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CARS & COURIERS

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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Carson the butler (Jim Carter) brings in Angela's Christmas pudding in Downton Abbey. Photo courtesy Carnival Films

Angela's pudding watched by millions

By Allison Goodings & Nick Young

Local resident Angela Corbo spends the weeks leading up to Christmas making many festive puddings, which she sells in and around East Finchley. Last month one of her puddings became famous when it featured in the Christmas Day episode of *Downton Abbey*.

Elstree-based Carnival Films, the makers of the hit ITV1 drama, contacted Angela after they found her company Angela's Handmade Limited (www.angelashandmade.co.uk) online. They asked her to make not one but seven four-pint-sized puddings for filming. Viewers saw a pudding being brought to the festive table by Carson the butler, played by Jim Carter.

Angela explains that four-pint puddings are an unusual size today, but they would have been common in the early 20th century when the show is set.

She said: "They said it didn't have to be edible... I didn't have to put in all the best ingredients, like brandy, but I did put some in to make it smell good as I thought that would be nice for the actors!"

The pudding recipe was based on one by the Victorian cook Eliza Acton, but mostly Angela makes cakes, cookies, preserves and pickles using Italian family recipes. Her ingredients are all locally sourced, including apples from her garden and the nearby allotment.

Angela works from her home on Fortis Green and her product range is sold in W Martyn of Muswell Hill Broadway and The Hampstead Butcher & Providore. Angela also offers free delivery for all orders within the N2 postcode.

Stanley Field sports plan: what next?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Barnet has not agreed to Sport East Finchley's proposal for Stanley Road Playing Field, but has asked three other bidders to see if they can work with our community to provide a mixed development scheme.

Roger Chapman, who represented Sport East Finchley at last month's Cabinet Resources Committee, told *THE ARCHER* that Barnet's position was not clear. He said, "As we understand it, we are not considered a specific bidder, but one that has to do a deal with one of the three others. This is an outstanding question we have to resolve".

Sport East Finchley submitted a business plan for multi-sports use. The other bidders are proposing residential development plus some community facilities.

Because details are not in the public report, all we know is that one would offer some open space with a children's play area, another off-site sports provision, and the third a sports area covering 1.4 acres (just under half the site).

Roger Chapman has agreed to talk to these bidders to find out exactly what is on offer. He told the Council meeting that, as the East Finchley proposal is community-driven, he has to ask local people about proposals as they emerge. At the time of writing, though, he doesn't know whether Barnet will try to set conditions

covering negotiations.

The position regarding Sport East Finchley's backers is now unclear too. The London Marathon Trust, for example, were prepared to purchase the site and contribute towards facilities, but only if all the land was available.

A recent Sport England survey found Barnet third from bottom among the London boroughs for residents' satisfaction with sports facilities, and East Finchley has been highlighted as an area deficient in open space and playing fields. Roger Chapman told Councillors that the local proposal offered Barnet a £2 million modern sports facility at no cost to the Council.

Barnet state that they have a duty to sell the land to whoever makes the best offer, but they know that there are "significant levels of public concern and involvement".

East Finchley's archer is an Olympic logo, but the public are still waiting for their Olympic legacy. There will be a public meeting, probably in February.

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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.

Copy deadlines

February: 13 January
March: 10 February
April: 16 March

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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

Hospitals

Barnet General 0845 111 4000
Coppetts Wood 020 8883 9792
Finchley Memorial 020 8349 7500
Oak Lane Clinic 020 8349 7000
Royal Free 020 7794 0500
St Luke's 020 8219 1800
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Barnetdoc 0300 033 3777
Barnet MENCAP 020 8203 6688
Cancer Support 020 8202 2211
Carers' Line 0808 808 7777
Drinkline 0800 917 8282
Drugs Helpline 0800 776600
MIND 020 8343 5700
NHS Direct 0845 4647

OAPs' Advice

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Contact (N2) 020 8444 1162
Help the Aged 0808 800 6565

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East Finchley Library 020 8359 3815
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Charity makes a difference

A local charity that helps families under stress was held up as a good example of the Big Society at the organisation's recent AGM. Home-Start Barnet, said Chipping Barnet MP Theresa Villiers, had made a difference to the lives of more than 1,700 families and 3,600 children since its launch in the 1970s.

Its core work is home visiting, where volunteers are matched with families whom they visit on a weekly basis to offer practical or emotional help. Home-Start also runs a twice-weekly family group; a variety of parenting courses; and has recently taken over the management of the bor-

ough's two-year-old scheme, where eligible families receive ten hours a week of free child care at different borough venues.

Volunteers are always needed. Anyone interested should contact the office on 020 8371 0674 or email adm in@homestartbarnet.org.

Planning Applications

Barnet Council

64 Bancroft Avenue, N2
Demolition and reconstruction of roof, including raising overall ridge height to create a crown roof in connection with loft conversion. Addition of two dormers to both side elevations, one dormer on rear elevation. Roof lights to crown roof and front elevation. (amended description).
106 Bedford Road, N2
Single-storey rear extension.
6 Durham Road, N2
Conversion of first and second floor to a single-unit self-contained flat.
44 High Road, N2
Single-storey rear extension to accommodate enlargement of (A1) commercial unit and existing studio flat. Alterations to existing shop front, including repositioning of shop entrance. New refuse enclosure at rear.
18 Howard Walk, N2
Replacement of existing front bay windows at ground and first-floor level with new double glazed units.

Dick Turpin, 383 Long Lane, N2
Minor material amendment to planning permission Ref: F/03082/11, for erection of a two-storey building, plus rooms in roof space, basement living accommodation and parking, all to facilitate eight residential flats following demolition of the public house. Amendment to include removal of one of the car lifts in basement area and replacement with windows. Creation of additional bedroom in flat B at basement level and associated enlargement of front light well.
386 Long Lane, N2
Single-storey rear conservatory.
29 Neale Close, N2
Installation of French door to replace existing window at rear ground-floor level.

Haringey Council

Chessing Court, Fortis Green, N2
Formation of additional floor to create one three-bed flat.
47 Fordington Road, N6
Removal of existing conservatory and erection of single-storey side and rear extension.

Will Fortis Green boundaries shift?

By Ann Bronkhorst

Last autumn we were consulted; this spring we can access the consultation responses; revised proposals will be published later this year; and in 2013 a final report will go to the Government. What's this about? It is the Review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries.

The total number of constituencies will be reduced from 533 to 502 and the numbers of registered electors in each constituency evened out to between 72,810 and 80,473. Ward and Borough boundaries won't change (so council taxes and local services won't either) but some wards may be moved from one constituency to another, to help re-adjust electoral numbers.

So far, so boring, you may think, but not if you vote in the Fortis Green ward, currently part of the Hornsey and Wood Green constituency. The ward is seen as a desirable asset by several political parties: Finchley and Golders Green Labour party, for

one, and the Haringey Lib Dems, for another. Oddly, Haringey Conservatives would be happy to hand the ward over to the Finchley and Golders Green constituency, while the Boundary Commission might decide to move Fortune Green ward into the F & GG constituency instead.

Some Fortis Green ward electors are concerned about the possibility of being allocated to a different constituency and fear they may have missed the chance to make their views known. To find out more information and whether you can still comment, contact <http://consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk> or email reviews@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk

Grit expectations

By Pam Kent

During the very cold and icy weather last winter, Bishop Douglass School asked the council many times to grit Hamilton Road and pavements because it was so dangerous for the pupils and local residents.

Apparently the side roads are not considered to be top priority, even if they contain a school. So this year the council have come up with the PledgeBank, a scheme whereby at least four volunteers from each school sign the pledge and the council supplies a one-tonne bag of grit and lots of wheelbarrows and shovels.

