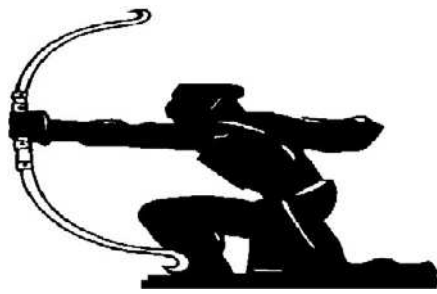


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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Have your say on Post Office changes

By John Lawrence

The Post Office has announced major changes to its service in East Finchley. The company wants to close the existing Crown Office in February and move its service in a franchise arrangement to the UOE office supplies shop on the opposite side of the High Road.

A public consultation on the proposal is under way and you have until 6 January to send in your comments. The Post Office is only asking for comments on location and accessibility, saying the decision to change the way the branch is run is not up for debate.

As we reported earlier in the year, the Post Office needs to make major cost savings in its loss-making Crown Office operation. Finding partners to run branches is seen as one way of doing this.

Roger Gale, Crown Network general manager, said: "We are committed to keeping a Post Office branch in East Finchley and to maintaining the same levels of service for our customers."

Extended hours

UOE has been in business for more than 30 years. Full branch opening hours at the proposed new location would be 9am to 5.30pm Monday to Saturday but Post Office services would also be available over the shop counter until 6pm and from noon until 4pm on Sundays.

The UOE Store would undergo a major refit, doubling the retail floor space, adding automatic door entry, ramped access and low-level serving counters, and five serving positions. These would be a mixture of one screened and three open-plan counters, and a Post Office serving point at the retail counter.

Elliot Jacobs, managing director of UOE, said: "We know that the Post Office is a vital part of the community. We look forward to the outcome of the consultation and the opportunity it gives us to extend opening hours and enhance the already excellent service provided by both UOE and the Post Office on a seven-days-a-week basis."

Seven staff currently work

at the Post Office in the High Road. They have been told that there will be no compulsory redundancies as a result of the proposed move.

However, their union the Communications Workers Union said it was concerned about the adequacy of the new facilities, the potential detrimental impact on the service to the public, and whether there would be a guarantee of long-term service provision by UOE.

The union claimed it was prepared to embrace longer opening hours at the existing office but that this hadn't come up for discussion. It is pledging to continue its campaign of industrial action in defence of Crown Offices, which has included 12 days of strike action at East Finchley this year.

Have your say on the Post Office move through an online questionnaire at postofficeviews.co.uk, by FREEPOST Your Comments to Post Office Ltd, via email to comments@postoffice.co.uk, via the Customer Helpline on 08457 22 33 44 or Textphone 08457 22 33 55. Quote branch code 003004 in all submissions.



Wendy picks up her MBE. Photo by Richard Dawson/Palace Photos

Wendy at the palace

Businesswoman Wendy Hallett received her MBE in an investiture at Buckingham Palace in October. A successful entrepreneur, Wendy has won the award for the innovation of her young fashion concessions (shop-in-shop) concept.

Her company Hallett Retail is based in East Finchley and her Modern Muse initiative aims to engage the next generation of female business leaders.

In 2010 Wendy opened two concessions where 100% of the takings go to Save the Children, raising £30,000 to date. She aims to raise £1 million for the charity.

Wendy is actively involved with Retail Trust, the principal charity of the retail sector, and is vice chair of the Retail Trust London Ball Committee.

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THE ARCHER team wishes all our readers, distributors and advertisers a happy festive season and a peaceful and prosperous New Year. Thank you for all your contributions and support over the last 12 months and we look forward to continuing to bring local news to everyone in East Finchley in 2014.

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THE ARCHER team wishes to thank all the generous people who give up their spare time, in all weather, to deliver the paper for us.

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 – **January:** 13 December, **February:** 10 January, **March:** 14 February

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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

Leisure

Alexandra Palace	020 8365 2121
East Finchley Library	020 8359 3815
Muswell Hill Odeon	0870 505 0007
Phoenix Cinema	020 8444 6789
Warner Cinema	020 8446 9933

Transport

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

Hospitals

Barnet General	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
Whittington	020 7272 3070

Health Advice

AIDSline	020 8363 2141
Alcoholics Anonymous	0845 7697555
Barndoc	0300 033 3777
Barnet MENCAP	020 8203 6688
Cancer Support	020 8202 2211
Drinkline	0800 917 8282
Drugs Helpline	0800 776600
MIND	020 8343 5700
NHS Direct	0845 4647

OAPs' Advice

Age UK	020 820 35040
Contact (N2)	020 8432 1415

Crime

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Barnet Police	101
CrimeStoppers	0800 555111
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RSPCA Inspector	0300 1234 999
RSPCA animal clinic	020 8365 3910
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Planning Applications

Barnet Council

ArcherAcademy, Playing Fields, Stanley Road, N2

Three-storey educational building, including three-court sports hall. Floor lit 3G all-weather outdoor sports pitch, two-court hard play area, parking provision, drop-off zone, bicycle space, circulatory and pedestrian access, landscaping, auxiliary works.

37 Deansway, N2

Single-storey rear and side extension, following demolition of side carport and canopy. Roof extension, including rear dormer and two roof lights, to facilitate loft conversion. Hard and soft landscaping and new garage door at front. All uPVC windows and doors replaced with timber double-glazing to match existing.

50 Deansway, N2

Replacement windows and doors.

5 Hertford Road, N2

Single-storey side extension. Demolition of existing single-storey rear extension.

1, 5, 9 – 17, 21 – 25 Pulham Avenue, N2

New electricity intake cupboards to front elevation.

2B King Street Mews, N2

Change of use from B1 office to C3 residential (one unit).

324 Long Lane, N2

Single-storey extension, depth 6m from rear wall, eaves height 2.3m, maximum height 3.17m.

Haringey Council

31 Aylmer Parade, N2

Change of use from A1 (retail) to D2 (personal training studio).

3 The Drive, Fordington Road, N6

Certificate of Lawfulness for rear ground floor extension.

90 Fortis Green, N2

Change of use from vehicle preparation workshops to car sales with retained workshops. Associated minor alterations to existing elevations, front boundary, lighting and landscaping.

11 Ringwood Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Rear dormer. Conversion of garage to habitable room.

11 Western Road, N2

New glazed doors, rear window and roof lights, and new decking area.

2 Woodside Avenue, N6

Rear ground floor extension and front and rear dormers.

For those who make a difference

Do you know a group or an individual living or working in Barnet who you feel deserves recognition for their outstanding achievements and contributions to the borough? Nominations are now open for Barnet Council's Annual Civic Awards 2014.

The awards, now in their 14th year, are an opportunity for the borough to recognise officially the commitment and hard work of those who strive to make a positive difference to the lives of others.

Winners will be announced at the Awards Ceremony in April 2014, hosted by the Mayor of Barnet Councillor Melvin Cohen. Nomination forms are available from any of the borough's libraries or by downloading a copy from www.barnet.gov.uk/civic-awards. All entries must be received no later than 31 December 2013.

One for your wall?

Built any attractive garden walls recently or is your garden particularly pleasing? If so, you might get an Environment Aware Certificate from The Finchley Society for improving the appearance of Finchley.

Who knows, your work could be catching their eye right now. Find out more from finsoceditor@hotmail.co.uk.

Man airlifted after collision

By Janet Maitland
A motorcyclist with critical injuries was airlifted to a central London hospital after colliding with a car on the High Road. The accident happened at about 2.30pm on 19 October, close to the junction with Oak Lane.

When police and paramedics arrived, they found the 29-year-old lying in the road being attended to by passers-by who had rushed to help him. He had severe injuries to his head, chest and pelvis. No one else was hurt and no arrests were made.

The High Road was closed to traffic until just after 7pm. At the time of going to press, the injured man was in a critical but stable condition.

Any witnesses to the accident are asked to call 020 8842 1817.

