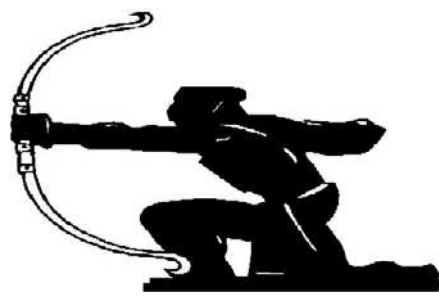


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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Stanley Field goes to Academy

By Daphne Chamberlain

By the time you read this, Stanley Road Playing Field will have been sold to the Archer Academy, East Finchley's new free school. Barnet Council were due to sanction the sale at the Cabinet Resources Committee meeting on 25 February. *THE ARCHER*, which has no connection with the school, heard the news just before our deadline for this issue.

Community use

The freehold purchase price is £3.55 million, to be paid by the Department of Education. The site will be developed to include a school building where the Herbert Willmott Centre stood. This will house younger pupils of the Academy, which already has premises in the former Institute building in Beaumont Close. A sports centre, all-weather pitch, and ancillary community facilities will be on the playing field, with community sports use available outside school hours. The sale is subject to planning permission limiting built development, and an agreement ensuring community use. However, details of this agreement are not yet worked out.

Barnet Council acknowledges that Sport England have to give consent to the loss of playing fields, but hope that a limit on building development and improved community sports facilities "should mitigate the risk of objection".

Questions raised

The council also says that Sport EF considers this scheme would meet the aspirations of the local community, blaming the "swift" bidding process for a lack of public consultation. When Sport EF began negotiations with potential property developers last year, it was on the understanding that the East Finchley community would be consulted throughout the process.

Questions are already being asked. Many people in this community are particularly concerned about what will happen if and when the Academy outgrows this field and tries to sell. Would developers re-enter at that stage?

Next month, we will look at all these questions in depth. Meanwhile, please let us know

your views, and remember to follow *THE ARCHER* on Facebook and Twitter. Our contact details are on page 2.

A public meeting

Supporters of Stanley Field are meeting at Holy Trinity Primary School, Eagans Close, N2, at 7pm on Wednesday 13 March to discuss the topic: Should the Archer Academy purchase go ahead? The supporters are establishing themselves as a regular organisation, with a president, secretary, treasurer, steering committee, and voting members. They say, "Please come, join the Supporters, and discuss the future of the playing field".

Valued space

Although Stanley Field has stood locked and empty for years, East Finchley has always valued this three-acre green space, and campaigned against it being lost to housing development. When Barnet Council offered the site to bidders, Sport EF submitted a business plan to create a multi-sports facility for the whole community, with backers including the Marathon Trust and Sport England. Barnet rejected the plan, but asked Sport EF to work with private bidders towards a mixed development (*THE ARCHER*, January 2012).

Post Office up for grabs

By John Lawrence

Changes could be on the way for East Finchley's Post Office after the announcement that it is one of 70 Crown offices that the national network hopes to hand over to a private operator.

Our High Road branch may be converted into an open-plan space that is part-shop, part Post Office, or the postal operation may be moved entirely to the premises of another retailer in the area.

Consultation

A spokeswoman for the Post Office told *THE ARCHER* that it was committed to having a branch in the area and that the High Road office would stay open if a franchise partner couldn't be found. She also said no compulsory redundancies were planned as part of the strategy.

"East Finchley Crown Post Office has been identified as a branch that could potentially be partnered with a retailer; it will be subject to a six week public consultation to gather the views of the local community," said the spokeswoman.

Continued on page 2



Children at Martin Primary dressed in Edwardian clothing to celebrate the school's 100th anniversary. Turn to page 7 for the full report.

First Big Local meeting

The first meeting to discuss the Big Local initiative for the regeneration of The Grange area and surrounding roads in East Finchley (The Archer, February 2013) will take place on Tuesday 12 March at 6.30pm at Boydens Pantry, 42 Church Lane, N2.

This first meeting is particularly for those residents who want to get involved and help spread the word through the community. Big Local rep Paul Bragman is always ready to help or simply chat. Please let him know in advance if you plan to attend this first meeting. His contact details are 020 8442 2379, 07887 721825 or paul@communityregen.net



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Voicemail (messages only) 0800 612 0748 for editorial and general enquiries or 0800 612 4027 for Advertising / Finance

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Copy Editor
John Lawrence

Production Editor
Alison Roberts

Picture Editor
Mike Rubens

Editorial Team
Diana Cormack
Daphne Chamberlain

Sub Editors
Ann Bronkhorst
Jeff Robson
Pam Kent

Finance & Advertising
John Dearing

Distribution
Toni Morgan
Rose Molloy

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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 – **March:** 15 February, **April:** 15 March, **May:** 12 April

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Councils

Barnet Council:

Admin/Town Hall	020 8359 2000
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

Emergency	999
Barnet Police	101
CrimeStoppers	0800 555111
Victim Support	0845 303 0900
East Finchley Safer	
Neighbourhood Team	020 7161 9014

Help & Advice

Advice Barnet Project	0844 826 9336
CAB Money Advice	020 8201 7727
Carers' Line	020 8343 9698
Childline	0800 1111
Disability Info Service	020 8446 6935
Gingerbread	020 8445 4227
National Debt Line	0808 808 4000
NSPCC	0800 800500
Rape & Sexual Abuse	020 8683 3300
Relate	020 8447 8101
RSPCA Inspector	0300 1234 999
RSPCA animal clinic	020 8365 3910
Samaritans	08457 909090
Refuge Crisis Line	0870 599 5443

Help with heating bills

Did you know there is a Warm Home discount of £130 available for people on certain benefits and for low-income pensioners to help with heating bills?

The discount is taken off your bill and does not affect your Cold Weather Payment or your Winter Fuel Payment. You could qualify for the discount if your supplier is signed up to the scheme and you are named as the bill payer.

Those who are eligible include people over 80 getting the Guarantee Credit element

of Pension Credit and those under 80 who *only* get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit. Others on low income may also qualify and each supplier has its own rules. Participating suppliers include British Gas, EDF Energy, E.ON, Scottish Power and npower, amongst others.

Those who are eligible

should have received a letter telling them how to apply. Check directly with your supplier if you think you could qualify but look sharp as there is an application deadline of 13 March. More details are available online at www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme.

Planning Applications

Barnet Council

74 Bedford Road, N2

Erection of wall at roof level.

31 Beresford Road, N2

Single-storey side infill extension.

23 Brim Hill, N2

Two-storey rear extension under a cat slide roof, with rear bay window at ground floor and dormer window at first floor. Alterations to earlier side extension behind garage, with brick parapet walls replacing extended canopy. Alterations to existing dormer windows to restore original details. Insertion of basement under house and rear terrace with light wells to the front and side, and pavement lights under rear terrace.

54 High Road, N2 (Phone City)

Change of use from A1 (retail) to mixed use A1 (retail) and A3 (restaurant).

125 High Road, N2 (Village Bakery)

Retention of flues/extractor fans.

44 Lincoln Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension at ground-floor flat. Replacement of railings at first-floor terrace and stairs to garden access.

383 Long Lane, N2 (Dick Turpin)

Material minor amendment to previously approved application, for "Erection of a two-storey building plus rooms in roof space, and basement living accommodation and parking, all to facilitate eight residential flats, following demolition of the public house." Amendment to include three first-floor windows being changed to Juliet balconies, and a front boundary wall replaced with railings and hedges.

8 Sedgemere Avenue, N2

Extension to roof, including rear

dormer and two front roof lights, to facilitate loft conversion.

55 Summerlee Avenue, N2

Conversion of garage into habitable room.

10 Trinity Road, N2

Single-storey side extension, including relocation of garden gates. Single-storey rear conservatory, including ramp for access to garden.

Martin Primary School, Plane Tree Walk, N2

School expansion from two-form entry to three-form entry. New single-storey extension, relocation of the temporary classroom and new two-storey extension. New Swale in existing orchard with associated fencing. New entrance gates with changes to levels, new gates to playing fields, new bin enclosure and new railings. Changes to landscaping in proposed car parking and relocation of outdoor equipment. Demolition of three existing air-shelters and creating new MUGA and parking/cycling facilities.

Haringey Council

64 Aylmer Road, N2

Single-storey side/rear extension.

24 Creighton Avenue, N10

Side first-floor extension, roof extension with one side and two rear dormers, and two front roof lights.