About 20 residents from Hamilton Road have volunteered to help with the gritting to keep the road and pavements

free from ice. A severe weather report will be sent to the school in good time and the volunteers contacted for duty. The school caretakers will deliver the wheelbarrows of grit and shovels to various areas of the road and it's all systems go.

The grit, wheelbarrows and shovels were delivered on Tuesday 13 December so all is in place if needed. If your school is interested in this scheme or for more information, visit <http://pledgebank.barnet.gov.uk>

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Tennis club plan for East End Road

By Sheila Armstrong

The Chandos Tennis Club in Golders Green may relocate to the garden centre site on East End Road, previously earmarked for a medical centre. The current site of the tennis club in Chandos Way is to be developed for Barratt Homes by the architect John Hopkins, whose last project was the London Olympics Velodrome.

A public exhibition was held at the Finchley Cricket Club in early December showing the initial development proposals between Barratt Homes and the Chandos Tennis Club.

These show eight tennis courts, some covered, a clubhouse, 45 car spaces and 26 secure cycle spaces. The green credentials of the building are photovoltaic panels and solar hot water collectors on a

green roof.

It is planned to keep the fine Victorian wrought-iron railings marking the original cemetery boundary on East End Road, and designed by Barnet and Birch in 1854.

Residents will be able to view the plans in January 2012 probably at the same venue, and can view some details on www.chandosway.co.uk.



An aerial view of the proposed tennis club. Picture courtesy Barratt Homes.

Next steps for Walk Safe campaign

A campaign by parents to improve road and pedestrian safety along Church Lane, the High Road and Creighton Avenue is gathering strength.

An online petition at www.ipetitions.com/petition/walksafen2 has attracted scores of signatures. It is also available to sign at many shops along the High Road and Church Lane, including Onur Food & Wine, Amy's, Tony's, Plummers, Budgens and Cootes Pharmacy.

Martin and Holy Trinity Schools have added a petition link to their newsletters to parents/carers and the East Finchley Village Residents Association and East Finchley Community Trust have given the campaign their formal

backing.

Walk Safe N2 is gearing up to put its case, with the help of Councillor Andrew McNeil, to Barnet Council's Area Environment Sub-Committee, which takes place on 23 January.

Campaigners are asking for as many signatures as possible and for letters of support giving a personal view of why the campaign matters to you, your family or friends, giving examples of problems you have experienced. These can be emailed to walksafen2@yahoo.co.uk or dropped off at the Martin School office.



Photo courtesy Sam Peach Productions Ltd

Sing, sing, sign

By Sheila Armstrong

Readers may have seen The Kaos Choir singing carols in and around East Finchley last month. Good at spreading festive cheer, they were at The Tree House, Muswell Hill Primary and The Hague School to name but a few locations.

The can-do attitude and musical talent of the organisers of Kaos is inspiring. It is a youth arts charity led by Suzy Davies and Alison Wood and based in North London. Kaos runs weekly drama and singing workshops; organizes holiday arts projects; puts on regular performances and works with schools.

The 'no audition' policy means anyone can join, encourages the less-confident to blossom and channels the talent and energy of the confident. This was evident at the Kaos Youth Choir's performance in November at the Drill Hall, Chenies Street, a concoction of singing and ad lib drama, with help from the audience, at a truly professional standard.

Sing and sign

Actively working to raise deaf awareness, Suzy and Alison also run the Kaos Singing Choir for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children. All participants learn to sing and sign, and all Kaos productions are British Sign Language interpreted.

Parents of Kaos children cannot praise too highly the benefits of being a member. "Kaos is not about producing individual stars of the future; it is about building confidence in young people, helping them to recognise that we are all wonderfully different and that dis-

ability should not be a barrier to living a good life," says one.

Adult angels

Their adult choir The Angels of Kaos, another 'no audition' choir, is another arm of the organisation that always welcomes new members. They sing for pleasure and to raise funds for the children's workshops. Enthusiastic angel Julia Coyne, a member for six years, told *THE ARCHER* that it was a positive and uplifting experience to sing with the choir.

Interested in any aspect of The Kaos Organisation? Check them out at www.thekaos.org

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Would you hire an electric bike?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Commuters, would you be interested in hiring an electric bicycle to take you into work each day? An electric bike “looks pretty cool, is perfect for the hills and vales of North London, accelerates easily from junctions and roundabouts, and leaves no carbon pedal-print”. So says Peter Thompson, Secretary of the Muswell Hill Sustainability Group. Peter has tried one, and is hooked. So is *ARCHER* columnist Adam Justice-Mills, who praised electric vehicles in our last edition.



Royal ride

The Prince of Wales has tried one, and has survived the experience. Prince Charles had

personal instruction at Clarence House from Colney Hatch Lane resident Va Hua, who invented the Spencer-Ivy model in 2010. The cycle works through a torque sensor, which detects the power the rider is applying to the pedals. This decides how much assistance is delivered by the chain. The rider stops the Panasonic electric motor by stopping pedalling. Gears are used in the normal way.

No special test is required to ride one of these bikes, but under EU law the cyclist must be at least 14 years old. The maximum speed with engine support is 15.5 mph. Then the engine cuts out and muscles take over. It needs recharging

after 86 miles.

At around £1,800 to buy, the Spencer-Ivy model is more expensive than the electric bicycles tested by Adam last month. But inventor Va Hua wants to know how much interest there would be in a daily hire scheme, with the cycles stationed in a special dock near Planet Organic (round the corner from Muswell Hill Odeon).

For more information, visit www.spencerivy.com, or contact Peter Thompson on 020 8883 0371 or at aoby37@dsl.pipex.com.

Thieves thwarted by quick-thinking duo

By Janet Maitland

Thieves got a lot more than they bargained for when they stole a local builder's van from outside a house on Deansway on 1 December.

Gordon Elliot was in the front garden, discussing the repair of a garden wall with the homeowner, when a white van pulled up on the other side of the road. The driver asked for directions to The Bishops Avenue.

Mr Elliot and his client had to take a couple of steps towards the van to hear what he was saying. While they were giving him instructions, a man wearing overalls and a baseball cap got out from the passenger seat and walked

nonchalantly towards the house.

As soon as the white van drove away and Mr Elliot turned round, he realised that his own red transit van, which had been parked in the driveway of the house, had been stolen by the man in overalls.

Dramatic chase

Determined not to let the thieves get away with it, the homeowner handed her car keys to Mr Elliot who jumped into her car and drove off, trying to second guess which way they might have gone. Turning right into East End Road, he drove down Fortis Green, finally turning left into Twyford Avenue. And there was his van heading straight for him.

“I noticed my ladders on the roof, first,” said Mr Elliot. “Then I thought, that’s my van! So I did a broadside, thinking I’m in *The Professionals* now. But he drove up onto the pavement. So I spun the car around.

“He jumped out of my van, ran across the road like a flash of lightning, and threw himself into the white van. His mate was waiting for him: it was their meeting point. They sped off, leaving my van in the middle of the road with the door open.

“The police said I was very, very lucky. I was too: apart from all my tools, they’d have had my case, cheque books, house keys, yard keys, everything. The only damage was to my side mirror.”

The van was also full of food for Mr Elliot’s reindeer and camels, which he keeps to raise money for charity. Gordon Elliot and Sons has been in business for 55 years.

Ardent Arsenal fan meets heroes

By Daphne Chamberlain

June James has been going to Arsenal matches since she was 10 years old. A room in her Leicester Road house, dedicated to the club, was filmed by Channel Five a few years ago. So she was horrified when somebody asked her recently who Herbert Chapman was. “How could they call themselves an Arsenal supporter?” she asked.

The great manager of the 1930s, who, as June said, even had Highbury’s nearest Underground station (Gillespie Road) renamed Arsenal, is one of three past Gunners commemorated in

statue form at The Emirates. “It must have been very difficult choosing the other two,” she said. “I can think of at least 30 others who could have qualified, but I’ve no argument. Tony Adams was very good, and Thierry Henry was marvellous.”