Christmas Festival in the High Road

This issue of *THE ARCHER* is due out around the time of the second Christmas Festival taking place in the High Road. As we reported in our last edition, the festivities take place all day on Saturday 7 December, with live music, entertainment, food, drink, crafts and real reindeer.

Lincoln Road will be closed at its junction with the High Road and that's the place to find the main stage this year. The French market will be open from Friday 6th through to Sunday 8th from the Bald Faced Stag down to the tube station.

The world famous Santa Fun run will be held again, the only entrance qualification being that you must wear a Santa hat to take part. The Phoenix Cinema will be showing a Christmas film and there will be a dog show.

Between 10am – 4pm the Bobath Centre on East End Road will be heaving with activities promoted by East Finchley Altogether Better (EFAB). This will include health and wellbeing activities, stalls, a magician, storytelling and a history walk from the Bobath Centre through the heart of historic East Finchley.

With so much happening, there's bound to be something for everyone so go along, enjoy yourself and support our local businesses.

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Residents trash new rubbish and recycling system

By Nick Young

'Bingate' is how many are describing the implementation of Barnet Council's new rubbish and recycling collection scheme, the first few weeks of which saw uncollected waste on the streets and many complaints from residents.

Barnet Council paid German contractor SSI Schaeffer £3.2million to produce and distribute 125,000 bins as part of the new recycling scheme, which will see householders not having to sort recyclable waste. However, many residents were not given the new bins in time for collections, leaving rubbish and recycling left on the streets for up to three weeks in places.

One local resident, Katharine Lea-Robbins of Park Hall Road, described "wet cardboard, split bin bags, rubbish everywhere."

"Absolute rubbish!" was how another resident, Roland Rowe of High Road, appropriately described the situation.

Who gets the sack?

Under the new system, residents have been provided with a small brown bin for kitchen waste and a large blue wheelie-bin which will take all recyclable waste, although some households have been given plastic sacks for the latter purpose instead. There has been much confusion over which households are entitled to blue bins.

The Council had, according to a press spokesman, "carried out a survey of roads in the borough to identify properties that may not be able to accommodate the new recycling bins." In some streets, however, some households received blue bins while others in the same street were given plastic sacks.

One resident commented: "It seems they did not order enough bins and they have sent various contradictory letters about who is entitled to them, but when the excuse is challenged they sometimes give in to pressure."

Council's response

A spokesman for Barnet Council said: "The council will review any outstanding issues with containers ... if residents request a blue bin we will be happy to supply one providing it is practical. For example, that it will not cause an obstruction to the pavement."

There has even been confusion over the new collection days, although the relevant information was communicated to residents via an information pack distributed with the blue bins. Although almost all residents have both the blue bins and the black rubbish bins collected on the same day, the council has advised that they are not collected at the same time in order to avoid congestion. For further clarification, see the council's website. (www.barnet.gov.uk/homepage/286/bin_collection_dates)

What's been your experience of the new recycling and rubbish system, good or bad? Write and tell us by email at the-archer@lineone.net, by post at The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE or Facebook/Twitter TheArcherN2

Is the recycling system even legal?

There have been rumours that the new recycling scheme will fall foul of forthcoming EU regulations that states recyclable materials should be collected separately. THE ARCHER asked Barnet Council for clarification on this point, and received the following reply:

"The EU's revised Waste Framework Directive states 'waste shall be collected separately if technically, environmentally and economically practicable'. We are confident that we will pass the tests in relation to the technical, environmental and economic reasons why a separated collection is not viable in Barnet.

"The Council's decision made in April 2012 was evaluated on all the criteria which form part of the test to ensure that the approach is acceptable for its new comingled recycling collection.

"With the Council's previous recycling collection method, performance had plateaued at around 33% of household waste being recycled, composted or reused. A change in method was necessary to improve on this performance, reduce costs and reduce the environmental impact of disposing of waste."



Children from Holy Trinity help to unveil the plaque with the Bobath Centre's Jayne Pearce, Mike Freer MP and the Finchley Society's David Smith.

Outside the old school gates

If you've passed the Bobath Centre recently, you may have noticed that a new plaque has appeared on the fence alongside the pavement on East End Road. It marks the building as the original site for Holy Trinity School, which moved to nearby Eagans Close in 1975.

Pupils from today's Holy Trinity came along to witness the unveiling at a small ceremony one morning in late September, as did Finchley and Golders Green MP Mike Freer and the Bobath Centre's Jayne Pearce.

The plaque has been put there by the Finchley Society using part of a £5,000 bequest from supporter Peggy Wells, who wanted the society to find ways to mark local history.

The original Holy Trinity School was founded in 1847 after the Bishop of London

handed over a parcel of land at the request of Holy Trinity Church. It was designed by local resident Anthony Salvin, a leading Victorian architect better known for restoring Windsor and Alnwick castles.

Finchley Society chairman David Smith said: "When the school was built, the High Road didn't exist and the centre of East Finchley life was in Market Place. All around was open land and East End Road was then a narrow country lane with a few cottages."

The plaque tells us that the school opened with room for 80 girls, 80 boys (their separate entrances are still visible) and 80 infants, with a headmaster and headmistress living in

tiny houses at either end of the building.

In those days, schooling didn't come for free. Parents were required to pay six pence a week for their first child and three pence for any siblings, while fees for infants were two pence a week.

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Controversial academy proposal at Martin Primary

Dozens of parents have written to the headteacher and governing body of Martin School expressing their concerns about plans to turn the primary school into an academy.

The proposal was announced at the end of October shortly before the half-term holiday and a month-long consultation with parents was due to finish as this edition of *The Archer* went to press.

Opportunities

Headteacher Helen Morrison and the governors are suggesting that the school in Plane Tree Walk joins forces with Northside Primary School in North Finchley and Foulds School in High Barnet to form a multi-academy trust, which in turn could be appointed to open and run a new primary school in Mill Hill from next year. All three primaries have been classed as 'outstanding' by Ofsted inspectors.

In a letter to parents, Mrs Morrison stated: "We believe this academy partnership will provide important educational benefits for our pupils and operational benefits for our school without diminishing our freedom to run the school as we believe best. As an academy, we would become a Sponsor which would enable us to have greater opportunities to support the development of excellent schools for local children across the borough of Barnet."

Too much, too soon

Some parents, however, responded with an open letter expressing their worries that the 'community' ethos of Martin Primary could be seriously disturbed and that their children's education could suffer if the headteacher and other senior staff have to spend a large amount of their time establishing both the academy and the new primary school.

Their concerns are heightened by the fact that Martin Primary is currently in the middle of a major

expansion programme to turn it into a three-form entry school. This is a significant change in itself, they say, and needs time to bed in before the school is subjected to further significant changes.

See Soapbox, page 11. Do you have a view on the Martin academy proposal? Write to us by email at the-archer@lineone.net, by post to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE, or contact us on Facebook/Twitter via TheArcherN2.



The Halloween dancers get jiggy at Woodhouse College. Photo by Julian Robbins

Now scammers target drivers

By Janet Maitland

If a stranger told you your car was leaking oil while you waited at a traffic light, you'd assume they were just being helpful, wouldn't you? But it's almost certainly a scam.

Barnet Borough Watch has issued a warning after a report from a Barnet driver. He said that while he was waiting at the lights at the junction of Frobisher Road and Green Lanes, an elderly man crossing the road signalled to him that there was something 'wrong' with his car.

When he got out, the driver could see oil streaming from his front grille. The old man told the driver he was a mechanic, pointing to an ID card he had round his neck. After looking under the bonnet, he told the driver the oil pipe was broken, but that he knew of a nearby garage who could fix it.

The driver said that wouldn't be necessary as he was a member of the RAC. When he contacted the RAC the engineer immediately asked, "Was it an old man on crutches?" A similar

stunt had been tried at the same junction a few days before.

The way the trick works is that the nearby garage repairs the car for £30 - £50. But there is nothing wrong in the first place. The man crossing the road simply sprays oil onto the grille as he walks past.