50 Creighton Avenue, N10

Roof extension with roof lights to front/rear, with Juliet balcony to facilitate loft conversion.

2A Southern Road, N2

Certificate of lawfulness for front and rear roof lights and formation of rear dormer, with alterations to rear fenestration.

Post Office up for grabs

Continued from page 1

Crown Post Offices provide access to financial services such as basic bank accounts to those on low incomes who cannot get a bank account with a high street bank, including the elderly. They also provide banking and postal/parcel services to small businesses. The Post Office has more than 11,500 branches across the UK, of which 370 are Crowns. These Crowns currently operate at a £40 million annual loss and the Post Office is keen to find retail partners to help them pay their way.

Examples of franchisees elsewhere in London include the Co-op and WH Smith. The Post Office spokeswoman said no potential partners had yet been identified for the East Finchley branch. The nearest alternative branches for us are in Muswell Hill and North Finchley.

Closure alert

East Finchley's Labour councillors have launched a campaign, fearing that the High Road branch could in fact be under threat of closure. Councillor Arjun Mittra said: "The loss of our local Crown Post Office would be a real blow to East Finchley High Road and would impact both local businesses which need to use the Post Office services, and local shops which benefit from the footfall the Post Office generates."

Well done, Friern Barnet!

By Daphne Chamberlain

Friern Barnet has finally regained the library closed by Barnet Council last April. Their victory was achieved through lobbying, protests, attempted negotiations, enormous public support, and dramatic intervention by squatters from the Occupy movement, who have run a service with donated stock since September.

Barnet has now licensed trustees from the local community to use the building until March, when they have been promised a two-year lease, a grant of £25,000 and "other practical help". At last, Friern Barnet have the community library they were refused when Hampstead Garden Suburb was granted one. The next step is to find at least 50 volunteers, and to

lobby the Council for a paid librarian.

Polly Napper, from the East Finchley Library Users Group, told *THE ARCHER*: "It is fantastic news that the council is going to allow Friern Barnet library to remain open. I really hope Barnet will follow this excellent decision with an even better one, by employing full time librarians to staff the library again."

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Horse meat scandal: traders and customers speak out

By Cathy Young

"You can't make silk out of cardboard," said a spokesman from Graham's Butchers, East End Road, responding to questions about the recent concerns around meat supplies in the UK and Europe. "We know our product, it's not mass-produced and our suppliers are known to us personally. We buy whole carcasses and would know immediately if something was wrong. It's all down to integrity and trust. Our customers trust us."

Recognising horse meat

His philosophy was endorsed by other shopkeepers and customers in the High Road and surrounding area. Midhurst Butchers on Fortis Green Road thought that their trade was unaffected as they had a loyal clientele who always shopped locally. Their spokesman pointed out: "If you want quality, you have to pay for it," adding that they could spot horse meat straight away as "It's a darker meat and a completely different shape." The only place to hide it was in processed foods.

While Graham's Butchers saw sales of sausages and mince (all made on the premises) rise by about 25%, Iceland had to remove their quarter pounders from the shelves. "We were informed that they might have had 0.01% horsemeat in them so we removed them immediately," the manager told me. "Other than that everything is much the same. People are a bit wary of meat products but not to any great extent." Budgens felt they had been unaffected by the crisis.

Across the road, in Bar-

racuda, customers were philosophical: "They say there's no health risk in horsemeat; it's all sterilised." Laughter broke out as one mother suggested asking their children, "Do you want sterilised sausages or sterilised mush for tea tonight?" They too felt that the growth of cheap, processed meals had enabled this crisis to develop. They were already more conscious about their food choices, but were concerned about younger, busy mums and older people reliant on convenience foods. One said: "I know an old blind lady who's totally dependent on ready-made meals delivered by meals on wheels. She's distraught as she has no control over what she's eating."

Beware the £1 lasagne

Back on the High Road, one young father with a toddler was quite frank: "If you buy lasagne for £1, you know it's not going to be good; if you want decent food you should cook it yourself." The final word came from a Chandos Road resident: "Meat crisis? It doesn't bother me; I'm vegetarian."

See Kalashnikov Kultur on page 9 for further comment.



Chinese banners for charity

By Daphne Chamberlain

We are now in the Chinese Year of the Snake, which The Institute celebrated with a flourish. On 7 and 8 February, calligrapher Jane Lo-Singleton created small "banners" for a steady queue of customers. Whether her design featured our individual animal symbols, messages, or her personal impression of our qualities, Jane told us, "We have worked on this together", a nice thought to take into a new year.

In return we donated to the favourite cancer charity of Helena Giras, pottery teacher at The Institute, who has the illness. Jane told *THE ARCHER*, "I have been going to Helena's pottery lessons since 2003. To join in the community spirit of this Education Centre fully, I have been a voluntary helper for Pottery at The Institute."

With her was her daughter-in-law Shinya, visiting from Hong Kong for Chinese New Year. Jane says, "It was delightful to have her practical assistance, and I feel very

grateful to the Institute and everyone for their kind support and donations. Over these two days, the Chinese Calligraphy event has raised £410 for Star Throwers."

Jane practised calligraphy at school in Hong Kong, using pencil at first, and brush and ink

from Year 3, but only felt truly at ease with it after studying with Master Zhao Yi Zhou. To discover more, visit <http://zhaoyizhou.co.uk>, and www.thebarnetcollection.org, which has a profile of Jane. She can be contacted on 020 8455 5857 or at janelo27@hotmail.com

Another jazz special

Following on from a successful event late last year, another very special Jazz Night is planned at the old Wilf Slack Cricket Club, now the Hall School Sports Ground, at 19 East End Road, N3, on Monday 11 March from 7.45-10.45pm.

As former Finchley Jazz Club secretary, Pam Kent, one of our *ARCHER* team, is a cancer sufferer and having the best care possible at The Royal Free Hospital, all proceeds will go to the hospital's oncology and chemo units for more research into causes and treatment of the disease.

This time Bob Dwyer's Bix 'n' Pieces band will be playing and it's hoped that many other

professional musicians will come along as before to sit in for a jam session.

The entrance fee will be only £8 per person and, as there is no bar, you can bring your own booze. If you wish to donate a raffle prize of books, CDs, DVDs, boxes of biscuits/sweets or wine, etc, they will be most welcome on the night. Please come along for a superb evening of top quality jazz.

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Harvey steps up for London Marathon

Until recently, Harvey Vaknin had no idea that he would be running the London Marathon this year. Then his younger sister Rachel suggested he ran for Ambitious for Autism, the young people's charity where she did voluntary work and whose specialist TreeHouse school is based nearby in Woodside Avenue, N10.

"I only signed up in January which gave me about 13 weeks to train," said Harvey, who's setting himself a target time of three and a half hours. "I've done some half marathons in the past but this is a hell of a step up."

"I'm really looking forward to the whole event, particularly the free sports massage at the end. I'm hoping I don't hit the Wall but I know that the support all the runners get from the crowd is a real driving force and keeps everyone going."

The 24-year-old, of Baronsmere Road, has raised £1,000 so far and is hoping to raise more than £2,000. To help him reach his target, you can donate online at his fundraising page <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/HarveyVaknin>



Running for Whizz-Kidz



By Philip Halton

I'm 25 years old and have always been a resident of East Finchley. This April, having been inspired by reading the stories of past runners in THE ARCHER over the years, I will finally fulfill a lifetime's ambition by running the London Marathon for the first time.

I will be running for Whizz-Kidz, a charity that helps to improve the lives of young disabled children by providing them with wheelchairs to increase their mobility and therefore to make them more independent as they make the transition into adulthood.

My goal is to raise £1,600 for this worthwhile cause, and hopefully with your support, to exceed it. £1,500 could provide a lightweight manual wheelchair to give a child the independence they need to keep up with their friends, but £4,000 could provide a powered wheelchair to give a child the independence they need to have fun.

Some of you may have seen me running in the High Road and despite all the hard training, cold nights and zillion blisters, I can't wait to run next month for such a fantastic cause.

Please donate online at my justgiving web page for Whizz-Kidz: www.justgiving.com/Philip-Halton. I would really appreciate any contribution, however big or small. Thank you.

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East Finchley has talent

In the build-up to this year's summer community festival, the organisers are holding a 'Battle of the Bands' on 16 March at the East Finchley Constitutional Club in The Walks from 2-8pm.

They are looking for exceptional young local acts to come and perform their tunes with the chance of winning a coveted spot on the main stage of the summer festival. If you know of an act that might be interested please contact: eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com.