June was impressed by her first sight of the statues in the bronze, as it were. “They’re probably more than life-size and must be a colossal weight.”

She is impressed too by what she calls the good noisy atmosphere at matches recently, though not by all that is said. She loves the way the crowd is getting behind the team, but wishes more people could see the reserves and the youth team, saying, “They used to play at Barnet, but now they are mostly behind closed doors at the London Colney training ground.”

June also watches Arsenal Ladies, who play at Borehamwood, and Barnet on her free Saturdays.



June James pictured with the FA Cup at Arsenal's stadium in 2003.

Count your chickens

By Nick Young

Are you planning to take part in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch on 28-29 January? If you do, then we at *THE ARCHER* would love to hear about which birds you manage to see in East Finchley.

To take part, all you need is a pen, some scrap paper (or a printout of the RSPB's bird ID sheet, which can be downloaded from their website) and an hour to spend watching the birds in your garden or in a local park on either the Saturday or Sunday.

For over 30 years, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has organised a nationwide birdwatch and, last year, over 600,000 people across the country took part.

“With results from so many gardens, we are able to create a snapshot of bird numbers in

each region,” says the RSPB’s website. “This is important because we’ve been able to see that some of our birds are disappearing in scary numbers. We’ve lost more than half our house sparrows and some three-quarters of our starlings.

“However, it isn’t all doom and gloom. These surveys help us spot problems, but more importantly, they are also the first step in putting things right.”

For more information about the Big Garden Birdwatch, please visit www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch/

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Youth club still out in the cold

By Janet Maitland

An unsuccessful attempt has been made to reopen the Monday Youth Club at the Old Barn Community Centre in Tarling Road. "It's a disgrace," said Maureen Clemetson, who runs the club. "There's just nowhere for young people to go in East Finchley."

The centre was a busy hub of community events and activities for 25 years, helping to keep children off the streets and providing support for local parents with its pioneering out-of-school services. But since a group of new trustees led by Reverend Geoffrey Muhoro took over the Old Barn in July 2010, all services have been discontinued, or forced to move out, or closed down because of health and safety concerns.

At a meeting between the Reverend Muhoro and members of the action group chaired by the council last November, it was agreed that the Reverend would meet with Maureen Clemetson to discuss the Monday Youth Club moving back into the building. But when they met no progress was made.

"The Reverend refused to talk about us moving back in," said Ms Clemetson. "What can I tell the kids? I've tried everything. I speak up for the kids. There's no one else doing that."

Local campaign

The Old Barn Action Group has been campaigning to restore the community centre to local people for over a year. Will Hudson from the action group informed *THE ARCHER* that the

council, who own the building, do not recognise the management committee as legitimate owners and have not accepted any rent payments.

Last June, 93 local people submitted applications to become members of the Old Barn in order to put pressure on the management to recommence community services, but the applications were not accepted.

Misleading photos

The management have recently launched a new website for the community centre at www.oldbarncommunitycentre.com

"The site claims that a youth club is open five nights a week and that a lunch for the elderly is held every Thursday but this is just a façade that the Reverend is creating," said Will Hudson. He claimed that none of the website photographs showing young people in various activities was taken either inside or outside the centre.

To help the action group, contact Will Hudson on 07870 647284 or rendofstrife@hotmail.co.uk. Everyone is welcome at a public meeting to discuss the future of the Old Barn at the Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale, on Tuesday 17 January at 6.30 pm.

Advance advances

By Daphne Chamberlain
Early last year we ran an article about a project called Advance, explaining its aims and asking for volunteers to help achieve them. Advance provides a voice for elderly people in care homes and day centres. In just over a year it now has 33 volunteer advocates who speak up for people and empower them to speak up for themselves.

One lady with impaired communication skills has said: "Without an Advance volunteer advocate's intervention and support, I would not have been listened to, and would have to give up my financial independence."

In this case, it was her son who was going above her head, and the care home manager who called in Advance. In another case, it was staff who were not responding to a resident's physical or social needs, and an Advance volunteer is liaising with Social Services to place him elsewhere, nearer his family.

Advance in Barnet

Barnet has 120 care homes and day centres, and so far 30 of these have signed up to Advance, with 24 receiving regular visits. As residents get to know and trust the volunteers, they tell them what they want and need.

Advance, which is a branch of Advocacy in Barnet, works closely with the Care Quality Commission, giving valuable feedback. The all-important volunteers, who are all over 50 years of age, are themselves gaining experience and confidence through training, one-to-one support and supervision. *THE ARCHER* will introduce you soon to a local Advance volunteer.

For further information, visit www.advocacyinbarnet.org.uk or contact Janet on 020 8201 3415 or Heena at heena@advocacyinbarnet.org.uk.



Busy mum and inventor Claire Bardner.
Photo by Hannah Eiseman-Renyard

Local mum's child safety invention

By Hannah Eiseman-Renyard

East Finchley resident Claire Bardner has created an innovative product to help children when they get lost and it's won two awards from the Global Women Inventors and Innovators Network.

The Me Finder was born when Claire, a mother-of-three, lost her two-year-old son in a crowd. "It was horrible. Apart from scanning the crowd there was nothing I could do," she recalls. "I never intended to get involved in any of this, but when Billy got lost I couldn't let it go."

The result, after nearly two years of prototypes, was the Me Finder, a brightly coloured band which looks like a digital watch and stores up to five phone numbers. That's enough for parents' mobiles, phone numbers of grandparents and trusted friends or even a teacher's phone number on a school trip.

Empowering the child

The device is simple, but it is the crucial link between teaching children what to do if they get lost and having the means to contact people. "I looked into GPS, but that was really polarising," says Bardner. "Really our

kids just need a phone number. I'm a great believer in teaching children everything. If you can teach a child what to do then they are empowered and they are less at risk."

The Me Finder, available in three different designs, is part of wider safety teaching at www.kidsshowsandtell.com.

Though the Me Finder already has international distribution on a small scale (including selling online in Aer Lingus) Claire is seeking wider distribution. With both the British Female Inventors Award and the Special Recognition Award from the Global Women Inventors and Innovators Network, it surely can't be far away.

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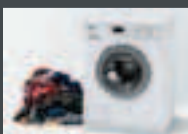
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Dangerous energy scam

By Janet Maitland

If you receive a phone call from someone who tries to sell you a plug-in device costing £99 that will save 40 per cent off your energy bills, don't be taken in. Not only do these devices not save energy, they're also dangerous.

"Consumers are warned not to use the product as they pose a risk of fire and electrocution," said Ron Gainsford, chief executive of The Trading Standards Institute, which has received hundreds of complaints about this scam. "Unscrupulous criminals are using rising energy prices as an opportunity to lure in cash strapped consumers; elderly people seem to have been deliberately targeted."

The cold callers appear to be credible, already knowing the consumer's details, their energy supplier and sometimes some or all of the digits of their credit/debit card. They

claim to be the energy supplier, or to be working in partnership with them.

If you have responded to one of the calls, you should report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or Consumer Direct on 0845 4040506. You should also contact your bank to stop your credit/debit card. If you've received a device, don't use it and dispose of it carefully.

Advice from police is to never give out any personal or financial information over the phone unless you have independently verified the caller's identity and are certain that what they are selling is what they claim it to be.



Barnet Police sign up to Mencap campaign

By Janet Maitland.

Barnet Police have signed up to a Mencap campaign called Stand By Me that aims to tackle crime where the victim is targeted for no other reason than their learning disability. There were 1,200 disability hate crimes last year, including violent attacks.

"Seventy three percent of people with a learning disability have been bullied in a public place, 32% don't feel safe in their own home, their local area or using public transport and 23% report being physically assaulted," said a spokesperson from Mencap, the charity that supports the 1.5 million people in the UK who have a learning disability.