In another variation, which targets women drivers, a ‘good samaritan’ warns the driver that the engine will catch fire if she carries on driving but she’s in luck because he happens to be a mechanic and can fix it for much less than a garage would charge.

He goes off and 'buys' a new oil pipe, while the woman waits in the car. He then 'fixes' the leak, showing her a broken oil pipe which he already had in his pocket, and charges her 'only' £70 which the woman gratefully gets from an ATM.

Zombie Zumba

Latin Soul hosted a Hallowe'en extravaganza at a spooky Woodhouse College in North Finchley on 30 October.

The Zumba-inspired event went off with a bang when guests were treated to specially brewed Hallowe'en drinks on arrival, followed by a Thriller Salsa and Pachanga professional dance show.

Latin soul hold Zumba classes every Monday and Wednesday evening at the college. Please see www.latinsoul.co.uk for more information.

Wi-Fi comes to our library too

Barnet Council announced in November that the Borough's "14th and final library" (that means the one at East Finchley) now has Wi-Fi coverage, bringing the number up to 100%. At the time of writing though, it still doesn't have self-service facilities. That should be achieved by the New Year. A notice in the library warns us that the building will be closed for three days some time during the week of December 9-16, when self-service booths will be installed.

The Council has said that East Finchley lagged behind the other branches because it is in a Grade 2 listed building, meaning permission had to be obtained for the necessary alterations.

So let's make the most of our unique library. Did you know that members can download free audiobooks, access reference books, encyclopaedias and newspapers online in your own time and place, and tap in to the automated telephone renewal service? Libraries will also supply sets of books (free of charge) to reading groups.

Visit www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries to find out more. Or pop along to the library, just remembering the self-service induced closures.

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Six of the best from Altogether Better

Six starter ideas have emerged from the East Finchley Altogether Better project, reported on in our October issue. Local people have come up with the ideas and they hope they'll have the support of the whole community. Here's an outline of the Big Six so far.

1. Back-to-work confidence workshops

Several people have pooled their skills and are suggesting a back-to-work confidence workshop where they would offer advice on CV writing, make-up tips for interviews and the workplace, and a photographer would take some great shots of attendees after the workshop. Can you offer any skills to get this workshop up and running or would you like to take part?

2. Cooking skills: share advice on simple meals for confidence in the kitchen

Some people may feel they lack the skills or confidence to prepare nutritious, affordable meals for themselves and their families. A couple of local residents are keen to share their skills with others. Do you also have cooking tips to share? Or would you benefit from learning some?

3. The Hub, young people's centre

This idea was for a centre or café run by young people, for young people, somewhere to go in the evenings to socialise in a safe place. This could be in an existing venue, run by student volunteers facilitated by parents/schools. Do you know of such a venue? Would you be keen to help supervise this group, or advise in getting it off the ground?

4. IT & Biscuits, learning to use computers and the internet

This group is keen to look at ways of giving people the opportunity to learn about IT and use it confidently. Do you know of a person or group that would benefit from this? Could you spare any time to teach some of your knowledge?

5. Table tennis group

This group is keen to have a table set up for use by older people in the day and younger people after school times. The idea is to socialise and get fit, with refreshments and coaching available at weekly sessions. Would you like to help lead or take part in this group? Do you know of a table tennis table or venue that could be used for this?

6. Information sharing, noticeboards and website

The need for one clear online source of information and local noticeboards around East Finchley was also discussed, so EFAB are looking into this idea further.

Besides these six ideas, other projects are in the wings waiting for people who might be able to get them off the ground. These include gardening group East Finchley Green Fingers, fitness group Mums Who Run and days out group Homes and Away for people living alone or in care or sheltered accommodation who don't get many outings.

If you are interested in finding out more or getting involved in any of these projects, call Lisa on 07909 998453. For information on progress and next events, follow East Finchley Altogether Better on twitter @EastFinchleyAB.



Children from the school council at Manorside School help out with the tree planting.

New trees get watered in

By Diane Langleben

The torrential rain on the morning of 8 November did not deter the throng of people who braved the weather to attend the planting of an avenue of trees, comprising mainly oaks, in Victoria Park, Finchley.

Among those attending was the deputy mayor of Barnet, Councillor Bridget Perry, Councillor Dean Cohen, children from the school council at Manorside School in Squires Lane, the children of the Rocking Horse Nursery, Reverend Nicholas Pye of St Paul's Church, Long Lane, and many local residents.

The project was created and funds raised by an informal group of local residents, Etchingham Friends, co-ordinated by Brian Plen. The planting took place in conjunction with the London Borough of Barnet, whose Parks and Open Spaces Officer, Tracy Sawyer, provided much help and advice.

The Finchley Society was also involved and on the day, volunteers from the Pratap Shakha Finchley, the local branch of

the Hindu Volunteers' Organisation, Hindu Swayamsevak

Sangh, were willing hands in setting up a refreshments tent.



Crash destroys traffic lights

By Janet Maitland

A driver and a passenger ran away and left their car after being involved in a crash that demolished a set of traffic lights on the High Road.

Two vehicles were involved in the collision that wrecked the traffic lights and pelican crossing at the junction between the High Road, East End Road and Fortis Green in the early hours of 18 October, as shown in our photo by Nick Young.

When police arrived at about 5.45am, they found that only one driver had stayed at the scene. He was uninjured.

The traffic lights were secured and a police car remained close by for the rest of the morning. No arrests have yet been made. If you witnessed the accident please call police on 101.

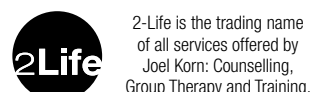


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Artist Nick Scammell's installation in Abbott's Gardens. Photo by the artist

A crowd of voices

By Ann Bronkhorst

Remembrance Sunday was sunny this year; the following day, Armistice Day, was rainy, with the sadness of fallen leaves and a dying year. In Abbott's Gardens, an unusual event reflected the autumnal mood.

Just for a few hours that day, some physical objects were carefully arranged in a silent commemoration of the V2 attack that devastated the street on 15 November 1944, when five people died, one woman was blinded and homes were massively damaged.

David Smith, chairman of the Finchley Society, has gathered survivors' accounts and residents have erected a permanent memorial plaque. The installation on 11 November, however, was temporary, and very different.

'A little string'

All over London artists and performers responded for just one day to the theme of Sound and Silence, reflecting the significance of 11 November. Local poet and photographer Nick Scammell chose to focus on Abbott's Gardens, entitling

his installation 'A little string speaks for a crowd of voices'.

An almost invisible piano wire (marked by a plastic strip saying 'fragile') was stretched between two trees, close to the memorial plaque. From the wire he hung autumn leaves bearing the names of casualties or the made-up word 'remurmur'. The leaves looked frail and vulnerable, like the civilians who suffered the V2 attack.

Why piano wire? David Smith recalled that all the strings of the family piano had resonated at once: "An uncanny sound." Another survivor, Maysel Houghton, who later lost her sight, had received some new-laid eggs that day which were found intact amid the wreckage. Nick arranged a pyramid of six perfect eggs at the base of one of the trees.

Someone remarked, "It's not

very substantial, is it?" Certainly this was an unobtrusive and temporary art-work but it did make me think about the fragility of human lives and the importance of remembering or, if you will, re-murmuring.

For more information about this and the day's other artistic projects, visit www.silentcaphony.co.uk

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"GREETINGS FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON"

Kit out your kids

By Diana Cormack

Hannah Woldu had to choose two important names this year: one for her second daughter born in July and the other for the shop she opened at 162 High Road. This became Ryker, a Nordic name meaning independent and strong-willed, qualities of value when you are running your own business and have to juggle the role of being a parent and a working mum.

Hannah told *THE ARCHER* that she studied textile design at Chelsea College of Art and Design. She decided to merge this talent and her subsequent retail experience with what she has learned from being a mother. So her shop is spacious, giving youngsters the freedom to move around and explore and allowing parents to feel relaxed. Hannah says she wants this children's boutique to feel friendly, open and welcoming and to build up

a community feeling there.

