordon to circle the whole park, which borders onto Thornton Drive. Anxious residents returning home from work were directed away from the area as a precaution.

The device was found to be a 'flashbang', which is designed to make a loud noise and a bright flash without causing any physical damage. Officers believed the device had already been set off and spent. It was removed and the cordon was lifted. No one was injured.

Police do not believe that the incident was related to terrorism. "No crime has been committed and no arrests were made," said a spokesperson.

Have you visited our 'best kept secret'?

By John Lawrence

Long Lane Pasture has reopened for the spring, with news of even more wildlife arrivals and a call for benefactors to help it continue its conservation work. The pasture bills itself as "Finchley's best kept secret", tucked away as it is on land opposite the fire station on Long Lane.

This spring, a new entrance way and path have been landscaped and a bench is shortly to be installed in full view of the birdfeeder. A circle has been cleared in the dense bramble by the railway line and been given a secret entrance.

Through the snowy winter, there have been plenty of winged visitors including redwings and fieldfares. A duck island has been built in the hope of encouraging ducks to return to the pond. A moorhen has already been spotted.

A group of three foxes has been seen so there may be a family living on this green space through the summer months.

The Long Lane Pasture Trust says that its grant funding from the Big Lottery Breathing

Places fund is coming to an end so it must now raise funds to cover essential overheads like insurance, tools and mower fuel.

Anyone who has enjoyed the beauty of this open pasture land is invited to send a donation or, better still, make a regular payment by bankers order to help the trust's work. Visit www.longlanepasture.org to get involved.

The pasture is open to the public every weekend between 10am and 5pm. Volunteers to work on conservation projects are welcome between 10am and 12 noon on Saturdays. There are a number of free special events coming up during the spring and summer, details of which are included on the website.



Paul Baker holding the group's interest. Photo by Diana Cormack

Stepping back in time

By Diana Cormack

It was the title that first attracted me: "Fabulous Finchley: a guided walk through 1,000 years of history". That, plus the fact it finished at East Finchley tube station so I wouldn't have far to walk home. However, by the time we got there, I didn't want it to end.

Most former teachers have the gift of the gab and this certainly applied to our leader Paul Baker. He is also a qualified City of London guide so knows what he is talking about and, as well as conducting walks in the City and the West End, has been doing local walks since 2004. Paul has lived in the area with his family for 23 years and obviously loves it.

We met at Finchley Central station and made our way to St Mary's Church, past Parde House School then down

Gravel Hill and along East End Road, arriving at our destination after about two and a half hours. The walking was easy and the time sped by, filled as it was with so many interesting facts and details pointed out along the way. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Walks cost £7 per adult and £3 for accompanied children under 12. Check our What's On listings on page 10 for the latest walk or for more details phone Paul on 020 8440 6805 or email pbaker54@hotmail.co.uk

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