Barnet police have commit-

ted themselves to the Mencap Police Pledge, which asks police to record disability hate crime as a crime and deal with it as a crime, rather than as anti-social behaviour. They've also promised to allow more time for interviews with people with learning disabilities.

Find out about Mencap services by calling Mencap Direct on 0300 333 111 or going to www.mencap.org.uk

Sport-hating Hannah runs in memory of her dad

An East Finchley woman who dislikes sport took up running to raise money for charity in memory of her father. Hannah Thompson, an English teacher, from Aylmer Parade, ran 5km on 4 December.

Her father Christopher died suddenly last Christmas from the heart muscle disease cardiomyopathy, and all Hannah's efforts were in aid of the charity that supports affected families, the Cardiomyopathy Association.

Hannah, who teaches at the Compton School in North Finchley, said: "I raised over £900 in two weeks. I think it is because people know I hate sport and want to watch me suffer. They know I much prefer to watch reality TV and eat cake."

Christopher died suddenly aged 60 from undiagnosed dilated cardiomyopathy. The condition, which causes the heart to enlarge and pump less efficiently, affects people of all ages, including babies. It is the main cause of sudden death in people aged under 35, but when found can usually be



Hannah Thompson ran in memory of her beloved dad Christopher.

treated successfully.

Because cardiomyopathy runs in families, Hannah and her brother Johnathan, who is 16, will have regular heart checks to ensure they stay well.

You can still sponsor Hannah at www.justgiving.com/HannahThompsonSantaRun. For more information on

the disease, visit www.cardiomyopathy.org or call the free helpline on 0800 0181 024.

Tuition centre now open

The newly opened Cherry Tree Tuition Centre at Park House, opposite East Finchley tube station, is now enrolling pupils who require extra tuition in English, maths and science. The centre offers personalised, private tuition services for all children aged between 5-18 years. The aim of the centre is to help children gain confidence and reach their potential at school and in examinations.

For the primary age group the programme includes tutor groups that prepare children for grammar and independent schools entrance examinations, help with literacy, numeracy and SATs preparation and Saturday maths clubs. For secondary pupils, GCSE English, maths and science tuition is focused on the National Curriculum and exam preparation.

Cherry Tree Tuition Centre also provides an ideal environment for children of high ability who require further stretching to be taught to a level above the national curriculum targets. Tuition is offered in one to one and small group settings (max 4-5)

Tuition times are Monday to Friday 3pm-8pm and Saturdays 9am-1pm. For more details or to book a place, contact Marion Ryan, 020 7998 5797 or mryan@cherrytreetuitioncentre.co.uk.

Check out the website at www.cherrytreetuitioncentre.co.uk

Bake to the future

By Diana Cormack

Some readers may well remember Rances, the bread shop that occupied 125 High Road at its junction with Kitchener Road. It closed in the 1980s, but things have now gone full circle with the opening of the Village Bakery in the same premises.

The new business is run by familiar local trader Pepe Dustezadeh who, until last year, owned the Casa Pepe eatery.

The range of bread he sells has had customers commenting favourably. Pepe told *THE ARCHER* it is all cooked on site, as are the other baked products on offer. East Finchley Village Bakery can also provide decorated cakes for special occasions.

Food can be taken away or eaten at one of the tables inside. The café area is growing in popularity and there are plenty of drinks and a variety of sandwiches, soups, pastries and cakes to choose from. Happily, there is a ramp for wheelchair or pushchair access. The bakery is open from 6am - 8pm on weekdays and 8am - 6pm on Sundays.



Pepe and assistant Chynna Dee. Photo by Diana Cormack

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One of the cyclists to benefit from the free bike scheme.

Easier travel by bike

A Finchley-based drop-in service has linked up with Jewish youth movement Habonim Dror to provide repaired secondhand bikes to its clients. The drop-in is held monthly at a venue in East Finchley.

For many of New North London Synagogue Destitute Asylum Seeker Drop In's clients, bus fares are prohibitively expensive and some end up walking 15 miles or more across London to get to appointments, access services or visit friends or family. The donated bikes are supplied to give them freedom to travel.

Habonim members run a bike workshop and are repairing and restoring secondhand bikes before supplying them to the asylum seekers along

with lights and locks. A north London firm of cycling-mad immigration solicitors has donated funds to purchase equipment and East Finchley bike shop Bike And Run is selling them helmets at a substantial discount.

Organiser Diane Taylor said: "We hope that the bikes will provide a practical as well as an environmentally sustainable solution to the asylum seekers' transport problems."

Watch a three-minute film about the project at <http://vimeo.com/31754639>

Dominic's theatre troupe blooms

By Diana Cormack

At the end of November a show much praised by critics finished its national run at artsdepot, North Finchley. First performed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2010, *Operation Greenfield* tells the tale of four unlikely teenagers in a Christian rock band and their attempts to win the local village talent competition. Forget *The X Factor* and concentrate on adolescent angst, teenage trials of faith and friendship with an amazing mixture of movement, music and mysticism, devised, written and performed by the Little Bulb Theatre group.

Dominic Conway, who grew up in Bedford Road, is a member of Little Bulb. He became involved in drama while at Martin School and Fortismere and also spent some time at the Finchley Youth Theatre. His first real acting experience as a child came after he stood in for a friend at an audition, gaining a part in a professional production of *Richard III* which also featured Eddie Marsan, currently reprising his role as Inspector Lestrade in Guy Ritchie's *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows*.

Music was important in Dominic's life too and he played guitar with his group at some of our East Finchley community festivals. A then-unknown Amy

Winehouse sang with them there and, in later years, Dominic was able to return the compliment by playing in her backing band. When he went to study drama and theatre studies at the University of Kent, Dominic was delighted to find some fellow students equally interested in music. The Little Bulb Theatre developed from this. Its five members are talented actors, musicians, singers and writers who have jointly created their offbeat award-winning shows.

Following 40 performances this year the group, which has Arts Council support, will set



Local actor Dominic. Photo by Diana Cormack

off on a rural tour in spring 2012. But before that 27-year-old Dominic is making a very special journey to Holland where he will study at the Gypsy Jazz Academy under the famous gypsy jazz guitarist Lollo Meier. Another string to his bow, so to speak!

Bishop Douglass entertains

By Pam Kent

Just before Christmas, over 140 elderly residents of East Finchley enjoyed a lively evening with the students and teachers at Bishop Douglass School.

Most of the residents came from sheltered housing complexes but there were also many individual local people who enjoyed an evening of festive entertainment.

Year 10 pupils had raised over £1,000 to fund the event and many were on hand to ensure that the evening went with a swing. Sixth-formers were in charge of the wine and soft drinks and the teaching staff manned the kitchen.

The choir was in good voice and everyone enjoyed joining in the carol singing. A three-course meal, served by the year 10 pupils, was followed by games of bingo and all went home happy after receiving a gift from Father Christmas.

Biting robber pleads guilty

By Janet Maitland

A 17-year-old boy pleaded guilty at Brent Magistrates Court to biting a 16-year-old boy and stealing his mobile phone. The incident started when the victim was talking to a friend at the Ossulton Way bus stop on East End Road at about 7pm on 18 October.

The attacker approached the boys and started to act aggressively. A bus arrived and the victim's friend jumped on it. The victim ran into Cristal Food at 121 East End Road, followed by the attacker, who grabbed him in a headlock, bit him in the face, threw him to the ground and stole his mobile phone.

When the police arrived they took swabs from the victim's cheek, hoping to trace some of the attacker's saliva. The victim

was later taken to Whittington Hospital where his wound was treated.

On 29 November, police called at a house in the N2 area where the defendant lives with his family. There they identified him from the CCTV images taken in Cristal Food. Laboratory analysis identified a DNA match between his saliva and the swab taken from the victim's cheek.