The shop stocks individualistic products of quality rather than quantity which are chosen with an eye to sustainability. English brands are to be found amongst the clothing and footwear on sale alongside such things as books, cuddly toys and scooters. Ryker can be reached on 020 8444 6266. Opening hours are 10am- 6pm Mondays-Saturdays and 11am - 5pm on Sundays.

Beware more scammers

By Daphne Chamberlain

Last month, someone claiming to be from my credit card supplier rang to check some alleged purchases. Had I spent £1,000 odd in a well known department store, and several hundred in shops in the same area? Did I have my card with me? Had I authorised anyone else to use it?

They didn't ask me to disclose any details, but gave a reference number and name, telling me to call my issuing bank immediately, as my debit and credit cards were both blocked. "Use the phone number on the back of your card," they said.

I have had a couple of genuine fraud attempts on my cards, and this conversation didn't ring true. Remembering warnings about fraudsters not clearing their end of the line, I certainly wasn't going to ring even a genuine official number on the phone I had been using. But out of curiosity, I picked up the phone again, and heard a dialling tone which also didn't ring quite true. So apparent dialling tones don't necessarily mean anything.

The landline rang again. The caller sounded strangely like the first one, but claimed to be

someone else. I told him I was about to call my bank, which I did - but on my mobile. Of course the story was untrue, but reported as attempted fraud. I then cleared my landline by dialling 123 and making a couple of personal calls.

But more was to come. Next morning, an email allegedly from another bank told me that online access to my savings account was blocked because of fraud investigation, but if I clicked on a link I would find out more. The smell of fish, not to say phish, came back.

I made another phone call. Surprise, surprise, this was untrue too. The bank emphasised that they would never ask anyone to click on a link, nor indeed send an email in those circumstances, and asked me to forward the email as a phishing attempt. So beware, take care!

Art for Ark's sake

The inaugural Art for Ark's Sake fundraiser in aid of Noah's Ark Children's Hospice will showcase works from established and emerging artists as well as original signed artwork from a host of well-known celebrities. The artwork will be put on display at the Original Gallery, Hornsey Library, Haringey, throughout December with a charity auction evening on 14 December.

A number of celebrities have generously given up their time to create original signed artworks for Noah's Ark, including tennis player Rafael Nadal, actor and comedian Johnny Vegas, actors Sean Bean, James Purefoy and Fay Ripley and musician Andy Bell from Beady Eye.



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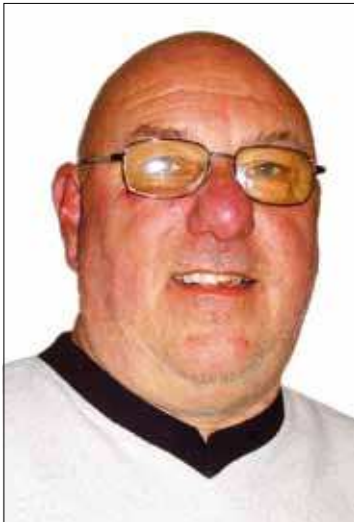
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45 years in the same workplace

By Ann Bronkhorst

"I was aged 15 when I walked in through those gates," said Barry Law, newly retired from 45 years' work in St Pancras (now Islington) cemetery. Few people have a work record as long, or as happy, as his.



Barry Law.
Photo by Ann Bronkhorst

Barry enjoyed the outdoor life from earliest childhood when he loved visiting Waterlow Park and its aviary. He became a skilled gardener, with an assistant, working for 20 years in the then Camden-owned section of the huge St Pancras Cemetery. His father had worked there and now Barry's son-in-law works in the office too.

When the cemetery gardening budget was cut Barry chose to continue to work outside, but as a gravedigger. And being outside, in what he calls "East Finchley's own nature reserve", has given him immense pleasure.

What, no wallabies?

Over the years he's watched innumerable birds, from gangs of long-tailed tits to pheasants, red-legged partridges and a regular duck family in the stream. Barry's face lights up as he describes the fox cubs at play; the cemetery cat, Duski; the pair of muntjac deer (long gone, sadly). He knows every road, path, monument and statue as well as the wildlife havens in between.

For Barry, a place often associated only with sadness has given him, he says, "45 years of watching, studying and loving" wildlife. That won't stop, because he and his family enjoy walking in the countryside and visiting nature reserves. He's a RSPB member, with state-of-the-art bird feeders in his Hertford Road garden, and a young grandson who shares his passion for nature.

Family man

On 1 November Barry was given two awards for long service and some bite alarms (he's a fisherman, too). Then colleagues past and present joined the family and friends for a party at The Five Bells. Colleague Sophia Alana said later: "Barry will be much missed and his length of experience can't be replaced. He's always positive: a great character and a family man through and through."

In fact, family life is so full, busy and happy that Barry isn't likely to miss his work, as some do after retirement. And he lives near enough to the cemetery to pop in now and then, in the early morning, to check on his favourite foxes.



Kevin Daly, Robin McDonald, Chris Antonio rehearse for the New Horizons production.

Theatre to break down barriers

By Linda Sansom

Young adults with disabilities are getting to grips with Shakespeare in a new inclusive theatre group that meets at the Finchley Youth Theatre in the High Road.

New Horizons is the brainchild of Cheryl Ferney-Reeves, a performing arts teacher at Barnet College whose students have already had successes with *The Tempest* and *Macbeth*.

Parents of the students wanted them to further develop their skills, but there is little chance for those aged 18-35 to do that, and Cheryl wanted young adults with learning disabilities to be able to belong to a theatre group. So she started New Horizons with colleagues Jose Forni and Emily Kinane.

"It's inclusive, which is very

important," explains Cheryl. "We didn't want to differentiate between mainstream young adults and those with disabilities. We wanted to break down barriers and we feel we do that with the workshops and performances. Once you are on stage there is no difference between the group and this is what's special to us."

Adapted for today

The group aims to tackle the classics including Shakespeare, because a lot of people are shy of performing them, and to make them accessible and enjoyable. So they rework the story, adapt the text into modern-day language, and add

visuals such as movement and theatrical technique.

Currently rehearsing *The Merchant of Venice* for a performance next summer, the group runs entirely on member subscription, with costumes, lighting and props all produced in house.

Cheryl is hoping for new members, who don't need previous acting experience "People can come along and try before they buy. Lots of young people have never had the chance to act at school."

For information contact Cheryl (07748 155298) or just turn up on a Friday (5.30 – 7.30pm).

New kid on the recycling block

By Diana Cormack

A relatively new arrival to the block of recycling banks outside East Finchley station is one for the disposal of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE). Anything that uses a plug, battery or charger can be recycled, so if your unwanted electrical item fits, pop it in. The WEEE bank opening measures 52cm/20ins by 51cm/20.5ins.

Otherwise call 0800 085 1050 for free collection of any electrical items from your home or take them yourself to a Reuse and Recycling Centre. Barnet's is just up the road from East Finchley at Summers Lane, North Finchley, N12 0RF. Old light bulbs and all batteries can also be recycled there.

By recycling one iron, enough steel is recovered to make 13 cans. Last year north Londoners recycled over 3,000 tonnes of electricals, estimated

at having offset over 26,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions. This is equivalent to taking 7,200 cars off the road for a year.

Visit www.wiseuptowaste.org.uk/weee for an interactive

map of Barnet's recycling facilities. This address can also be used for free entry to a prize draw competition in support of The Children's Air Ambulance lift off. For more information visit: www.dhl.co.uk/envirosolutions

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YOUNG ARCHER



The victorious Coldfall Primary football players.

Football firsts

Coldfall Primary School were the winners in the Haringey Boys Football Tournament. The year 5 and 6 pupils came out on top of 36 local schools after battling their way through to the finals, winning two of their matches and drawing one. Not only are they Haringey champions but they have now qualified to represent the borough at the prestigious London Youth Games at the Crystal Palace National Athletics Stadium in July 2014.