First signs of spring on the pasture

By Linda Dolata

Long Lane Pasture is a remnant of ancient hay meadow, now managed by volunteers as a nature reserve. Located opposite the Fire Station, it's open at weekends from 10am to 5pm.

It has been an exceedingly wet winter, and standing water has hampered our efforts to rake up all the hay, necessary to prevent overfertilisation by decomposition of the native plants. Nevertheless, the signs of spring and the inception of a new season are all there.

White and gold

The snowdrop bank was already in bloom by mid-January, and these beautiful bulbs are accompanied by winter aconites, and followed by shy little native daffodils planted last year. Goat willows display their fur-like 'pussy-willow' catkins whilst the hazels shake their own 'lambs tail' male catkins with every tiny breeze, shedding copious yellow pollen. We usually have a resultant autumn crop of cobnuts, which are popular with small mammals such as voles and mice.



Hazel.

Illustrations by Terry Mardell

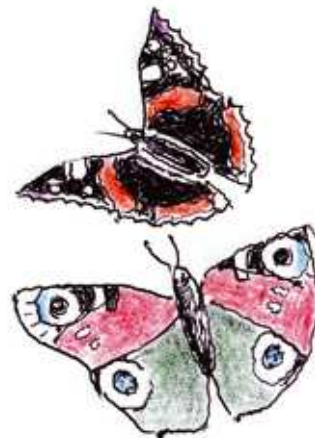
ments and gardens. Some of them are visitors, others make their homes here, particularly in the brambles and other hedge-row shrubs.

Frequently seen are sparrows, robins, blackbirds white-throats, thrushes, starlings, ducks, moorhens, crows, wrens, bluetits, great tits, long tailed tits, a heron, a sparrow hawk and a kestrel.

Frogs go a-wooing

One rather loud member of the dawn chorus has a distinctive and continuous croak. On investigation, this noise comes from the many male frogs which serenade their loves before pairing up with them to fertilise literally gallons of frogspawn. It is worth a visit just to see this sea of dotted jelly.

There is so much to tell you about, but better still, choose a nice day and come and see for yourselves. Our website www.longlanepasture.org has full details, including dates for our special activity days. And we are in need of more volunteers. Just two hours any Saturday from 10am, when you can do as little or as much as you wish... weeding, pruning, clearing, planting, digging, recording or observing.



Red Admiral (top) and Peacock butterflies

The air at this time of the year is full of birdsong, as the males claim their territory and send tuneful signals to their potential mates. We have a good range of birds on the pasture, helped by its proximity to allot-

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Burglary through the front door

By Janet Maitland

Burglars usually break in at the back or side of properties but at the end of last year there was a spate of burglaries through front doors, reported in our December issue. This trend has continued.

On 30 January, burglars tried to break into a property on Leslie Road, but the owner had locked the front door with a mortice as well as a Yale lock. So even though the door frame was broken, the burglars couldn't get in.

The incidence of burglary in East Finchley is not as high as in many other postcodes. Ours ranks 145th out of 233 in Greater London, according to police data for December 2012, but it's worth reading the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) advice about doors, some of which may not have occurred to you.

Gate and door safety

The team advises that wooden back gates should be topped with trellis if possible and should always be bolted and locked with a padlock. Wooden front and back doors should be solid timber with a five-lever mortice lock one third of the way up and an automatic deadlocking rim lock one third of the way down.

The door frames should be reinforced with metal strips, called London and Birmingham bars. Any glass panels on doors should be at least 6.4mm thick and either laminated or reinforced with security film. Another option is to fit internal grills over the glass.

The SNT also suggests that you fit a solid letterbox on your front door, making sure that no one can look through it or put their hand through. Lock UPVC doors when you go out, don't just push the handle up, and don't leave valuables like laptops or car keys near the door or in sight of windows.

Garden break-in

On 4 January, a house on Summerlee Avenue was broken into between 9.30am and 8.15pm while the residents were out. The burglars took advantage of an unbolted back gate, then broke into the house using garden tools that had been left outside. They forced open an old wooden back door, which splintered and broke, then stole cash and jewelry.

Bright business idea for a rainy day

Fed up with getting wet while fumbling for an umbrella only to see it turn inside out in the first gust of wind, friends Katy Isaacs and Julia Wonke came up with a fashionable alternative. They designed a range of waterproof tailored ponchos in bold animal prints that have been worn by television presenter Fearne Cotton and Biba clothes store founder Barbara Hulanicki.

Bike poncho

Now keen cyclists Katy and Julia are moving into the market for women on the move with a garment specially made to keep out the rain and ensure cyclists stay visible. The new design has high-visibility strips woven in and handy wrist straps to keep the poncho close to the body.

The pair have been in business together as Rainwave for two years, working between Katy's home in East Finchley and Julia's in Muswell Hill. Katy was a former TV director and Julia used to work in marketing for a



Poncho designers Julia Wonke, left, and Katy Isaacs. Photo by John Lawrence

record company. They realised umbrellas were useless, especially when walking with young children or a buggy, and most cagoules were unattractive.

Julia said: "Most mums have their hands full on the school run, carrying things or holding on to their children. It seemed a great idea to have something you could just chuck over your clothes to stay dry and that was lightweight and packed away into a handbag."

Online success

Katy and Julia designed the Rainwave poncho themselves, found manufacturers in Morocco and Taiwan and

got their first sales at music festivals. Delighted with the celebrity endorsement it's received since, they've sold thousands online through their website www.rain-wave.com and Amazon, with sales particularly strong in Scandinavia and Australia.

Katy said: "The bike poncho is the next step for us. Cycling is bigger than ever and I'm a cyclist myself so we wanted to make something women could wear on and off their bikes."

You can find the full range of ponchos online or buy the bike poncho at the Bicycle Maintenance Company in Fortis Green Road, Muswell Hill.



Do you fancy getting stuck in with the N2 Gardeners? Photo courtesy of Harriet Copperman.

Go green this growing season

By Harriet Copperman

For the past few years a small group of volunteers called N2 Gardeners has worked on the steep bank of earth at the entrance to East Finchley's tube station car park. Aided by a grant from Capital Growth, they have cleared the brambles and planted it up at the more shady end as a 'forest garden' of fruit and nut trees and bushes and wildflowers, leading to a four-bed mini allotment area, with the remaining space used for perennial flowers, herbs and vegetables.

A new growing season is upon us and the group would very much welcome help from a few more people, so take yourself, a trowel and some old gloves and go along at 11am on Sunday 17 March, even if you only have a spare half an hour or so.

They'll be weeding, planting and tidying up, and if you don't want to be on such a steep slope, there's always weeding to be done at the front of the plot. Experienced hands say it's surprising how much fun it can be even when the weather isn't at its best! Check out the blog at <http://n2gardeners.blogspot.com/>

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THE ARCHER at 20: Archie speaks



For more than 70 years, Archie has looked down on East Finchley from his vantage point atop the station. David Tupman spoke to him about the 20th anniversary of the newspaper named after him.

- The Archer:** All hail to the great one! The patron of East Finchley's favourite newspaper speaks.
- Archie:** Greetings to you all. I'm 72, you know. And, yes, it was in recognition of many years of public service that your founders decided in 1993 to place my name on the masthead.
- The Archer:** And how do you regard *THE ARCHER*'s 20-year contribution?
- Archie:** Have you seen the local commercial rivals? You're head and shoulders above them, covering all human life in N2. And you're run entirely by volunteers!
- The Archer:** Well, we've certainly come a long way since the days of black and white photographs. February 2013 is our 231st edition.
- Archie:** *THE ARCHER* began when the group Meat Loaf had pop chart success. John Major was prime minister and launched his 'Back to Basics' campaign. You can say what you like about his policies; he always wore lovely grey suits.
- The Archer:** Yes, the 1990s were difficult days. Sometimes it was touch and go if we could go to print. We often got on our knees and prayed and thanked God that we were still on our feet.
- Archie:** You were a forerunner of what current politicians call The Big Society.
- The Archer:** Yes, indeed. We didn't think of slogans except a meaningful strap-line that said 'local news is our aim'. It was dreamt up in the former Welch's Ale House over a bag of pork scratchings.
- Archie:** I guess *THE ARCHER* has chronicled many changes in East Finchley?
- The Archer:** I should say so Archie. It's classic Dickens: the best of times and the worst of times.
- Archie:** I lived through the Second World War, so I'm a half glass full chap. What do you regard as the best?
- The Archer:** There are so many choose from. The campaign against Waitrose. Colour photographs in 2009. Helping to restore the Phoenix cinema to its current glory. The festivals in Cherry Tree Wood. Take your pick.
- Archie:** And the worst thing?
- The Archer:** That perennial favourite providing endless copy: traffic and parking.
- Archie:** So I'll sign off with a heartfelt well done to everyone in East Finchley for producing, delivering and reading *THE ARCHER*.