The defendant was already on bail for another alleged robbery, and although he was given bail on curfew conditions, he breached those and was again arrested. He subsequently pleaded guilty to robbery and was due to be sentenced at a hearing before Brent Magistrates on 5 January. The defendant cannot be named for legal reasons.

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YOUNG ARCHER



The Holy Trinity tag rugby players get to meet Sari the camel after their match.

Young players battle to semi-finals

Children from Holy Trinity School took part in the Saracens' Tag Rugby Festival back in the autumn. They were among 360 pupils from 36 different schools battling their way through the group stages and made it through to the semi-finals against Cromer Road.

The semi-final was incredibly close with both teams showing great skill and determination. With the score at 1-1, Cromer Road scored in the last minute to clinch a place in the finals. Team Holy Trinity were out but not down and

were incredibly proud of their achievements.

They were given the chance to meet Sari the Camel and see Saracens player Joe Maddock as well as having their picture taken with the Aviva Premiership trophy.

Football team snatches victory

By William, Dylan and Cameron, Year 6

In November, the Holy Trinity School football team went to play a match against Chalgrove. Within the first ten minutes we were 2-0 down because of dodgy defending. Then, after another hard 20 minutes, we were rewarded with an individual goal from Joseph.

After half-time we pressed hard for another goal but it didn't come until the last ten minutes when we got a quickfire brace from Joseph and Callum. Then, in the final minute, Cameron tapped in a close range volley. Chalgrove barely had time to take centre before the final whistle blew! We had won!

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Party time at Strawberry Vale

The Green Man Management Committee organised a Saturday afternoon Christmas party for children living in Strawberry Vale.

The excited children were entertained in the Green Man Centre by Lolly Jangles, who did magic tricks, balloon modelling and face painting. After pizzas and party food, Father Christmas arrived to distribute presents to the youngsters.



Parents and children enjoying their pizza. Photo by Diana Cormack.

Food advice for the menopause

Nutritional advisor Claire Cantor is starting a series of workshops to introduce women to different ways to treat symptoms of the menopause.

Claire believes Muswell Hill, Crouch End, East Finchley, Highgate and Hampstead have a wide array of health food shops and general food retailers selling health-giving produce yet there is very little knowledge of the benefits specific foods can have in dealing with debilitating menopausal symptoms.

Claire said: "My aim through these workshops is to provide essential nutritional information and ways to deal with the key symptoms that affect some women during the menopause, as well as to create a local network for women who can support each other during this transitional life stage."

Workshops will be held in small, intimate groups, in the comfortable environment of Claire's home. For the wider community there will be a workshop at the Emporium Tea rooms on Fortis Green Road on 20 and 27 January. For more information, contact her at claire.cantor@hotmail.com, www.clairecantor.co.uk

PARENT & BABY/CHILD ACTIVITIES

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- ❖ **Dads' Club**: Get-togethers for dads looking after young children in East Finchley. Adam 07957 441435.
- ❖ **EF National Childbirth Trust** contact Ruby Yang or Patrizia Canwell at eastfinchleynct@googlemail.com
- ❖ **Newstead Parent & Toddler Group**, Thurs 9-12-30, Green Man Ctr. Sajni 8359 3460.
- ❖ **Parent & Toddler Group**, Green Man Centre, Julia 8444 2276
- ❖ **Stepping Stones**, interactive play session for under 3s. Karen 07957 278860.

Rachel Shipton, one of the organisers, told *THE ARCHER*: "The kids had great fun and a good time was had by all,

with people from all over the estate coming together. It was a great community event."

A clam-tastic recipe

By Allison Goodings

Even the most confident cook has one recipe they wouldn't dare to recreate, preferring to save this dish for special occasions and enjoy it in restaurants. For me, that dish was *linguine alle vongole* where the fresh flavours of clams, garlic and chilli shine through. Linguine with clams is actually a really simple dish and it turns out I had nothing to fear. It's quick and easy.

To make a delicious and impressive *linguine alle vongole*, you need to start with fresh clams. In East Finchley, we have the folks at A. Scott & Son (94 High Road) to help us source the best seafood. Clams in hand, I made a quick stop at Amici Delicatessen (78 High Road) for high-quality Italian pasta, which is especially important in a dish with so few ingredients. Grabbing garlic, chilli and parsley at Tony's (140 High Road), my shopping list was complete.



Linguine alle vongole. Photo by Allison Goodings

Linguine alle vongole (Linguine with clams) Serves 2

Scrub 750g fresh clams (in their shells) in cold water, discarding any that don't close when tapped. Put clams and 60ml white wine in a saucepan, cover and steam over a high heat until the clams are open, about 5 minutes. Strain into a bowl, and reserve clam broth. Discard any clams that don't open. Remove about half the clams from their shells, and leave the rest in their shells. Set aside.

Meanwhile, cook 250g linguine in a large pot of salted boiling water until *al dente* (tender but still firm). Drain and set aside.

Heat 2 tbsp olive oil in a saucepan over a medium heat and add 2 minced cloves of garlic, half a minced red chilli with seeds removed (use more chilli if you prefer more of a kick!), 10g chopped flat leaf parsley and a pinch of salt. Sauté for 3 minutes until the garlic is softened but not brown.

Add the reserved clam broth and bring to a boil. Add the cooked linguine and toss over high heat until the liquid is reduced to only a few tablespoons; this should take only a few minutes. Add the clams to the pasta along with a knob of butter. Stir together until the butter is melted and each strand of pasta has a nice glossy finish. Enjoy!



Singing group changes its tune time

By Diana Cormack

“From Gershwin to Gaga and everything in between” is how Barnet’s Community Focus advertised its new singing group in September and I am witness to the truth of that description.

Last term we covered old favourites *The Way You Look Tonight*, *California Dreamin’*, *Bridge over Troubled Waters*, *Somebody over the Rainbow*, *I Say a Little Prayer* and *I’ll Never Fall in Love Again*. But I also found myself singing songs I’d never heard of by Rihanna and Adele and now enjoy having *Take a Bow* and *Rolling in the Deep* in my repertoire. We also practised some Christmas carols which we sang at Mulberry Court

retirement flats and in The Old White Lion pub.

Voices with Gusto is run by Community Focus for those over 55 and adults of all abilities. Singing is taught in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and nobody minds if you go wrong. The group, which meets on Wednesdays in East Finchley Baptist Church, Creighton Avenue, has a new time this year. Starting on 11 January, the sessions will be from 11am-1pm at £5 a time.

If you’d like to join, just come to East Finchley Baptist Church on a Wednesday or contact Lili Barcourt on 0208 369 5483, email: lilibarcroft@communityfocus.co.uk

Attempted mugging

A young woman was grabbed from behind as she walked along the footpath between Trinity Road and Manor Park Road on 18 October at about 6pm. The attacker put his hand over her mouth and tried to snatch her handbag but she bit his hand and managed to hang onto her bag. The man, described as black, about 19 and wearing a hooded jacket and jeans, then ran off.

If you have any information that could help the police to solve this crime, please ring 101 and quote crime reference number 2425217/11. To remain anonymous, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

High-rise fire

By Janet Maitland

Firefighters tackled a blaze on the seventh floor of a block of flats for nearly an hour before bringing it under control.

Emergency services were called out to the fire at one of the high-rise blocks on Prospect Ring on 25 November. Police believe that the four-roomed flat was empty at the time of the fire. The fire service informed *THE ARCHER* that fortunately there was only a small amount of damage. The ambulance service confirmed that there were no patients to treat.

Big Fun Walk 2012

The Big Fun Walk in aid of the North London Hospice takes place this year on Sunday 1 April and registration is now open. It’s a chance to join family and friends for a fascinating seven-mile walk through North London’s most beautiful parks, starting at East Finchley tube station and finishing at Westminster.