Tigers are ready to roar

A father is trying to set up a new youth football team for East Finchley and is looking for young players to join up.

David Pang, of Church Lane, got the bug for youth soccer after watching his 13-year-old son play in Muswell Hill in recent years. He gradually got more involved as a parent and now has an FA qualification in coaching.

His idea is to set up a team closer to home that would be open to all youngsters aged eight and over. The strip has been chosen (dark blue tops) and the team already has a name... the East Finchley Tigers.

David said: "I'm just an

enthusiastic volunteer but I'd really like to get this off the ground. There aren't a lot of facilities or things for young people to do in East Finchley, so hopefully a new football team will be popular."

Training options

There are a few local teams, some of them playing in the Watford Friendly League, but many have to travel some distance for fixtures. David wants the Tigers to play in the Camden and Regent's Park Youth League, which holds matches in Regent's Park on Saturdays.

Training would take place on Lyttleton Fields in Hampstead Garden Suburb or possibly on the pitches behind the David Lloyd Centre in North Finchley. There's also the future option of using Stanley Field once it is opened for community use by the Archer Academy.

David's plan is to have the team up and running by April so that players can have a long period of training ahead of the new season in September 2014. If you are interested, you can get in touch with David via the Contact link on www.clubwebsite.co.uk/eastfinchleytigers

How your car could be tracked

By Janet Maitland

You may have seen warning signs about the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras that are being installed across the borough. ANPR is a surveillance method that uses optical character recognition on images in order to read vehicle number plates. Any vehicle can be tracked, in very close to real time.

ANPR has wider uses than crime prevention and detection. Transport for London already uses ANPR to charge motorists entering the payment zone of the London Congestion Charge. It can be used on toll roads, for security at border controls, and for traffic management and planning.

Its use is not without controversy. The fact that mass ANPR surveillance is capable of tracking and recording all vehicle movements across the whole country means that there are some concerns about individual privacy.

"I've campaigned to have ANPR introduced since I first became an MP," said MP Mike Freer, "so I'm delighted - it's another way to make Barnet safer." Paul Hammond of Barnet Boroughwatch is also very positive about ANPR, saying: "It's a highly efficient way of deterring criminals and sends a signal that they are not safe in Barnet."

The police and Barnet council are developing the ANPR network and they hope the whole system will be up and running by 2014.

Cookies for Santa

By Allison Goodings

It wouldn't be Christmas without cookies for Santa, and who wouldn't enjoy making these fun peanut butter biscuits in the likeness of Rudolph and his friends?

Ingredients

220g plain flour
1tsp bicarbonate of soda
¼ tsp salt
60g softened butter
150g brown sugar
55g granulated sugar
195g smooth peanut butter
1tsp vanilla essence
1 large egg
Chocolate chips or M&Ms

Whisk together the flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt in a small bowl and set aside. Using an electric mixer on medium speed, cream the butter, brown sugar, granulated sugar, smooth peanut butter and vanilla essence in a large bowl. Beat until light and fluffy for two to three minutes, scraping down the bowl a few times.

Add the egg and mix until just blended. Add the dry ingredients on low speed and mix until just blended. Blend until smooth. Roll teaspoon-size mounds of dough into balls and place three inches apart on baking sheets lined with parchment paper.

Dip a flat-bottomed water glass into a small bowl of granulated sugar and flatten dough balls to make 1/2-inch-thick round cookies. Gently stick two small pretzels into the dough at the top of each cookie to make antlers. Use two chocolate chips for eyes and a red or green M&M near the bottom for the nose.

Bake 8 to 10 minutes at 190C, or until cookies are light gold in colour. Let cool on the baking sheet for two minutes, then carefully transfer to a rack to cool completely.



Message in a bottle

By Neville Robinson

The Rotary Club of Golders Green is running a Message in a Bottle scheme to help people who fall ill at home.

The idea is simple: vulnerable people are given a plastic bottle inside which are two self-adhesive Green Cross stickers and also a two-sided sheet of A4 paper. On one side are the instructions and on the other a data page for the recipient to complete.

One of the self-adhesive stickers is put on the inside of the front door and one on the refrigerator. If a person collapses, and is found, the emergency services are called

and will see the Green Cross on the front door, telling them there is a 'bottle' in the fridge.

Inside the bottle will be details of the patient, including doctor's name and address and telephone number, next of kin and medication.

The scheme has been run elsewhere in the country by other Rotary Clubs and I understand that over the last four years, some 19 people have been 'saved' because of the Message in a Bottle.

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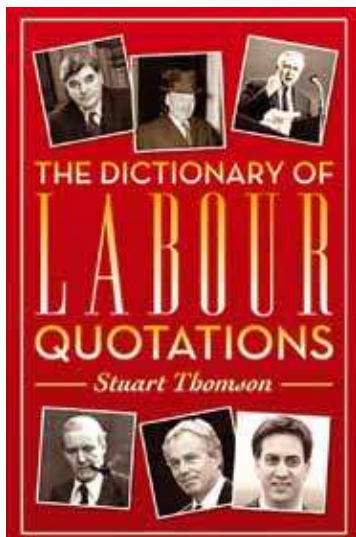
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Book Reviews

Dictionary of Labour Quotations

Review by John Lawrence



Not often will you find mouthy football manager Brian Clough and once-the-world's-most-powerful-man Bill Clinton in the same book but Stuart Thomson has brought them together for his latest project.

The author, who lives in Manor Park Road, has published the Biteback Dictionary of Labour Quotations, an entertaining and thought-provoking compendium of memorable lines from the wits, firebrands, revolutionaries and thinkers who have fuelled the British Labour movement since its conception.

Brian Clough freely admitted being a Champagne Socialist, saying: "The difference between me and a good Tory is that he keeps his money while I share mine."

Clinton, meanwhile, is an

example of the world thinkers who have influenced Labour politicians in this country. Among the fascinating quotes are ones from Canadian-born economist JK Galbraith and historical figures like Keir Hardie and George Orwell.

Stuart, a public affairs consultant, wrote the original version of this book 12 years ago and has updated it to include the Tony Blair years and the Labour politicians of today.

For anyone fascinated or troubled by politics, left, right or centre, this book can easily be enjoyed as a history of the Labour movement, with all the interesting bits left in.

The Dictionary of Labour Quotations, by Stuart Thomson, is published by Biteback Publishing, price £12.99.

Friern Barnet - The library that refused to close

Review by Daphne Chamberlain

Local author Keith Martin has dedicated this book "to those in the community who created Friern Barnet Library in 1934 and to the team of determined, brave and talented people who refused from 2011 to 2013 to let it be closed".

The book is a tribute and will be a historical record, introducing the team and the details of their campaign to the (at times) nationwide audience who watched with growing interest and involvement as the story unfolded.

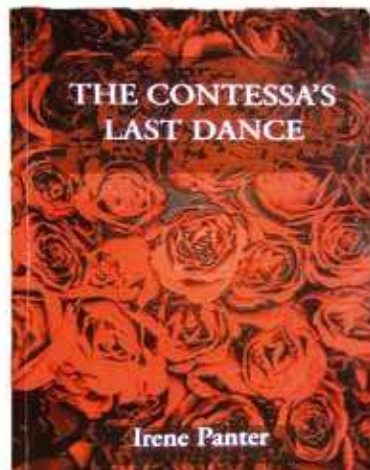
The Occupy movement of squatters, Barnet Council and councillors, the media (including *The Archer*), celebrities, Internet bloggers, lawyers, and the local people who care passionately about their library and are developing it as a lively community centre: these are

all featured here, highlighted by a large collection of colour photos.

Friern Barnet - The Library That Refused To Close is written by Keith Martin and published by Chaville Press, ISBN 978-0-9569344-7-5. It costs £10.99, of which £2 per copy will be donated to Friern Barnet Community Library.

The Contessa's Last Dance

Review by Margi McAlister



The contessa of this story is based on Dame Barbara Cartland, whom local author Irene Panter met some time ago. The story begins with a young woman, Julie, depressed after the breakdown of her marriage and loss of her dog, who starts an art degree course. She goes to live as a paying guest with an elderly lady.