Big Dig is back

A community food-growing project at Vale Farm allotments is looking for new volunteers, preferably with some gardening experience, to join a small but fun group growing seasonal food.

Anyone who's interested can join in with the group's Big Dig Day on Saturday 16 March from 11am to 4pm at the allotments off Tarling Road, N2.

On the day, they'll be getting ready for the new growing season, digging over open beds, planting, building a cold frame and making bean teepees.

The group currently runs a garden with six raised beds, four open beds, a small orchard, a greenhouse, a shed and a relaxation area. Volunteers are asked to bring a fork and gloves if possible. To find out more visit www.bigdig.org.uk/london or email Sally at valefarmproject@gmail.com.

Fun guy and naked ladies delivering *THE ARCHER*

For some time, Linda Dolata has been delivering *THE ARCHER* to a certain avenue in East Finchley, and has usually found herself muttering away as she does so. Here, she shares some of her 'tongue-in-cheek' thoughts. **Thank you to the lovely people with centrally placed letterboxes, and no steps. To others, if you hear muttered curses aimed at your door, it is me going up steps and then bending right down to the letter box at the base of the door.**

As I do so, my shirt becomes untucked, and my delivery bag slips off my shoulder... Grrr... but I would probably pay a lot of money at a gym to do something similar, so no real complaints.

Then there are the spring-loaded letter boxes that do their best to amputate fingertips, and the ones that have draught excluders at the back so that the paper squidges up against it instead of sliding through.

Contrary to expectation, I like the two dogs who have lain in wait for *The Archer* over the years. One, a terrier, used to have a real fight with the paper, growling and shaking it from side to side until he had subdued it. I confess I used to sacrifice the first paper just for the spectacle, and then tuck a second one into the door furniture. The other dog (now moved), was a large handsome one who used to thrust his head through a small cat flap at the base of the door, and grin (as dogs do) at me. He was lovely, and I miss him. Finally, I ought to explain the fun guy and naked ladies that I saw very clearly on last month's delivery round. The fungi was a large mushroom-type fruiting body, probably on the site of a tree stump, on someone's front lawn. The Naked Ladies, also in a front garden, are the name given to the autumn crocus, *Colchicum*, because the beautiful violet flowers arrive without any accompanying leaves.

Can you spare 30-45 minutes each month to deliver *THE ARCHER*? Email us at the-archer@lineone.net or telephone us on 0800 612 0748.

THE ARCHER at 20: what do you think?

THE ARCHER is celebrating 20 years at the heart of East Finchley. The newspaper has changed in many ways since 1993 but is still the volunteer-led community newspaper it set out to be from the start.

Do you have any memories of *THE ARCHER* over the years? Please get in touch and we'll feature your recollections in future issues.

And what do you think of *THE ARCHER* in 2013? Have you got any suggestions or new ideas for the paper in our anniversary year? We'd value your thoughts on new things we could be covering and, although we can't promise to put everything into action, we'll certainly consider all ideas to help make the newspaper the best it possibly can be for the next 20 years.

How to get in touch:

- Email us at the-archer@lineone.net
- Phone us and leave a message on 0800 612 0748
- Find TheArcherN2 on Facebook (www.facebook.com/TheArcherN2) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/TheArcherN2)
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HOLIDAYS



Joy Merryweather returned to Martin Primary, where she'd been at school in the 1940s.

Joy's memories of her Martin days

A special guest joined the staff and children of Martin School when they celebrated the school's 100th anniversary in February. Joy Merryweather went there from 1944 and now lives in Lancaster Gardens.

She joined both assemblies for the junior and infant children and shared her memories of life at the school almost 70 years ago. Children from each class stood up in turn to ask their questions.

Top of the list was "Were you naughty?" to which Joy said she tried not to be. "Did you get hit on the hand?" asked the next pupil. The infants listened in silence as Joy remembered how she was regularly hit over the knuckles with a ruler, and all because the teachers said her writing was too big.

Joy told the children how her favourite lesson was sums, how there were no uniforms in her junior days, and how

she'd regularly walk home to Leslie Road for her lunch before returning to school in the afternoon.

The assemblies finished with the children singing *We'll Meet Again* and *The White Cliffs of Dover* specially for Joy, who was very touched, as well as presenting her with a thank you card.

Joy said afterwards: "The songs were beautiful. *The White Cliffs of Dover* particularly reminded me of my father. It's been fascinating to be back in the school after all these years and it's surprising that the buildings and the classrooms really haven't changed all that much."

100 years of Martin School

Martin Primary School opened a year of celebrations to mark its 100th birthday with a day of Edwardian teaching and two very special assemblies.

Children of all ages and staff came dressed as they might have done on the day the school opened in February 1913. Girls in bonnets and smocks walked with their hands together in front, while boys in caps and shorts held theirs behind their back. (See our front page picture.)

In the classrooms the children's desks had been rearranged into strict rows and there were slates and chalks for writing and sums. One teacher reported that her class said it was the best day of lessons they'd ever had.

School governor Roger Chapman said: "This centenary day has brought alive the history of the school, not just as a celebration of 100 years, but also by looking back over the years and using all the stories as part of our teaching throughout the year."

Tales from two wars

Roger's research into the school's log book has found some fascinating tales. One entry from September 1915 recalls how 30 girls were given time off to attend Holy Trinity Church for the funeral of their classmate Phyllis Wren, said to have died of fright during a night raid by Zeppelins over north London. Phyllis, 13, fell dead a few steps down the stairs of her home in Leslie Road. An inquest jury returned a verdict of death from natural causes, possibly an undiagnosed heart condition.

The school had a torrid period in 1940. On 24 August, there was the sudden death of Miss Piggott, headmistress of the junior school since it opened in 1913. Three days later, the school was closed owing to "being in the danger zone of a

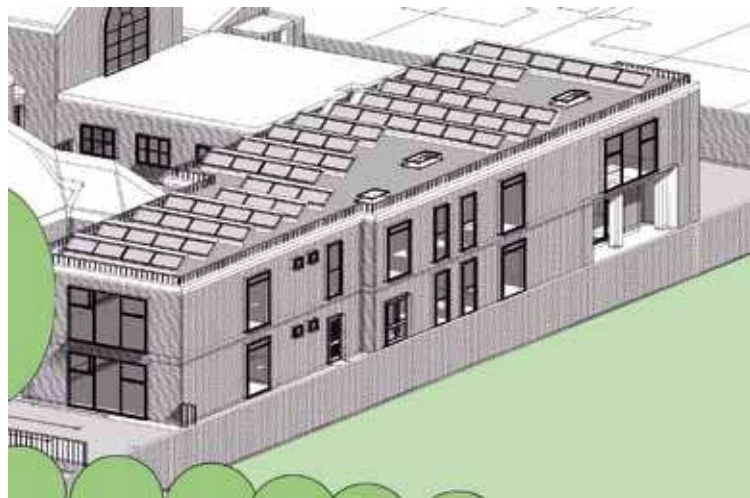
delayed action bomb". School life was seriously disrupted for the next three weeks and staff and pupils spent much of their time in the seven air raid shelters that still ring the school. They also missed their daily deliveries of milk as one of the two local dairies was put out of action, presumably by bombing.

Preserving the past

Martin School has been granted £10,000 in Heritage Lottery Fund support to invest

in preserving the school's history in digital form for future generations, as well as recording oral histories from pupils past and present.

A number of special events are planned for this centenary year, including an archaeological dig week in April. Preserving evidence of the past is particularly important as Martin School gets ready for building works that will help it increase its pupil intake.



A new look for Martin School

Barnet Council has issued an image of how the new extension at Martin Primary School will look.

A two-storey block will be built on the existing car park at the side of the school in Plane Tree Walk, providing seven new classrooms in all. A new multi-use games area will be installed on the school field and three of the four World War Two air raid shelters in front of the school will be demolished to make way for a relocated car park. Work on the expansion is expected to start soon, as the school celebrates its 100th anniversary.

Stanley Field photos

Friends of Stanley Field have announced their first annual photo competition. There will be winners from different categories.

