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Letters to the editor...

Stanley Field: I'd like to know more

Dear Editor

Regarding Stanley Field, it is hard not to feel sympathy for the individual criticised in last month's letters pages as a "lone voice" who had asked a few questions in relation to the proposed sell-off of Stanley Field to the Archer Academy.

As a parent with children in Martin School, there is an obvious attraction to me in what is proposed and which has only come to pass after deeply impressive work by many people.

However, if built, the academy will cause a permanent loss of rare open space in East Finchley and this should be discussed publicly. This is especially so given that until recently the campaign which generated much local support was to preserve Stanley Field as a public space.

It is only through such openness that the Academy can ensure that it gains the widest possible support and the community can feel that the best possible solution has been found.

Yours faithfully,  
Alastair Lyon,  
Huntingdon Road, N2.

What is Stanley Field's future?

Dear Editor,

Along with other parents from East Finchley, I am passionate and proud of our new local secondary school The Archer Academy.

I am surprised about the angry responses in last month's letter's page about the concern regarding Stanley Field's future, and don't understand why the anger is directed towards THE ARCHER, which has always been a great supporter of the school concept.

So I'd like now to thank THE ARCHER and other campaigners who have provided information about the issues surrounding the long term future of Stanley Field. A long time before the last public meeting we had the great news that Stanley Field would be sold to our new local secondary school, which seems a fantastic idea.

But people are clearly concerned about what will happen once the school expands. What will the school do with it when they move? A letter in the last THE ARCHER mentions that only 'one supporter' is concerned about the future of the field after selling it to the school. Others who may have doubts might have felt too intimidated to speak up. I would like to testify that the 'one supporter' has been active in the cause of saving the field for over five years, organising local politicians, sports celebrities, gathering other supporters to clean up the fields, outreach and arranging transparent meetings. This 'one supporter' knows what he is talking about!

Campaign leaders and local councillors have promised to secure the field's future but will this follow through? Stanley Field is a rare and unique open space in East Finchley which needs to survive any future changes.

Yours faithfully,  
Zekiye Kartal,  
Creighton Avenue, N2.



Christmas news from the Jarvis family

Dear Editor,

During the 1950s and 60s my great, great Aunt Flo received Christmas cards from Tommy and Maude Jarvis, who lived at 244 Nether Street, Finchley.

Every card is home-made and contains a photographed painting by Maude; some are views of London and others are room interiors. Some of the cards have a summary of their year's news and one had the attached photograph which we assume is of Tommy and Maude in their sitting room in 1956.

We would love to be able to return these lovely cards to the Jarvis family, and would appreciate it if you could publish this letter and photograph in the hope that someone in the Finchley area will be able to put the family in touch with us.

The only information we have apart from their address is that Tommy retired on 30 September 1953, which was also Maude's birthday, and they had a granddaughter called Rosalind who was five in 1954.

Yours faithfully,  
Elizabeth Wear  
64 Upton Way, Broadstone,  
Dorset, BH18 9LZ  
[pheuw34@gmail.com](mailto:pheuw34@gmail.com)

War Memorial Plaque 'disappears'

Dear Editor,

Anybody passing down the bottom end of Brackenbury Road will notice the gaping hole at 78-80 where the British Legion used to be ... and an outline on the side wall of No. 82 where the Manor Park Mission Great War Memorial Plaque used to be. How did this come about...?

Well, on the morning of Monday 25 February an organisation called 'The Durand Charitable Trust' was allowed access to the site by the developer's agents and removed The War Memorial Plaque and is keeping it in storage....somewhere!

All well and good? Well, no! One of the conditions of Planning Consent was that the development should not take place until the applicant had agreed with Barnet Council an alternative location for the memorial.

A proposal (F/00144/13) was submitted in January 2013 to deal with this, but hasn't even been considered by Planning at present (early April). So by rights The Memorial Plaque should still be in place in an un-demolished British Legion.... Obviously not!

L.B. Barnet Planning responded quickly when informed of the plaque's removal and passed it on

to their 'Enforcement Section' who have since done....Errr....Nothing! (apparently, at time of writing).