This is the contessa, who is living in a time warp between old England, the Somme and the Spanish Civil War. There are other paying guests; in particular a handsome young American academic in an unhappy marriage. The contessa, flattered by his chivalry, sets about bringing him together with Julie.

Meanwhile, she has an old friend, a princess who lives in Austria in a dilapidated little hunting lodge, grandly called a castle. Before long, the pair are bickering and the princess becomes inordinately jealous and on a visit to England to stay with her long-suffering friend, the contessa, the relationship deteriorates with catastrophic results.

The Contessa's Last Dance, by Irene Panter, is published by Janus Publishing ISBN 978-1-85756-758-8.

Showtime 6

Review by Daphne Chamberlain

Every year, for the last six years, East Finchley Writers have brought out an anthology of their work. To some of us who have read them from the start, they recall memories of childhood Christmases.

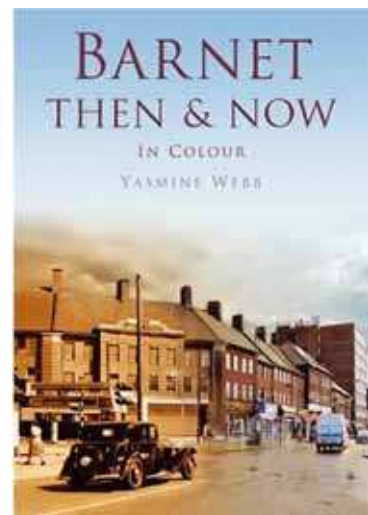
Not that the material is childlike. It's adult and subtle. It's just that it's rather like getting your gift annual, and catching up with familiar characters. Only it is most of the writers who are familiar.

East Finchley Writers are a talented bunch. If you've never read any of their previous offerings or heard them reading aloud at East Finchley Arts Festival, do give them a try now. Science fic-

tion, reminiscences, poems, short stories, travel writing, extracts from novels: take your pick.

If you feel you could write yourself, why not join them in their weekly meetings, 6.30pm on Wednesdays at The Old White Lion. Carola, on 020 8883 5808, will be delighted to tell you more, and will also tell you how to buy Showtime 6. It's a good read.

Barnet Then and Now



We have just heard of an addition to the collection of books about the borough of Barnet. The Finchley Society newsletter describes *Barnet Then and Now* as "enjoyable, colourful and informative". Author Yasmine Webb is the former collections manager of Barnet Local Studies, which means she knows what she's talking about. She also took the photographs herself.

We hope to tell you more in future editions, but meanwhile keep an eye out for it yourselves. Published by The History Press, it can be ordered from local bookshops or obtained through the internet.

Desperately House-Hunting!

After 10 years in East Finchley, my family has expanded with a beautiful baby boy and we need to find a larger house in the area! If you live in a three or four-bed house and are thinking of trying to sell sometime over the next few months then please get in touch with us at: rrmarcus2013@gmail.com

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Sundays at 10.30am

Come & Celebrate Christmas with us!

Sunday 22nd December

10.30am - 11.45am:
Christmas Carol Service
"Sense or sentiment"



6.00pm - 7.15pm:
Carols by Candlelight



Christmas Day (Weds 25th Dec)

10.30am - 11.15am
Christmas Morning Family Service

For more information please contact
the Church Office, Tel: 8883 1544
web site: www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk
Minister: Simon Dyke

Visitors Always Welcome

DO JOIN US THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON
EAST FINCHLEY METHODIST CHURCH
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Carols by Candlelight
Sunday 15 December, 5.00 p.m.

Christmas Day Family Service - 10.00 a.m.

Full details of all our Christmas services are on our website
tel: 020 8346 1700 www.eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Relax, it's Christmas

Yes, it's that time of year again, time to max out your credit cards, spend something close to the national debt of a medium sized nation and end up over-fed-up and wondering how you are going to get through January. Of course in the weird world of Christmas, December is way too late to start celebrating and anyone who hasn't ordered their reindeer by the end of October is not playing the game.

But the festive season isn't just about overeating, it's really about overspending. Now is the time to join the Argos aliens and buy your nearest and dearest something they don't want. What you buy depends on the size of your bank account and it is a universally acknowledged fact that a person with a large fortune will be in want of taste. So if you're friends with a Russian oligarch make sure you get the receipt because nothing looks quite as crass as sequins on a Ferrari.

After the food and the presents comes the drink and after the drink comes more drink until you've done more to help the brewers of Britain than anyone this side of the Aussies rugby players who got banned for being more drunk than usual. And don't forget the case of dry white wine for anyone who doesn't like beer.

By now you're ready for music and our good friends at Classic FM have a whole new download of carols you've come to loathe. This special release even includes the massed bands of the RAF playing excerpts from Cliff Richard's last Christmas record.

All of which should put you in the mood for the local school's nativity play. The only time I was let anywhere near one of those was when I was seven. It wasn't the greatest experience, not after I got demoted from being one of the three kings to hotel keeper. Come the big night as Joseph and Mary turned up looking for a room, I did the only thing an irresponsible brat like me could do and let them have the King Herod suite. And that just about sums up Christmas.



Regular Events

Sport & Fitness

- **Badminton** Weds eves 8-10pm all abilities, contact George 8349 0170 or John 8444 7163.
- **East Finchley Flyers running club**, Tuesdays 7pm at the tube station, 7k run and socialising. Nick 07593 367134.
- **Finchley & Hornsey Ramblers Group** Call Vivien 8883 8190
- **Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club**, Summers Lane N12. New and experienced bowlers welcome.
- **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.
- **Pilates Beginners Classes** Tue 9.30-10.30am, Holy Trinity Church Hall. Michelle 07767 804 564
- **Tae Kwon Do** for children & adults at Finchley Lido Mon & Fri 7-9pm 07949 612 706. www.taekwondo-uktd.co.uk
- **Tai Chi** class at EF Methodist Ch, Weds 1pm. James 8883 3308 or james@taiji.co.uk
- **Tennis club** with four clay courts off Southern Road. Call 8883 7723.
- **Yoga, breathing & relaxation**. Weekly drop-in classes - N3, N6, N10. Phone Judy on 07956 375607.
- **Yoga**, pregnancy yoga, meditation classes. Call Sunnah 07941 321 772 www.stretchingpeople.co.uk.

Music, Dance & Creative Arts

- **Art Classes**. Call Henry on 8888 5133.
- **Ballroom Dance Classes**, Wednesday eves for beginners & improvers. St Mary's Church Hall, N3. 8444 0280.
- **Ballroom & Latin American Dance Classes** - beginners & improvers. Wed & Fri eve, Bishop Douglass Sch. 8207 2323.
- **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.
- **Ladies Keep Fit** Class for over 50s. Tues 10.30-11.30am at Tetherdown Hall. Sheila 8444 0084.
- **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

Clubs & Social

- **Bingo evening**, 8pm Sundays, at the Constitutional Club, The Walks, N2.
- **Bingo Club** Mondays 7-9 pm, Green Man Centre, Contact: Jan 8815 5452
- **Contact Lunch Club** Tuesdays at the Green Man. Call 8444 1162 to book.
- **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.
- **Muslim Ladies Lunch Club** 1st & 3rd Weds, Ann Owen Ctr., Oak La. Call 8432 1415 to book.
- **North London Bridge Club**, Muswell Hill. Contact 8348 3495
- **Bridge Club**, every Saturday 1.30-4pm, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2 8LT. Contact Ray Tiano 07944 562180.
- **Jewish Friendship Club** for over 60s, Tues 1-3 pm at Muswell Hill Synagogue, Tetherdown. Anita 8886 6140.
- **Muswell Hill Tetherdown Bridge**, contact 8883 4390
- **Youth Club** at Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale every Tues in termtime. Ages 8-13, £1 entry.