Winning photos, which will be made into calendars, will be displayed at the East Finchley Festival and shown in *THE ARCHER*. Send your best photographs of the field to friendsofstanleyfield@gmail.com or c/o Robert Simon, Maths, LSE, Houghton St., WC2A 2AE. The deadline for entries is 15 April 2013.

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YOUNG ARCHER



Winning moves: Coldfall Primary School's Under 11 chess team; left to right, Hamby Amat, Charlie Sprung, Oscar Pollack, Michael Dan and Devin Karia.

Chess players make the right moves

Young chess players at Coldfall Primary School are celebrating after playing their way to victory in the 2013 English Primary Schools Chess Championships qualifying tournament. The under-11 A team finished top out of 12 teams at the tournament in Ilford, winning out against a team from local rivals Brookland School and beating last year's national finalists.

Coldfall's under-nine players all made their debut in this tournament and they surprised everyone by finishing third out of 14 and so reaching the national semi-finals.

Coldfall's chess team has made tremendous progress this year and in recent months won the primary schools tournament at the London Chess Classic in December and the Barnet Junior Chess League Division 2.

Oscar Pollack, captain of the Coldfall Under 11 A team said: "We have done well because of our fabulous teacher Kamlesh. He has taught us many things, from tactics all the way to complicated games so that we think ahead."

Evelyn Davis, headteacher of Coldfall Primary School, said the school was proud of all its chess teams and had seen what

a positive effect it can have on pupils. "We are thrilled to have recently introduced chess as part of the curriculum for all our year 3 pupils," she said. "Not only has it improved pupil's concentration and problem-solving skills but in many children the success they have in chess has hugely boosted their confidence and self-esteem."

Do you have a story for us?

You can send your stories, letters, and photos by email to the-archer@lineone.net or by post to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA. Tweet us @TheArcherN2 and find us on Facebook. You can also find out more about contributing and advertising at www.the-archer.co.uk

Kids' fun at the Phoenix

Stuck for something to do with your young ones? You may find something to keep everyone amused at one of the Phoenix Cinema's regular children's activities.

Toddler Time happens every Tuesday at 11am, an hour of screenings and activities for pre-school children and their parents. On Wednesdays at 11am there are Bringing Up Baby screenings of the latest releases for parents and babies.

Finally, the Kids Club shows films every Saturday at 12pm when tickets are only £2. It's preceded by a free activity at 11am that must be booked in advance. You can get full details on all activities from the Phoenix box office on 020 8444 6789.

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Win a visit from a TV star

Noah's Ark Children's Hospice is giving all children attending primary school in north London the chance to win a money-can't-buy prize with two well-known children's TV presenters.

For a £1 entry fee the charity is inviting children from nursery through to Key Stage 1 to design a bag charm in the shape of their favourite animal or monster and win a visit from Andy Day. If photography is more your thing and you're aged 7-11 years, then Noah's Ark is giving you the chance to win a photography masterclass with Blue Peter presenter Barney Harwood.



Blue Peter presenter Barney Harwood will be judging the Noah's Ark competition.

Andy and Barney will be choosing their favourite designs and photos during Children's Hospice Week running from 26 April to 3 May so you still have time to enter. Entry forms and full details of both competitions are available to download via www.noah-sarkhospice.org.uk/support-us/schools. Alternatively, call 020 8449 8877 and speak to a member of the fundraising team.

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- **Baby & U baby massage.** Contact Ruth at babymassagewithruth@gmail.com, www.facebook.com/baby-andubabymassage
- **Bringing up Baby.** Screenings of the latest films for parents with babies. Phoenix Cinema. Wednesdays 11am. Box office 020 8444 6789.
- **Coffee & Kids,** Fri 9.15-11.15, Green Man Ctr. Rachel 8343 6147.
- **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 east-finchleynct@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.
- **Teddy Bears' Music,** singing for 0-3s in Holy Trinity Church, N2; Thursdays 9.45am & 10.45am. Liz 07836 284538.



New Tae Kwon Do and kick boxing have started at the Green Man Community Centre.

Combat classes

Two new classes have started in Tae Kwon Do and kick boxing at the Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale, for anyone from the age of six.

Senior instructor Michael Belle, a four-degree black belt with over 21 years' experience and four European titles to his name, will lead the classes, which are organised by Master Wolf's Tae Kwon Do & Kick Boxing Academies. For more details, contact Michael on 07734 034 435 or mbelle@wolftkd.com

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Recipe: Tried and True Chicken Leek Stew

By Allison Goodings

As the cold still bites, we all need to come home to quick, easy meals that fill our bellies and warm our spirits. This one-pot family dinner needs only a few steamed green beans and a thick piece of crusty bread on the side, and can be made from start to finish in well under an hour. Skinless boneless chicken thighs can be found in most butchers, including Grahams (134-136 East End Road) and Midhurst Butchers (2 Midhurst Parade, Fortis Green), but could easily be done at home with a sharp knife and a little *chutzpah*. Adapted from a recipe in *Olive* magazine.



Creamy Chicken, Leek and Potato Stew (Serves 2)

- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 leek, finely sliced
- 2-3 minced garlic cloves
- 250g new potatoes, halved or quartered
- 4 large skinless boneless chicken thighs, cut into chunks
- 175 ml white wine
- 250 ml chicken stock
- 2 tbsp minced fresh dill
- 2 heaped tbsp crème fraîche (low fat is fine)
- 150 g steamed green beans and 2 slices crusty bread to serve

In a large pan (with lid), heat butter over medium heat and sauté leeks and garlic until softened, about 7 minutes. Add chicken, potatoes, wine and stock to pan. Bring to a boil, cover and simmer for 30 minutes, until potatoes and chicken are cooked. Take pan off stove and stir in dill and crème fraîche – season with salt and pepper to taste. Ladle into large bowls and serve with green beans and bread.



Joe and Patricia perk up the coffee shop scene

A blackboard menu hanging on the wall of the new Campbell & Syme coffee shop in Fortis Green is like a mini tour of the world's best coffee-producing regions. Brazil, Rwanda and Ethiopia are among the countries that might feature, depending on the season and the time of the harvest.

Joe Syme, owner and barista, has made coffee quality his top priority, trading directly with farmers in these countries through a merchant, rather than buying homogenised blends in bulk through a chain of middle men.

"The farmers get a much fairer price for their beans that way and I know I'm always buying speciality-grade coffee," says Joe. "It's quality that motivates me and that's something that tends to go hand in hand with good ethics."

Sounds good, but aren't there plenty of cafés in East Finchley already? "A few people have said that to me," smiles Joe. "But I think the location I've got here is a good spot for a meeting place and I wanted to offer the neighbour-



Patricia and Joe Syme are behind the counter at the new coffee shop.

hood something that's just a bit different."

Of course, coffee is not the only refreshment on offer. Teas, soups, baguettes and home-made cakes baked by Joe's mum Patricia complete the menu, and there are plans to offer salads in the warmer months.

Joe's been in the catering business for 10 years and Patricia brings more than 30 years of catering experience to the new venture. Campbell & Syme is open Tuesday to Friday from 9am to 5pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 5pm. Find out more at www.campbellandsyme.co.uk

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Lunch on the hoof

In the weird and wild world of modern cuisine nothing causes as much fear as discovering that there is something 'wrong' with your food. As supermarkets clear the shelves and consumers reel at the shocking news that Dobbin the knackered nag has replaced Daisy the cow in frozen lasagne, panic takes over. But I can't understand what the problem is.

Let's get real; horsemeat is sweet, tender and low in fat. In Sweden, it's salted and stuck in sandwiches, the Dutch serve it smoked and Ukrainians shove it in sausages. Horse is popular in Italy where it turns up in stews, salami and pasta sauces and in Belgium they sell it as steak tartar. And that's before we get round to the French.

The French will eat most things if it's cooked with garlic and shallots and served in a white wine sauce, and horse is no different. They have had specialist horse butchers since 1866 where you can get the finest nag and, you'll have to trust me on this, horse steak and chips is a pretty good meal. Naturally, when the French went to Canada they took their cooking with them and horse is still popular in Quebec. Go over the border to the USA and horse is banned for all the wrong and sentimental reasons.

Naturally, us pet-loving Brits get upset at the idea of fluffy bunny rabbits ending up as stew, so the thought of the entire pony club ending in a bolognaise sauce is enough to cause complete social meltdown. Funny thing is, we never used to be like that. Horse and donkey were popular right up until the 1930s and Yorkshire folk had a particular liking for 'Last horse in the Grand National pie'.