Walkers are asked to raise at least £30 each towards the work of the hospice, which is based in Whetstone and cares for patients and their families throughout Barnet, Haringey and Enfield. For information and registration forms, telephone 020 8202 5586 or visit www.bigfunwalk.co.uk by 19 March.



The choir on Platform 8...

By Marian Bunzl

In December, North London Chorus sang carols at Kings Cross Station on behalf of Marie Curie Cancer Care. First, we had to attend a hidden office on Platform 8 (and a half) to watch a riveting DVD on *Elf and Safety*.

Suitably informed, we gathered round the Christmas tree on the main concourse, a somewhat motley crew. Some wore traditional Father

Christmas caps, one bass chose a tartan beret and a red fright wig, and the rest of us donned bright yellow Marie Curie bonnets and bibs.

Passers-by stopped to look and stayed to listen. We managed to overcome the ambient acoustics of station announcements, wailing sirens, and shrieks of office partygoers, and perform a range of traditional carols in four-part harmony (with descant).

IPhones and cameras recorded us, and we were even asked to sing into a father’s mobile for his daughter’s bedtime. Gratifyingly, we heard the rustle of paper money as well as the clink of coins. At the end, we sang a rousing *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, and melted back into the station crowds. We had fun, travellers enjoyed us and the collecting tins were filled. Job done!

Register your bike

By Janet Maitland

Did you know that if your cycle is registered with the Bike Register it can be returned to you if it is lost or stolen? To register your bike for free, all you have to do is take it to East Finchley tube station on 31 January between 7.30am and 10am.

The Cycle Task Force, who will be outside the front of the station, will apply a unique serial number to your bike using an indelible paint. They will then register your bike for you, using this number and the frame number of your bike. This process establishes legitimate ownership so that if your cycle is lost or stolen it can be returned to its rightful owner.

Officers from the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) will also be there to answer questions, help out and give crime prevention advice. You can contact the Safer Neighbourhood Team on 020 7161 9014 or 07887 632767 or email them at EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk. You can also talk to the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) you see on patrol.

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By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Claim your Olympic glory

As the weird world of 2011 crashes into 2012 it’s time to look forwards, backwards and especially sideways. Why? Because 2012 is going to be a whole new experience in a kind of Olympian Jubilee sort of way and one that will give us a chance to forget about Austerity Clegg, Calamity Cameron and all the other cartoon characters.

Let’s forget comedy and get serious for a moment. Let’s think London, let’s think Olympics and let’s ask not what we do for the Olympics, but what can the Olympics do for us.

As East Finchley failed to be the venue for beach volleyball, archery or dwarf throwing we’ll have to do something else. Why not make a serious contribution to transport by converting the Northern Line into a two-class railway? Let’s have Olympic Class to give our visitors the full London experience. No seats, overheated, overcrowded and stuck in a tunnel outside Camden Town. Meanwhile, we have Londoner Class, a special type of train for special people; you know, Londoners, complete with air conditioning, TV, WiFi, hot and cold running waiters and seats for all.

Then there is the huge waste of money that is the opening and closing ceremonies. Why spend millions when we could have real street theatre for less than the cost of a looted high street? Just let the kids organise it, give them the money and take cover behind a passing soldier as the colourful nightlife of a London street explodes around you.

The only sport I’m going to worry about is the football. We know the world is full of better runners than the motley crew we’ll chuck out on the track, but football is different. Football is the one time a Great Britain side will take to the field. And it will be British with Welshmen, Englishmen, Scotsmen and Irishmen proving that the whole will not be greater than the sum of its parts as the Germans win again. Which brings us back to the other main event, the Jubilee, and more winning Germans as our Royal Family proves that no one does Victorian pomp better than her great-great granddaughter.

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- ❖ **Keep fit for the Retired** on Wednesdays, Christ Church N12. Call Bridie 8883 5269
- ❖ **Muswell Hill Bowling Club**, Kings Ave, N10. New & experienced bowlers welcome. Tel: 8883 0433.
- ❖ **Pilates** in East Finchley, qualified teacher. Contact Dee on 8883 7029
- ❖ **Pilates class** Weds 3.30 & 7pm at Ann Owens Ctr, N2. Call Penny 8444 2882.
- ❖ **Tae Kwon Do** for children & adults at Finchley Lido Mon & Fri 7-9pm 07949 612 706. www.taekwondo-uktd.co.uk
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- ❖ **Creative writing classes** in informal, friendly atmosphere. Tel Sallie Rose 020 8444 7217.
- ❖ **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: Live jazz** on Mon 16 & 30 Jan at 7.45pm, Hall School Sports Ground, East End Rd, N3.
- ❖ **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.
- ❖ **Symphonic Wind Orchestra** Contact Caroline Egan 8340 2706
- ❖ **Traditional music** at TOC, Highgate Hill on 1st & 3rd Tue each month from 8.30pm. Free. All musicians welcome. Info 07958 282898.

CLUBS & SOCIAL

(See p8 for Parent & Toddler Clubs)

- ❖ **Bingo evening, 8pm Sundays**, at the Constitutional Club, The Walks, N2.
- ❖ **Bingo Club** Mondays 7-9pm, Green Man Centre, Contact: Jan 8815 5452
- ❖ **Contact Lunch Club** Tuesdays at the Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book.
- ❖ **Finchley & District Philatelic Society**, Contact Brian 8444 3251
- ❖ **French conversation** in small friendly group with native speaker. 8444 9395.
- ❖ **Friends of Cherry Tree Wood** www.cherrytreewood.co.uk or 8883 7544.
- ❖ **Haringey Recorded Music Society** informal meetings locally. Call David Moldon on 8361 1696.
- ❖ **LGBT?** 1st Weds every month in a local pub. Welcoming atmosphere. Email efinchleylgbt@hotmail.com
- ❖ **Muslim Lunch Club** 1st & 3rd Weds, Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book.
- ❖ **North London Bridge Club**, Muswell Hill. Contact 8348 3495
- ❖ **Northside Bridge Club**, EF Methodist Church, Thurs 7.30-11pm. 8346 8145.
- ❖ **Jewish Friendship Club** for over 60s, Tues 1-3 pm at Muswell Hill Synagogue, Tetherdown. Call Anita 8886 6140.
- ❖ **Muswell Hill Tetherdown Bridge**, contact 8883 4390
- ❖ **Probus Lunch Club** for retired professionals. Call John 8883 8114.

Thrill of the spoken word

Jazz, poetry, writing and art all mix together in a regular free event called **Spoken Words** every Thursday from 3pm to 5.30pm Upstairs at Sable D'Or on Muswell Hill Broadway.

No one knows who will turn up from week to week, but people do show up and the event is growing in popularity.

Jazz world artist Annalou Oakland and Sable D'Or organiser Joan Podel welcome entertainers of all kinds: musicians, poets, writers, rappers and others. Whoever wants to visit Upstairs is welcome.

Joan said: "These Thursday events have been meaningful in so many ways, bringing people together not only from Muswell Hill but also the surrounding areas of North London. Also, there are not many spaces in London where one can have an event such as this, which is unique and very special."

Jewellery appeal

If you have any jewellery which is broken or which you no longer want, the Alzheimer's Society can put it to good use. An odd cuff link or earring, a bracelet or necklace you no longer wear, even an old watch, can be used to raise money to help their work in the fight against dementia.

Freepost Jiffy envelopes in which to send your jewellery can be ordered by phone or on-line. Call 0844 477 0035 or visit www.alzheimers.org.uk/oldjewellery

Hunt for raffle organiser

The East Finchley Community Festival is on the lookout for someone to organise the 2012 Festival raffle. Organisers need someone to work with local traders and others to provide the prizes, marshal volunteers to sell the tickets both before and on the day, and then make sure the prizes get to the lucky winners.