Jazz at Bishop Douglass School

Toe-tapping tunes for a special team member

On 22 October an evening of jazz took place at Bishop Douglass School, Hamilton Road, in memory of long-term Archer team member Pam Kent.

It was a fitting venue as Pam had worked at the school for several years. Pam loved jazz and used to run the fortnightly Finchley Jazz Club, so this was a particularly suitable tribute. Organised by John Bayne, who put up a sale of Pam's CDs and tapes alongside a raffle, the event raised £552 for the North London Hospice.

Pumpkin on the button

By Sheila Armstrong

Tireless local fundraiser Brian Hooper has recently sent *THE ARCHER* the results of this year's Guess the Weight of the Pumpkin competition, again hosted by The Old White Lion pub.

Mark Edwards guessed the precise weight of the enormous and locally grown vegetable which was 78 pounds or 35.45 kilos, though there were 28 people who were within half a pound of that weight. The prize was a £50 voucher to spend at the pub. Interestingly, guesses varied from 16 pounds to 175 pounds.

The total raised at the time of writing was £1,500. Brian will be handing over a cheque to the RSPCA and half of that amount

will go to the East Finchley Branch. Pumpkin jam is still for sale in the pub.

In the lead up to the festive season Brian will be organising other fundraising activities at the pub. He also runs the quiz night there every Tuesday; The Archer's Quiz Team put in an appearance twice in November. Contact Brian on Facebook at O W L / Brian's Tuesday Quiz, email briansquiz@aol.com, or on his mobile 07775 932 906.

Meditating at Noon

By John Ryan

A blistering blast of winter wind from the east Serves me well as I wander Cherry Tree Wood, and meditate on life's vagaries. We look To life's consistencies, are uneasy with life's Unpredictabilities. And we sometimes fear the Winds of change.

The winter wind winds its way to my very Bones: one of life's consistencies these times. I'm moodily meditating on how we adapt to Essential facts: birth, and – of course – death.

Yet all is optimistic: this is very late winter. Already the first buds are tentatively showing Through. Begone, this long, foul winter in my Soul. Adieu!

Welcome, soothing springtime, full of Optimism and new growth, in my soul. Welcome! Bonjour!

I cogitate and ruminate upon life's flimsy fragility In the face of wintry winds in the mind and soul. But they will pass, and we will enter a Garden of Summer, brimful, even overgrown, with floral Delights.

Time is indeed the Great Healer, but for now a Blistering blast of winter wind.

New director for the Phoenix

By Sheila Armstrong

Elizabeth Taylor-Mead became executive director of the Phoenix Cinema at the start of November. The appointment is part of the cinema's on-going renewal programme which began with a major overhaul of the fabric of the building in 2010. Former executive director Paul Homer, now at the Jerwood Collection in Hastings, steered that project through successfully.

Elizabeth Taylor-Mead recently commented: "The Phoenix was an important venue in my film education as a young filmmaker in London, and I have watched its development with great enthusiasm and respect."

Welcoming the new director, Stephen Barr, chair of the Phoenix Board of Trustees, said: "The cinema landscape is moving rapidly, and Elizabeth is just the person to lead the cinema through the exciting challenges that lie ahead."

Elizabeth has extensive experience in the film industry in both the UK and US. She was founder of Metropolis Pictures and of the Association of Independent Producers. Most recently she worked for one of the top art house cinemas in the US, the Coolidge Corner Theatre.



New at the Phoenix: Elizabeth Taylor-Mead

Make friends with a book

Get Into Reading groups are perfect for people of all ages, whether you're a reader, a non-reader, or someone who would simply like some time and space to relax. And it's all free.

A new group has started meeting at Age UK Barnet, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2, every Friday from 10.30am to noon. You can simply drop in and sit down, there's no pressure to talk, to read, or even to drink tea.

The group will read a wide range of short stories, novels and

poems by our greatest writers, and they will all be read aloud: you can just listen. You won't have to read aloud unless you want to as the group facilitator will do that.

If you are interested, contact Paul Higgins on 07985 718744 or paulhiggins@thereader.org.uk. Or just drop in.

What's On...

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

Tuesday 3 December – Sunday 5 January

• **The Tiger Who Came To Tea**. The classic children's picture book comes to arts depot. Box Office 020 8369 5454. www.artsdepot.co.uk.

Wednesday 4 December to Saturday 7 December

• **The Guild Players present Jack and the Beanstalk**, by John Morley, at Finchley Methodist Church Hall, Ballards Lane, Finchley, N3 1NB. Box Office enquiries: 020 8346 6337. All Tickets £8.

Saturday 7 December

• **East Finchley Christmas Festival** and French Market along the High Road, 10am to 6pm, with plenty of activities in the Bobath Centre, East End Road. Family fun, live entertainment, food, drink and things to buy. Come along and support our local businesses and community groups.

Thursday 12 December to Sunday 26 January

Award-winning Broadway musical **Kiss**

Me Kate, music and lyrics by Cole Porter, Upstairs at the Gatehouse, Highgate, N6. Box office at www.upstairsatthegatehouse.com or 020 8340 3488.

Saturday 14 December

• **Martin School Centenary Christmas Bazaar**, 12noon to 3pm, Martin School, Plane Tree Walk, N2. Bigger and better than ever this year, with loads of fun for the kids and plenty of gorgeous gifts to buy. And Santa's been invited. Entry £1 per family.

• **Charity auction evening for the Art for Ark's Sake** exhibition of works by artists and celebrities, in aid of the Noah's Ark Children's Hospice, 6pm, Original Gallery, Hornsey Library, Haringey. The works are on display at the same venue until Saturday 4 January.

Tuesday 17 December

• **Live band featuring Kenny Charles** at The Victoria pub, North Hill, Highgate, from 8pm. The pub also runs a quiz each Wednesday from 8pm, £2 per player, and a Friday live music session from 8pm.



Letters

Bin blight

Dear Editor,

I was wondering if you have plans for a feature on the latest environmental blight to disfigure our neighbourhood in East Finchley? While the principle of encouraging recycling is to be commended this latest roll out seems to have been done with complete disregard for our neighbourhood which is of large numbers of houses with very small front gardens and hence little room to accommodate yet another large bin.

Consequently here in Leopold Road there are bins all over the place and where people have managed to squeeze them into their front space you see as much of bins as of the house behind it. A walk from the tube station to here and through intermediate streets shows many similar situations.

A telephone call from a friend in Ingram Road just now has revealed that they have already been given the alternative of a bag rather than a bin, much to their relief. The difference between the size of the gardens there and here must be a few centimetres so why we have not been treated in a similar fashion I cannot understand.

I see from a Council leaflet that they will review the situation in January 2014 and may supply bags to residents who request them. Why on earth they cannot have started with this process now I cannot understand. Why go through the roll out and then have to reconsider later?

It seems to be yet another example of a thoughtless Council having little regard for the consequences of its actions...and giving recycling a bad name.

Yours faithfully,
Brian Merison,
Leopold Road, N2.

Why throw it away?

Dear Editor,

As someone who has recently moved to East Finchley, something has been puzzling me about the new waste and recycling scheme.

Nowhere have I seen any mention of the word 'compost', nor any encouragement for residents to compost their own kitchen and garden waste. In other London boroughs, some councils actively encourage home composting and provide compost bins to residents for a small cost.

As for me, a passionate devotee of the compost heap, I think it's such a wonderful natural process for dealing with waste and ending up with free good quality compost for the garden. Magic!

And it reduces the actual waste that needs collecting by a huge amount. So, come on Barnet, how about giving us some compost bins?

Yours faithfully,
Francesca Lincoln,
Address supplied.

In search of Goozee

Dear Editor,

I wonder whether you would be kind enough to print this letter for me? I am currently researching material for a book regarding a Lancaster bomber which crashed on the village of North Thoresby, Lincolnshire on 4 October, 1943 as a result of which all the crew members were killed.