So what's the problem? There are plenty of other less appetising things they could shove in your burgers and, in some countries they sure as hell do. We all know about the world of Korean cuisine with its life-affirming dog stew. Most of us know that the average Peruvian sees guinea pigs as a tasty roast, not a family pet. And when things get tough and food gets scarce people will eat anything, as long as it's nicely prepared. And that includes most family pets. The Swiss have a liking for eating cats, except they call it roof rabbit, and the Budgens in Crouch End will sell you free range squirrel. As they say, when in doubt eat it, although even I'm not too sure about foxtail soup.

Rare sightings for bird lovers

By Nick Young
January and February have passed with some interesting bird sightings in East Finchley. Robins, wrens, chaffinches, goldfinches and three species of tit (blue, great and long-tailed) have all been seen in parks and gardens, while the waterlogged field in Cherry Tree Wood has attracted a few black-headed gulls.

More unusually, a female grey wagtail has been sighted near the High Road. This bird has a slate-grey back and a yellow-under-tail, and is almost constantly on the move. Although more usually associated with rivers, it is not unknown for them to visit other habitats, including urban areas, during the winter.

Another rare sighting has been a goldcrest in Cherry Tree Wood. This tiny bird is dull green in colour and has a distinctive patch on its head (yellow for females, orange for males). It's a resident bird, but in winter its numbers are swelled by migrants from Scandinavia and Eastern Europe.

Winter visitors have included fieldfares, redwings and waxwings. The first two are members of the thrush family. Fieldfares have grey heads and chestnut backs and are particularly fond of apples. Redwings are smaller (about the size of a song thrush) and can be identified by their red flanks and a distinctive white stripe above the eye.

The waxwing is a much rarer sighting. Slightly smaller than a starling, it is a reddish-brown bird with a prominent crest, a small black mask round its eye and a yellow-tipped tail. These species are usually seen in flocks and are more commonly associated with the countryside, but during harsh winters they do move to towns and suburbs in search of food.

Calling all brass players

Did you fancy joining in the brass band playing at the East Finchley Christmas Festival? Now's your opportunity. The same group of local brass players are starting a brand new band based at Fortismere School. Enthusiastic learners and more experienced players are all welcome. From secondary school age to retirement age, the only requirement is grade 1 standard on a brass instrument.

Starting on 2 March, the band will run on Saturdays from 10am to noon at Fortismere Music Centre (entrance through school gates on Tetherdown). The fee will be £5 per session (£50 for a ten-week term), but there is no charge for school-aged students. Some instruments will be available for hire, so if you're a trumpeter who's always hankered for a blast on the tuba, now's your chance!

A diverse repertoire will include film music: James Bond

and Pirates of the Caribbean; pop music: Baggy Trousers (Madness) and Bohemian Rhapsody, as well as more traditional classical and brass band music.

The new band, to be called Fortismere Community Brass Band, will have at least three concerts a year. Paul Hooper, a teacher and professional musician of some 15 years, will conduct the band. For more details, e-mail: FMCInfo@fortismere.org.uk or call Craig on 07588 868600.



The brass players were a big hit at the Christmas Festival in December. Photo by John Lawrence

Keep fit on the Tube

By Daphne Chamberlain
In January 1935, Pennyfare, the London Underground staff magazine, reported a new keep-fit idea. Some people were considering running up the stairs at Hampstead and Belsize Park stations. Please don't try this. At 58.5 metres (192 feet) below street level, Hampstead is the deepest station on the Underground.

Our own branch of the Northern Line has the highest point: Dollis Brook viaduct, on the Mill Hill branch, is 18 metres (59 feet) above the ground. Keeping it local, there are plaques commemorating Harry Beck, designer of the Tube map, outside his former home in Court-house Road, North Finchley, and at Finchley Central station.

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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 07795 503752.
- **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, Church Lane N2. Contact: 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 at 1pm. Call James Drewe 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 or see www.stretchingpeople.co.uk.

Music, Dance & Creative Arts

- **Art Classes**. For info 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.
- **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 8.30 pm. Free. All musicians welcome. 07958 282898.

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.
- **LGBT?** 1st Weds every month in a local pub. Welcoming atmosphere. Email efinchleylgbt@hotmail.com
- **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
- **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. Anita 8886 6140.
- **Muswell Hill Tetherdown Bridge**, contact 8883 4390

March at the Phoenix

What a month March is going to be for cinema fans in East Finchley! Phoenix patron and all round amazing cinema legend Ken Loach will be here to speak after a showing of his new film *Spirit of '45* on Monday 18 March. However, Ken isn't our only special guest this month...

March begins with *Lore*, the long awaited follow-up to *Somersault* from director Cate Shortland, based on the novel

The Dark Room. We were very pleased to welcome author Rachel Seiffert to speak after the 6pm screening on Sunday 3 March.

On Monday 4 March, Phoenix patron Mark Kermode was on hand to introduce a rare 35mm film screening of Jean Cocteau's classic fairy tale *La Belle et la Bête*. And on Tuesday 5 March we were thrilled to have the directors of *McCullin* to speak after a one-off screening of their critically acclaimed portrait of famed war

By Carina Volkes, Phoenix operations manager

photojournalist Don McCullin.

On 8 March at 11pm, we've teamed up with Cigarette Burns for a classic Friday night horror screening featuring a family of Victorian cannibals terrorising the London Underground system. Look out for horror icons Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee.

We're celebrating some of the best cinema of the world with three one-off presentations. On Sunday 17 March, Italian post-war favourite *Bicycle Thieves* has a screen-

ing in association with Dark City Gallery. Minima are back with a specially composed live score for German Expressionist masterpiece *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* on Saturday 23 March, and on Sunday 24 March we mark 150 years of the London Tube with Anthony Asquith's 1928 film *Underground*.

Of course, don't forget about the rest of our main features. North London coming of age drama *Broken* opens on 8 March. Look out for an amazing performance from local girl Eloise Laurence. Also coming up is *Beyond the Hills*, the powerful entry from Romania for Best Foreign Language Film Academy Award. And look out for Frank Langella starring in indie comedy-drama *Robot and Frank*, and Vanessa Redgrave and Terrence Stamp leading the cast of moving British comedy-drama *Song for Marion*.

Book online at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk.

Love on the high seas

A West Indian Romance: a True Story of Love and Seafaring in the Caribbean, by Brian Dyde

Review by Angela Anderson

It's impossible not to think of *Madam Butterfly* when reading this very well written book. Brian, a British naval lieutenant-commander, met Veronica, an Antiguan secretary and musician, while working on hydrographic surveys in the West Indies. The story of their growing and deepening love is told largely through the letters they exchanged in between meetings, mostly written while Brian was at sea.

In these days of social media and mobile phones, that in itself is fascinating. This is possibly the last generation to write letters and the difficulties caused by postal delays and infrequent phone calls heighten the drama as they wait for news of each other following storms, hurricanes and an earthquake. The narrative moves between the West Indies and England, with Veronica spending time with her sister Sonia in East Finchley.

I won't spoil the ending for those who want to read the book but it is a very absorbing story, encompassing not only their relationship but also the prejudices experienced by people of different cultures living in the 1970s, the view of their liaison taken by the Navy at the time and the details of commanding a ship.

Anecdotes of fellow sailors make for amusing reading and, because they are written for Veronica, come across as very personal. There are vivid descriptions of the Caribbean islands and their history. Their shared delight in music and literature comes across as well as their joy in being together and sharing experiences, making the book a broad and lively read. Copies are available from the author at £10 (inc p&p) at 21 Monkton, Pembroke SA71 4LS.



Bugsy Malone

Review by Lisa Omar

Create Theatre School brought *Bugsy Malone* to life at the Finchley Youth Theatre in the High Road. Three outstanding shows were performed to full houses over the weekend of 9-10 February by a highly talented cast of young children aged from three to 14.

The children had obviously worked hard on learning their lines and adopting an American accent. The wonderful acting, tap dancing, singing, dancing, plus the fabulous staging and costumes all came together to deliver the well-loved musical.

Bugsy Malone, played by Lucie Murphy, Blousey (Emily Moore), Fat Sam (Niva Yadav) and his gangsters plus Dandy Dan's (Jesse Musker) gang, showed what happened if they were double crossed ... out came the splurge guns and the gangsters in Fat Sam's gang started dropping. Baby Face played by Caelan Mundy had a fantastic time, clobbering two policemen with a baton and becoming the self-proclaimed star of the show!