For the last couple of years the raffle has not had someone specifically responsible for it and takings have suffered as a result. If you want to take on this vital task and support the local community, contact eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com or phone 07983 360834.



At the court of Arcadia. Photo courtesy Guild Players

Puss in Boots claws it back

Review by Daphne Chamberlain

As Puss in Boots stalks national cinema screens this winter, the Guild Players brought their own version of the top cat to the Finchley stage. "It's the purrr-fect story to tell," said Mother Goose, but at the Saturday matinee it took a while to get going. Circumstances beyond their control in the first 10 minutes or so didn't help, but some of the cast in this production of Puss definitely needed a bit more welly.

However, after the interval we got into traditional panto action, and once the audience were involved children around me shrieked with glee and clutched each other in enjoyable horror. We had a bone-crunching ogre, his gruesome henchman, a cat-loving hero and his two useless brothers, and a ghost who really was behind them all.

Voice projection (and general lack of oomph) was a bit of a problem with some of the actors, but the two useless brothers, the gruesome henchman, the Lord Chamberlain and Freckles the page were all excellent, and the Queen of Arcadia was a dame with real presence.

As usual with this company, the scenery, costumes and

props were fantastic, and this year they really went to town with their special effects. The five-piece band was excellent, and I liked the introduction of a lively country dance.

So it all ended happily. Proceeds from the performance on Wednesday 7 December went to Save the Children. The Guild Players, who rehearse and perform at Finchley Methodist Church, N3, have been entertaining us since 1946. To find out more, visit www.guildplayers.org.uk or call 020 8441 7696.

Women, run for your lives

By Victoria Davenport

Soon after my return from running the New York City Marathon, which was thrilling, wonderful and hell, all at the same time, the stats were emailed containing my time and that of 40,000 others. It's fascinating and in some ways predictable: the older I get, the more shocked I am by the decline in the number of women runners from age 40.

In this year's NYC marathon, out of a total of 17,000 women, of all ages, there were only 280 in my age group (60-65). The previous two groups from age 50 weren't much greater.

What's going on? What happens to us when we hit 50 and particularly, what happens to women? I suspect it's along the lines of "No one else is doing it, I'd look like an idiot if I did".

Over-40 is a tricky age for everyone. The usual stuff applies: everything goes into decline, the older we get the more invisible we feel. The problem is that when you are depressed, the last thing you feel like doing is going out running, or swimming or dragging to the gym, yet it is probably the best thing you can do.

Mood-changing

As a psychotherapist I hear first-hand how exercise can affect people's moods. There is no doubt in my mind that what-

ever is going on chemically in the brain during exercise has a positive effect.

So, ladies, if anyone wants to take a chance and join me on Saturday mornings for a friendly walk/jog around the woods, please do get in touch. I am not a coach or a trainer, I just know from experience that women in my age group need to stick together, cheer each other on, and get moving.

Let me know by email at vdavenport@btconnect.com. The only restriction that applies is that it's for women only, preferably 40 plus.

Laplanders who lunch

Santa Claus made a surprise visit to Age UK's premises at the Ann Owens Centre in Oak Lane just before Christmas.

Responding to a request from the East Finchley Community Trust, Santa interrupted his busy present wrapping schedule to hand out gifts provided by Budgens East Finchley to senior citizens at the luncheon club on 1 December. The Trust also supported senior citizen lunches at Paul Byrne House, Thomas More Estate and the Green Man Community Centre. In each case the food was supplied for free by Budgens of East Finchley.

What's On...

Sunday 15 January

- **Battle of Barnet:** guided walk around the famous Wars of the Roses battlefield of 1471 with City of London guide Paul Baker. Meet at junction of Great North Road and Hadley Green Road, 11am. Phone Paul on 020 8440 6805.

Tuesday 17 January

- **The Future of the Old Barn:** public

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

meeting at Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale, ^3.30 pm. All welcome.

From Thursday 19 January
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Letters to the Editor

Concerns at tennis club plan

Dear Editor,

On 8 December 2011, I attended the public consultation on proposals for a new Chandos Tennis Club on East End Road. An exhibition at Finchley Cricket Club set out initial proposals for the redevelopment of the Club and its relocation to the Finchley Manor Garden Centre site on East End Road. I have several concerns.

As East End Road is an extremely busy road, particularly between 3-4 pm when four neighbouring schools contribute to the increased traffic, the proposed entrance and exit from the proposed Tennis Club into the "curved" part of East End Road will create challenges for drivers and affect existing traffic congestion.

The provision of 45 car parking spaces will contribute to traffic congestion on a busy part of East End Road and when all car parking spaces are occupied, where will club members and visitors park their vehicles?

The existing side road, which will border the new clubhouse, four clay courts and one junior court, is located opposite Thomas More Way which is used by residents on Viridian's Thomas More Estate and has recently seen increased traffic from the new building at 1 Thomas More Way, in addition to several double-decker buses which wait on East End Road daily to deliver and collect schoolchildren, all of which will create further traffic congestion.

The entrance to the existing side road is also one of the entrances to a cemetery. While funerals are in progress and/or when people visit graves there will be unavoidable disturbance from tennis players' raised voices and tennis balls, all of which are likely to upset people visiting the cemetery.

The "bubble" appearance of four covered courts will look out of character alongside a cemetery and crematorium site.

When construction commences, there will be additional traffic from delivery vans and lorries involved in the project which will further affect traffic on East End Road. In addition, nearby residents will suffer further disruption from noise, dirt and dust, all of which they have recently tolerated during the construction of 1 Thomas More Way.

Yours faithfully, Betti Blatman, Address supplied.

Institute debt levels

Dear Editor,

I read your report on the sale of the Institute Arts Centre (THE ARCHER, December 2011) with concern. Although I am sorry that this is happening, I must point out that it is incorrect to state that the Institute debt three years ago was four times what it is at present.

The audited accounts for the year ending 31 August 2008 state on the balance sheet that total net current

liabilities were £3,472,844 for that year. You will know, of course, that I left the Institute in June 2008. The audited accounts at 31 August 2010 show liabilities of £3,755,065. If the statement in the article were true, the liabilities in 2008 would have been some £15 million, which has never been the case.

I have corresponded with the principal and believe that she was trying to make the point that the operational deficit has reduced in the past four years as the Institute recovered from the setting up of the Arts Centre. This is good news but is only one part of the total Institute debt, which has increased in that period.

I hope this clarifies the facts.

Yours faithfully, Fay Naylor, Former principal, The Institute

A tale of two councils

Dear Editor,

I found it ironic and not a little sad to note that December's edition of The Archer carried not only a piece on the admirable attempts of worried local parents, under the Walksafe N2 banner, to improve safety in the Barnet Council-administered Church Lane, High Road, Creighton Avenue 'rat run', but also an article on the new primary school to be built in the Haringey section of Creighton Avenue.

I note that Haringey Council has imposed safety conditions amounting to £82,000 of improvements to be done regarding pedestrian and cyclist safety before planning permission was even considered. What a difference from the attitude of Barnet Council, which has declared publicly that it is unwilling to spend money to improve the N2 area until there is a fatality. I only fear it will not be long before this is the case.

Yours faithfully, Harriet Connides, Manor Park Road, N2.

Dying matters

Dear Editor,

On Ewan Roberts' letter on the opening of Robertson Memorials on the High Road (Letters, THE ARCHER, December 2011) I would like to offer a response.

It's fantastic that N2 residents have more places to make their funeral plans. Despite the fact that half a million people die in England each year, death remains a taboo in society. A 2011 poll conducted by the Dying Matters coalition confirmed this: more people are scared of dying (67%) than of going bankrupt (41%) or losing their job (38%). So it's not surprising that my fellow ARCHER reader would rather see a hairdressers or estate agent set up on the high street than another 'death

shop'. On the other hand, I welcome the new shop and would happily adopt Ewan's suggested slogan for our village ("Welcome to East Finchley, death is what we do") if it helped more of us in N2 to discuss with our partners the type of funeral we wanted (two thirds of people don't currently do this) as part of broader, more open conversations about our end-of-life wishes. I would urge fellow N2 residents to visit www.dyingmatters.org for more information, and not just because I work there!