The plane, a Lancaster ED583, had taken off from RAF Waltham, Grimsby, with eight crew on board one of whom was Warrant Officer (Pilot) John Thomas Goozee who is buried in Islington Cemetery. John was the son of John Donovan and Mary Ann Goozee of Kingsbury and the husband of Doris May Goozee nee Green. They had got married in the summer of 1942.

I do know that a Robert Goozee lived in Grange Avenue, N12, between 1927 and 1939, a Harold Goozee lived in Ravensdale Avenue, N12, from 1930 to 1939 whilst a Mrs Goozee lived in East End Road, N2, between 1924 and 1937.

As the surname Goozee is somewhat unusual I wonder whether W.O. Goozee was related to any of the above? I would love to hear from anyone who may be able to help me in my quest.

Yours faithfully,
Dave Barnett
Langholme, The Square, North Thoresby, Lincolnshire, DN36 5QL, Email: davebarnettnt@gmail.com

What a mess!

Dear Editor,

I am disgusted by the amount of dog mess on the pavements in East Finchley. I would like to ask all dog owners to please clear up after their dogs.

Every single day there is an incident of having to avoid it and very often we don't manage to and so I am left having to clean it off my shoes, my

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page", The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE or e-mail the-archer@lineone.net.

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be printed. Contact details can be withheld on request at publication. We reserve the right to abridge letters for reasons of space.

children's shoes and my pushchair.

I would like to appeal to all dog owners and remind them that dog mess carries potential diseases for both humans and dogs, with children being most at risk of a disease which can lead to blindness. If there are other residents who feel strongly about this please call and register your complaint with the council.

Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied.

Dangerous blind spot

Dear Editor,

Local parking controllers are quick to issue tickets to shoppers on the High Road, but lack reinforcing the rules in parts of the area where there are actual safety issues. A real blind spot exists when you turn right onto East End Road from Market Place. Many times cars park on the double yellow lines close to the junction, totally obstructing the views of the drivers intending to turn right.

Although the section close to the road has double yellow lines, I have yet to see any of these illegally parked vehicles to be penalised. If any vehicles should be towed away, it is here. Do we have to wait for a serious accident before the local authority take this junction seriously? At the very least, it would be good to have a convex mirror on the lamppost opposite to help drivers know if it is safe to proceed.

Yours faithfully,
Michelle Huberman,
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.



Why risk our successful school?

By Emily Burnham

I have three children at Martin Primary School and have a very positive view of the school and its place in the community. Its Ofsted 'outstanding' status is a bonus. I was deeply shocked when my children handed me letters home about a consultation for Martin to become part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) with two other Barnet primaries, Foulds and Northside.

As many people know, our school is in the middle of expanding to a three-form entry to increase primary spaces in the area. Parents, including me, accepted the need for this expansion more or less without turning a hair. We knew parents who had no school place for their child and realised that we had the space to do it without losing the character of the school too much.

But we could not believe that the MAT proposal was coming in on top. How would staff cope with two such major things at once?

When we found out that five governors had voted against the proposals even going to consultation, that the benefits for our pupils are very thin, and that staff members are firmly against, we wondered why the proposal was still on the table. It turns out that Barnet Council has promised a new school in Mill Hill East in September 2014 and we are part of the proposed solution.

And so we have it: a totally new, unwritten, and intrinsically unaccountable structure that will convert three existing schools and open another within 12 months. We are told that it is positive that the new school in Mill Hill East will continue to be part of the "Barnet family of schools" under the MAT sponsorship.

But, actually, this is to be achieved by three existing Barnet schools LEAVING the local authority, setting themselves apart from their communities by joining with schools in other parts of the borough and, at least for Martin, going against the wishes of parents and staff.

People might think a MAT is better than an Academy chain. But, in reality, what is the difference, apart from a hope that the personalities of the head teachers will prevail over a purely business model ... forever?

The structure is designed to shift power away from individual schools - including staff, parents and community governors.

The future of education in Barnet holds many challenges, but we should not give up what is most dear to us in the process of seeking solutions.



East Finchley Community Trust members Roger Chapman, Robina and Stan Spinks with Bernadette and Geraldine from Paul Byrne House at the official opening for the shelter.

Shelter from the wind

The East Finchley Community Trust has helped to fund a shelter and outdoor windbreak for residents of Paul Byrne House on the Thomas More Estate off East End Road.

Budgens of East Finchley are also making funding available for outdoor furniture for the area. More than 20 residents attended the opening with a fine range of sandwiches, snacks and cakes laid on by Viridian staff, manager Bernadette, surveyor Geraldine and some of the residents.

TONY'S CONTINENTAL

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Michael Morpurgo cuts the ribbon with the help of Academy pupil Markos Jethwa.

“I declare this school open”

Renowned children's author Michael Morpurgo officially opened the Archer Academy at the end of November. Asking all the children to give him a hushed (but getting louder) countdown from 10, he unveiled a commemorative plaque with the help of pupil Arsham Moti-Ghavanin.

“They've spelt it wrong,” joked the former Children's Laureate as the plaque was unveiled and he kept everyone laughing as he roped in students Alex Warwick and Markos Jethwa to help him cut a ribbon across the entrance.

Once the formalities were out of the way, Mr Morpurgo, author of War Horse and Private Peaceful, went back inside where he'd earlier read some of his short stories to the students and taken part in a Q&A.

English is a specialism of the new school in Beaumont Close, now nearing the end of its first term. To show their appreciation for the author's visit, students are investigating ways to raise money for his charity Farms for City Children.

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Tales from Fukushima

By Nicola Grove

I visited Japan this summer as part of my work on storytelling and disability, travelling north from Tokyo to Fukushima, then to Matsuyama right in the south, and then up to Ikaho, a spa resort north west of Tokyo.

This was my second visit to Japan; the first time was just after the tsunami and nuclear accident in 2011, when I had been very moved by the stoic but generous and caring response across Japan to the disaster.

Safety issues

Before I went, people asked if it was safe to go to Fukushima, but since my Japanese friend and mentor was quite happy to visit, I felt very confident. We were meeting two storytellers and running a workshop for families who had been evacuated from the radioactive zone to Aizu Wakamatsu, the capital of the province, hosted by a tiny charity, the Aizu Radiation Information Center. This is based in a church, and was set up in 2011 to provide families with reliable information, and moral and practical support.

The situation is very difficult. Here is what the Director, Terumi Kataoka says: “Families and communities have been rent apart, causing much pain and suffering in their daily lives. In Fukushima Prefecture, where economic recovery has become the primary concern, it has become hard to talk about one's fear of radiation.”

We were very impressed and moved by the work this tiny group are doing, in the face of a great deal of opposition. Just as I flew home, in fact, they were vindicated when the government conceded that the leaks from the reactor are continuing at an unacceptably high level.

Samurai heroine

After our workshop we were able to do some sightseeing and find out what the tourists are missing. Aizu is a beautiful town with so much history. At the Samurai palace, a deceptively peaceful hillside location, we heard the terrible stories of the suicide of a platoon of boy soldiers and of the women and children of the palace, in the doomed Boshin rebellion of 1868.

But then I discovered the wonderful story of Yae Nijima, a Samurai crack shot who defended Tsuruga castle, just across from the palace, at the head of a brigade of women warriors. After the rebellion, Yae converted to Christianity and worked tirelessly for women's education, training as a nurse in her fifties and leading the first cadre of nurses to tend wounded soldiers on the battlefields.

She is a truly inspirational character, and thanks to a TV soap opera about her life which has transfixed audiences on Sunday evenings, is acting as



Nicola Grove, second left, with her hosts in Japan.

a focus to bring tourists back to Fukushima. Do go, Archer readers! Japan is one of the most exciting and beautiful places in the world; you will have an unforgettable time!

Nicola told tales of Fukushima at Black Gull books on Thursday 14 November. With Yumiko Mitsudo, she is planning to write a children's biography of Yae Nijima. Her charity can be found at www.openstorytellers.org.uk. Please donate to the Aizu Radiation Center if you can at <http://aizu-center.com/greeting>

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