The Create-teenies (age three to five) looked fantastic as they came on stage singing and dancing as showgirls and guys; they also turned their hands at being fierce-looking boxers.

Create's good cause

Each year Create children choose a charity to support. This year they are supporting CLIC Sargent (helping children and young people with cancer). Raffle tickets were sold over the three shows and a grand total of £260 was raised.

If you would like any more information about joining tap dancing, singing, dancing or drama classes at Create Theatre School, please contact Caroline Lau on 020 8882 9009 or email caroline@createheatreschool.co.uk.

What's On...

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

Tuesday 5 to Saturday 9 March

• **Finchley and Friern Barnet Operatic Society** presents *Anything Goes*, the classic Cole Porter musical, at The Intimate Theatre, Palmers Green. Performances 7.30 pm; Sat. matinee 2.45 pm. Tickets £12, £13; concs £10 available Tues, Wed and Sat matinee.

Friday 8 to Thursday 21 March

• **"Cycles"**, a show by **East Finchley Open artists**, at the Highgate Gallery, Highgate Literary & Scientific Institution, 11 South Grove, London N6 6BS, Tuesday to Friday 1-5pm, Saturday 11am-4pm, Sunday 11am-5pm. Details: 020 8340 3343 or www.hlsi.net For more information on EFO and individual artists, www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk

Friday 8 March to Sunday 14 April

• **Daisy Pulls It Off**, by Denise Deegan, a comedy pastiche of school life in the 1920s; Upstairs at the Gatehouse, Highgate, Tuesdays to Saturdays 7.30pm and Sundays 4pm. Tickets priced £10-£16, with concessions available. Box office 020 8340

3488 or www.upstairsatthegatehouse.com

Sunday 10 March

• **Free concert at East Finchley Methodist Church**, High Road, 7.30pm. **Don't Shoot the Pianist**, a recital by Terry Hawes of popular classics and music from films and television with reminiscences of his career as a piano accompanist and musical director, featuring tenor Stuart Booter. Free admission with collection in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care. Venue fully accessible to people with disabilities.

• **Finchley Choral Society and Finchley Children's Music Group in A Celebration of British Choral Music**; St John's Smith Square, London SW1P 3HA, at 7.30pm. Music by Britten, Finzi, Elgar, Parry and Vaughan Williams. Tickets priced £8-20 online from www.sjss.org.uk or by telephone on 020 7222 1061.

Monday 11 March

• **Finchley Jazz Special**, Hall School Sports Ground, formerly Wilf Slack Cricket Club, East End Road, N3, from 7.45pm. Bob Dwyer's Bix 'n' Pieces band will perform,

with jam session by professional musicians. Entrance £8 per person in aid of the oncology unit at the Royal Free Hospital.

Wednesday 13 March

• **North London Brass: Muswell Hill Band** give concert in aid of Noah's Ark Children's Hospice, 8 pm, Muswell Hill Methodist Church, 28 Page's Lane, N101PP.

Saturday 16 March

• **Big Dig Day at Vale Farm Allotments**, Tarling Road, 11am to 4pm. Join a group of volunteers growing seasonal food in a community plot. Please bring a fork and gloves if you have them. More details from www.bigdig.org.uk/london/ or email Sally at: valefarmproject@gmail.com.

• **Battle of the Bands contest** to find exceptional young local acts, with chance of winning coveted spot on main stage at East Finchley's Community Festival in June; East Finchley Constitutional Club, The Walks, 2pm to 8pm. If interested, contact: eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com with details.

• **North London Sinfonia** (formerly The

Tudor Orchestra), conductor Owen Leech, Trinity Church, 15 Nether St N12 7NN, 7.30pm. Programme: Martinu's Rhapsody Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (soloist Katya Lazareva), Faure's Peleas and Melisande, Dvorak's Legends (selection). Tickets £8 (concessions available). More details from www.tudororchestra.org.uk

Sunday 17 March

• Join the **N2 Gardeners** to prepare bank alongside East Finchley tube station for spring. All help welcome for weeding, planting and tidying up. Please bring trowel and old gloves. Meet from 11am. More details at <http://n2gardeners.blogspot.com/>

Sunday 31 March

• **Egg decorating, treasure hunt and The Great Egg Roll** at Lauderdale House, Highgate, from 11am. No advance booking (first come first served; max 100). Bring a parent/carer. Tickets on sale from 10.30am; £6.50 per child, finish 1pm - no latecomers. Wear suitable clothing. Meet at back of House near café.



Letters

Walksafe N2 update

Dear Editor,

We are delighted to announce that the road safety proposals agreed by the Council have passed the public consultation stage and installation is due to begin shortly.

We can look forward to: 1) a zebra crossing on Creighton Avenue; 2) a 20mph speed limit on Church Lane with two Vehicle Activated Signs (which will also record the speed of all vehicles); 3) a pedestrian refuge on Church Lane at the junction with East End Road.

This achievement is due to the high degree of public support and the previous work done by EFVRA and parents/governors at Martin School.

Thank you to all those who took time to obtain signatures on the petition, write letters of support, talk to other residents, email the council, attend site visits, press events and council meetings. Thank you also for the support given by our local councillors and *THE ARCHER*.

The outstanding objective of a three-way traffic light on the High Road at the junction with Church Lane will have to wait till another day. However, we would be grateful if everyone could continue to make a record of dangerous incidents. We will keep the walksafen2@yahoo.com

email address open for this and for feedback on the effects of the upcoming improvements.

Yours faithfully,
Walksafe N2 Steering Committee.

Brief encounter

Dear Editor,

Would the kind lady who stopped at the corner shop to speak to me after reading of my 100th birthday in *THE ARCHER*, please ring me. I had unaccountably run off.

Yours faithfully,

Regina Allen,
Ossulton Way, N2.

Was this you? Contact us and we'll put you in touch with Regina. Our contact details are on page 2.

Age ambassadors

Dear Editor,

I work for Independent Age, a charity which supports thousands of older people across the UK and Republic of Ireland. We tackle older people's poverty and loneliness by offering information, advice and friendship. For those who need it, we also offer befriending and support from an Independent Age volunteer.

We support around 6,000 people in the UK and Ireland and are particularly keen for new volunteers to

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withheld, however, on request at
publication.**

help to raise our profile, attract new volunteers to the charity and manage an existing team of volunteers in East Finchley.

If you like getting out and about and meeting new people and think you have what it takes to help recruit, support and motivate our volunteers, we would love to hear from you.

This is a fantastic opportunity for someone who has a few hours a month to spare. It could enable you to develop new skills, or make use of your professional skills in a voluntary capacity. It could make a real difference to the lives of older people.

To find out more about becoming a volunteer with Independent Age contact Gina Meyer, area manager for London, on gina.meyer@independentage.org.uk or 020 8858 2423.

Yours faithfully,

Gina Meyer,
PO Box 56483,
London SE3 3BW.

East Finchley under fire

Dear Editor,

My very kind niece sent me a cutting from your paper ("First World War memorials", Letters, January 2013). I must explain to you that I am 93 years old and housebound. I was born and bred in East Finchley, which I left for health reasons in 1971. I was married in 1941 at Holy Trinity Church. I did recognise a lot of the names you mentioned in the letter. My surname before I married was Cork.

I did my war work in Simms Motor Units for four years and I did my stint on fire watch during the war. I was a firefighter trained to put out incendiary bombs, three of us in a team. I remember a land mine falling in the High Road. It destroyed the British Legion Club, where I'd spent many happy hours before the war.

I remember the North Circular Road being built in 1927. Before it was built, the area was a lovely field with a little brook. I spent most of my childhood playing there. I don't suppose I would recognise East Finchley now. I hear it has changed a lot and, as I read in another of your letters, please don't spoil it.

I understand your paper is run by volunteers. You are doing a very good job. Please keep up the good work. I hope you don't mind me writing to you. I was so pleased to get the cutting, it made my day. I hope you can understand my writing. My old hands are a trouble.

Yours faithfully,
Doris Underhay,
Priory Road,
Watton, Norfolk.

Road clearance is snow joke

Dear Editor,

After all the 'excitement' of being snowed in on the ski slopes of East Finchley in January I left the snow of Barnet to get to my office in Docklands. My journey took me through the boroughs of Camden, Haringey, Islington, Hackney and Tower Hamlets, and along both main and side roads.