Yours faithfully, Alice Fuller, Baronsmere Road, N2

Don't take it so seriously

Dear Editor,

I enjoy reading Kalashnikov Kultur; it's fun and you don't have to take it too seriously. If Stuart Rising (Letters, THE ARCHER, November 2011) wants to indulge in a spiteful rant, let him write an article to give us readers an idea of what we should really be reading. Come on, Stuart, forget the spite and lead by example.

Yours faithfully, John Dixon, High Road, N2.

I'm no rival to Ricky Savage

Dear Editor,

I was gratified to read Malcolm Griffiths' rather guarded endorsement of my view regarding Kalashnikov Kultur's recent, and in my view unsuccessful, change from being mildly outrageous to presenting heavy-handed politicised comment (Letters, The Archer, December 2011). As to Mr Griffiths' perfectly valid point about criticism being easier than actually performing, this is self-evidently true. Like most people, I suspect, I have always found criticism far more congenial than performing. But, with respect, Mr Griffiths misses the point. As Ricky has admirably demonstrated in the past, a savage review is always more fun to read than one larded with praise. But to confuse criticism with self-promotion is a mistake and I shall resist Mr Griffiths' playful suggestion that I attempt a Stuart Rising column. One only has to reflect on the dismaying spectacle of failed politicians, journalists, and assorted so-called celebrities attempting 'strictly' to dance on TV to know when to say "No". One does not have to do it in order to justify commenting on it. Ricky, certainly so far as competition is concerned, can relax.

Yours faithfully, Stuart Rising, Durham Road, 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.



Danger on school 'crossing'

By Karen Saunders

I'm like most N2 residents, always proudly raving about where I live; the lovely schools, the Phoenix, Finchley Youth Theatre ... but there is a big flaw: we can't cross the road. Drivers coming from surrounding motorways seem unaware that we're a little village. We're invisible to them on their commute through our streets.

It's not easy teaching my children road safety when I'm shouting, "Wait, go, stop, what's this idiot doing? INDICATE!" Even when the green man is on your side, children are learning that in N2 they must run diagonally across a junction at high speed without dropping anything. It's not very Green Cross Code.

Cars turn right into Fortis Green at the main junction when the green man is displayed; they speed down Church Lane; run red lights on the SCHOOL crossing. But most 'pavement rage' manifests when facing the danger, especially to children, of crossing at the junction where Creighton Avenue meets the High Road. A request to create a safe system here was dismissed at the last Barnet Residents Forum with the statement: "There has been no personal injury /accident to pedestrians for the last ten years at this site, therefore, whilst the concern is appreciated there is no justification in proposing any changes."

This is unacceptable. Lack of evidence of serious incident neatly hides the issue for Barnet. It ignores a genuine perception of fear. It's not only a concern for mums on the school run. Elderly residents are avoiding crossing Creighton Avenue completely. I hope it became clear to the Barnet officers on the site visit on 8 November that if you live to the south of Martin School, the Creighton crossing is effectively your school crossing. I hope they saw the mums weaving behind cars and getting trapped on the clogged traffic island with children, scooters and buggies. I know they saw the cars running the red lights, right on cue, at the Church Lane crossing. The large audience appeared not to dampen the road rage that afternoon. I hope they saw and heard enough this time to take some action.

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Fashion amongst the foliage

Coldfall Wood has always been a nature-lover's paradise but now it could be a fashion hotspot too. Professional photographer Caron Westbrook decided to use the woods for a fashion shoot and came up with amazing results.

Caron used Barnet model Alice Grist, hair artist Kasia Fortuna, make-up artist Jasmine Mathieson and gowns by Adebayo Jones, a veteran of the fashion industry for 25 years, who has dressed celebrities and Miss World 2001.

"The beauty of Coldfall Woods attracted me whilst

walking my dog Phoebe," said Caron. "I had a mental image some time ago of doing a shoot in a woodland area. Having moved to Creighton Avenue and the woods being at the end of my garden, I decided to try and put my mental image together by creating a shoot."

Mary is a caring winner

Mary Hayes, of Home Instead Senior Care in Barnet, was named Home Care Worker 2011 in the Great London Care Awards. Mary works in East Finchley and other parts of Barnet.

Before joining the Home Instead team, she cared for her mother when she had cancer, as well as her son who was living with heart problems, and a disabled nephew.



Caregiver of the Year Mary Hayes being congratulated by TV presenter Debra Stephenson and local businessman Jason Clayburn.

Mitzvah Day in Coldfall Wood

By John Roots
The Friends of Coldfall Wood had some welcome guests on Sunday 20 November: a group of journalists from the North London Times, who came to do voluntary conservation alongside volunteers from BTCV.

The newspaper team wanted to contribute to Mitzvah Day (the annual day of voluntary social action, led by the Jewish community) so they contacted 20 organisations for ideas. We were delighted that they finally chose to come to Coldfall.

We met at around 10 o'clock on a misty morning. After a brief pause for a photoshoot, we trooped off towards the stream. One of the Friends gave a snapshot of the local history from the end of the ice age; to an enclosure act in 1543 for the Bishop of London; and the use of the woods as a natural resource right up to the 1930s - all in five minutes!

The group's task was to clear a stretch of willow saplings which threatened to choke off growth along the bank of the stream. When they finished shortly after midday the entire stretch of saplings had been cleared, apart from a few larger ones which will provide nesting sites for birds.

As the volunteers set off home through the woods, the sun came out and lit up the mist along the stream bed, clearly showing what beautiful patches of woodland can still be found, even so close to the centre of a densely populated city.

Jack Whitehead's forest childhood

By Ann Bronkhorst
Historian, writer and retired teacher Jack Whitehead, now in his nineties, makes local history come alive. Interviewed in September 2011 by the Friends of Coldfall Wood, who are gathering reminiscences about the wood and its setting, Jack recalled his childhood in the 1920s growing up in one of the first council houses on Coppetts Road, Muswell Hill.

He described the remaining traces of rural life, the making of the Coldfall Estate and an inspirational teacher who gave him "a sense of time". Around Jack's home were forest trees, unpolluted streams, hayfields and flower-rich meadows: "a magic place". Children made dams in streams, pressed leaves, collected moths and bred butterflies. "Nature was very much part of life," he says.

Through the back garden gate of friends in Durham Road, East Finchley, Jack could enter the private Coldfall Wood, then owned by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and extending south to Fortis Green, and walk home through unbroken woodland. As he wrote in *The Making of Muswell Hill*, he seemed to live at "the edge of a thousand year old forest, immense and exotic."

When the trees were felled

Asked which moment he'd revisit, if he could time-travel, Jack chose the woodland clearance that heralded the

Coppett's Wood and Coldfall Estates. His father, who usually avoided mentioning the Great War, said it was "just like Flanders," but young Jack felt "shock and excitement" as the ancient oaks were felled (one dating back to 1717) releasing their sharp, unforgettable smell. He watched the army of skilled workmen hand-building the new homes (no health-and-safety regulations to inhibit a curious boy) and his life-long interest in architecture began.

The Coldfall Estate gardens became virtual allotments during World War Two, to the benefit of Coldfall School pupils. One effect of open space and fresh food was 'The Coldfall Type' of healthy, strong child who often scooped the prizes at post-war inter-school sports days. Obesity certainly wasn't an issue then!

Jack Whitehead is still developing teaching materials and championing the relevance of local history. Check the website www.coldfallwoods.co.uk where his memories will be made available next year.

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