Residents of Cherry Tree Road clearing the snow

Grit spreading in Cherry Tree Road

During the recent wintry weather residents of Cherry Tree Road involved in Barnet's Adopt-a-Street project got to work spreading grit.

Thanks to Nathan Eastwood and Oliver Mellman with his son Jacob braving the elements, the road was soon usable again. The street has its own grit box along with equipment provided by the council.

In all these boroughs the side roads, as well as the main roads, had been cleared of all ice and snow.

I did not need a 'Welcome to Barnet' board to greet me to know when I had got back here to Barnet, as the pavements were still covered with ice slush and snow. Is this a forecast of what life and our services will be like when Barnet's outsourcing comes into effect? None of the boroughs I drove through were Tory controlled. Another point about our council, no doubt their next freebie report on how (well!) they are doing will mention the containers of sand which they tell us are all around the borough. I would like to know where the nearest one to Cherry Tree Wood and the Summerlee roads is, as neither I nor my neighbours have ever seen one. I recall I raised a similar question last winter and never got a reply. Where ARE the sand stocks for East Finchley? We residents deserve to be told.

Yours faithfully,
Joyce Arram,
Summerlee Gardens, 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.

Pooh-pooh these litter louts

By Janet Maitland

I'm getting completely hacked off by the avalanche of litter and dog poo that's overtaking East Finchley. I've no idea if it's actually getting worse or whether I'm just turning into someone from *One Foot in the Grave*. But I don't care which it is.

Are the people responsible expressing some kind of existential angst or have they just turned into giant toddlers, dropping rubbish everywhere for mummy to pick up? There's even a trend for bagging up dog poo and then draping the bags on bush and tree branches, because plastic only takes a mere 2,000 years to disintegrate, doesn't it? And why do council signs about litter refer to 'tidiness'? Who's going to care about that? What about not polluting the environment?

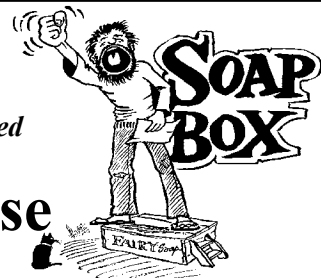
I do ring the council to complain, but this seems to take weeks, unless you're reporting something like a rotting elephant carcass outside a food shop. I've found that using Fix My Street (www.fixmystreet.com) is better. What you put on the site goes straight to Barnet and they do act quickly. But they only deal with the immediate problem and ignore requests for bins in strategic places.

You probably have your own bits of N2 where you walk past muttering, plotting imaginary conversations with the people who drop the litter. But you rarely see them actually drop it, do you? I even try and glean some hope from this, that there's still an element of shame.

When I do see people chuck litter, I do say something. Once I called a teenage boy a barbarian, but I think I just made his day. Another time I threw a carton of KFC chicken bones back through the car window it had been chucked out of and then had to run away as an absolutely furious woman started getting out of the car.

If you feel like I do, could you start complaining to Fix my Street if you don't already? Maybe if the council got more complaints, especially those that mention the need for bins and for cleaning the streets more often, they might actually do something more than sending out a SWAT team to clear up the little patch that you've complained about.

Why not clear up the litter on the pavement and in the gutter in front of your house? I do. I've also been known to do the whole street when I can't stand it any longer. And litter picking can have unexpected rewards. Once I was clearing up litter in Cherry Tree Wood and a little boy stared at me open-mouthed. "Are you a human being, or do you live in the forest?" he asked.



Get your walking boots on for this year's Big Fun Walk.

Boots at the ready

Do you, like Nancy Sinatra, have boots that are made for walking? If so, you might want to consider signing up for the annual Big Fun Walk in aid of North London Hospice.

This popular annual walk sets off from East Finchley tube station on Sunday 7 April and follows a seven-and-a-half mile route through many of London's Royal Parks, finishing at Westminster.

Last year's walk raised more than £150,000 for the hospice, which provides palliative care for terminally ill patients and their families both at home and at the hospice's centres in Barnet and Enfield. It costs more than £7 million a year to deliver its end-of-life care services and 75% of this must be found through fundraising.

Community fundraiser Natalie Gordon said: "We really want to make this year's walk the biggest and best yet. Last year raised an incredible amount for the hospice. We hope the community will once again get involved and support us this year. We look forward to seeing everyone walking together on the day." There is no registration fee but walkers are asked to raise a minimum of £40 sponsorship for the hospice. To register, log on to www.bigfunwalk.co.uk or call the fundraising team on 020 8446 2288.



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Juliet is teased by her nurse in the Hiraeth production *Upstairs* at the Gatehouse in Highgate. Photo courtesy of Hiraeth.

Romeo and Juliet

Review by Sheila Armstrong

The young theatre company Hiraeth, founded by Zoe Ford in 2011, brought their 60s-inspired *Romeo and Juliet* to our local theatre Upstairs at the Gatehouse in Highgate in February. The director draws parallels between the feuding of the Capulet and Montague families and Mods and Rockers' antagonism to each other. Both the play and the 1960s are about youthful rebellion.

The Who's film *Quadrophenia*, about the summer of a teenage Mod, is mentioned by Zoe as being a major influence. Vintage Sixties clothing and music happily supported the theme.

The famous love story was told with passion, the actors playing the leads – Benjamin Ireland and Maya Thomas – coming to life when they met. The dance of the two young lovers symbolising their commitment was an imaginative touch. Rosalind Blessed

deserves special mention for playing the nurse strongly and with wit; as does Michael Hanratty who played the friar with gravitas.

A few comments from press night: the unused balcony on set was a bit like the elephant in the room and never used, thus avoiding a cliché I suppose. The actors' faces need to be lit as it is so important to see them, and this was not always the case but may well have been rectified after the first night.

Ash disease moves closer

By Ann Bronkhorst

In Norse legend, a giant ash tree grew at the centre of the world; the gods created the first male human from an ash tree, the first woman from the elm. Our ancestors used ash wood for spear shafts, tool handles, furniture and fuel, and thought the leaves and wood protected against evil and cured illnesses. Even today the ash has medicinal uses.

But what will cure the tree itself from *Chalara fraxinea*, the potentially devastating fungal ash dieback disease? How can people identify ash trees, healthy or unhealthy, and what happens if (when) the disease reaches North London? Before Christmas it was reported in St Albans so the air-borne spores will reach us soon, probably via roads and rail tracks.



Recognition

To identify leafless ash trees in winter, look for greyish bark, smooth on saplings but often naturally fissured on mature trees, and for upward-curving branches that may retain a few clusters of winged seeds ('keys'). The leaves, divided into leaflets on a central stalk, emerge in May from distinctive hoof-shaped black buds. Ash trees like clay soil, self-seed readily and are easily spotted along the tube embankments, for example behind Prospect Ring, and throughout Islington Cemetery.

Dieback disease causes abnormal vertical lesions that look like wounds, and dark brown marks inside the twigs and branches. Diseased leaves blacken and the fungal spores they carry are spread by wind, leaf litter and walkers' feet.

Coldfall Wood, Highgate Wood and the main part of Hampstead Heath have few ash trees but the heath extension has plenty and its manager is braced for damage once the spores arrive. Haringey is monitoring about 700 ash trees in parks and estates across the borough, including mature ones in Downhills Way and Parkland Walk. All Haringey's recent plantings seem fine and further surveys will be done this spring.

Guidance

Felling of mature ash trees as a 'control' measure is not advised. Barnet Council provides brief, clear information in the Tree Management section of its website at www.barnet.gov.uk and there's good coverage at www.rspb.org.uk/ashdieback. For disease identification, the Forestry Commission website is excellent, particularly its short video. Try www.ashtag.org for regularly-updated information.

A doula's role in childbirth

Eleonora Lawson explains what a doula is and outlines the benefits of having a childbirth companion in preparation for birth and during labour.

World Doula Week will be celebrated between 22–28 March, the time of the spring equinox and the return of a fertile Earth. A doula is someone supporting mother and partner emotionally and practically during pregnancy, birth and beyond.

She is a trusted companion who has usually undertaken a training course and is someone chosen by the parents. As their guardian, she supports parents, helps them explore the options for the birth day they want for themselves and their baby, protecting their space before, during and after labour and acting as an advocate if needed.

In my doula journey, I am

learning that having an experienced birth companion who knows the NHS system is key for parents. They can enjoy the day without worrying about practicalities that the doula takes care of, so they are free to focus on the experience.

You can find more information at www.doula.org.uk, and Eleonora, based in Muswell Hill, can be contacted via www.lifetouchmassage.co.uk

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