Return the plaque to East Finchley and let the people of this Community decide where it should go! Your thoughts to your local councillors & Barnet Planning!

Yours faithfully,  
Bruce Boyd  
Brackenbury Road, N2

My letters to Mrs Thatcher

Dear Editor,

After hearing the news of Mrs Thatcher's death, I recalled having written to her in the 1970s as an MP for Finchley and then Prime Minister on various matters and she had the courtesy to respond to each of my letters, all of which she personally signed.

Having re-read the exchange of letters between us, it was interesting to note that some matters still continue today, 25 years later, such as after-school care for working parents, especially single parents trying to maintain full-time employment and cope with school holidays.

I had outlined in 1978 that surely it would cost the country less to make provision for both after-school and holiday facilities for children of working parents and therefore release so many people who were on social security because they were faced with lack of provision for child care in many cases, and therefore forced to remain at home and rely on state aid.

Unfortunately the response received from Mrs T was "I do not believe it should be the responsibility of the state to provide care for school children during holiday periods when parents have full-time jobs."

Do residents remember the chaos on the roads in Finchley Central whenever Mrs T visited her offices located in Ballards Lane, which was usually monthly?

Yours faithfully,  
Betti Blatman,  
Address supplied.

Those were the days

Dear Editor,

I was interested in reading Doris Underhay's letter (THE ARCHER, March 2013). Yes, I remember the name Simms Motor garage but could not remember exactly where it was in East Finchley. I have been living in East Finchley for over 50 years.

I remember there used to be a church on the corner of High Road and East End Road, where Budgens is now. I also remember there was a small jewellery/watch repair shop somewhere opposite there. I was a little boy and used to go with my mother to the jewellery shop.

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.



This disgusting rat run

By Cathy Young

They say you're never far from a rat in London. This is alarmingly true for people waiting at the 263 southbound bus stop on the North Circular flyover.

The pathway leading down to the pedestrian underpass is bordered on both sides by dense shrubbery. It is an ideal habitat for our furry little rodent neighbours, particularly as there is a constant source of food nearby. The bin at the bus stop overflows with waste food and food wrappers from the leisure park. The surrounding area is a smorgasbord of litter with half-empty packaging and drinks cans.

The council has clearly made an attempt at solving the problem. Rat traps and dead rats in various stages of decay are strewn along the pathway; not something you would expect to step over in a fairly affluent suburb of North London. There are live ones, too: I saw 10 in the short walk up from the North Circular.

Rats have a bad reputation as dirty, disease-spreading creatures. Fleas carried by black rats were responsible for spreading the Plague in 14th century Europe, killing between 75 and 200 million people. The brown rat, the one we see nowadays, came to the UK in the 18th century. Within 20 years it had overpowered the indigenous smaller, black rat because it reproduces at an alarming rate: a female can have 12 pups every 4 weeks and one pair can multiply to 200 in one year.

Rats remain a major health hazard. Many are infected with Weil's disease. Because rats have no bladders their urine is emitted continuously, so the infection seeps onto everything they scurry over.

We will never rid ourselves of rats completely but to allow a large colony to flourish in such close proximity to people, including parents with young children, some in buggies close to the ground, is not acceptable. The shrubbery should be removed or at least cut right back, the traps put out of reach of children and the dead and dying bodies of the rats should be regularly removed, not left to rot in plain sight. The bin by the bus stop should be emptied regularly, as indeed should all the bins in the area.

Rats do indeed have a reputation as dirty. Surely a civilised society should not sink to their level?

There was a pet shop on the corner of High Road and Lincoln Road, where it is now Barracuda cafe. The lady who worked at the pet shop was very friendly and chatty. When I was a little boy, I used to go inside and have a look at all the pet animals, budgerigars and fishes. Those were the days!  
Yours faithfully,  
Mr N. Kaufman  
Brim Hill, N2.

Always a warm welcome

Dear Editor,

I like to eat out two or three times a week as I live on my own and hate cooking. I always eat at the same place because I feel like I am friends or even family when I go in, as the manager and staff are very friendly indeed.

I am talking about the Local Café on the High Road. The food is excellent and they have a wide range to choose from. They welcome me by my first name and are very friendly people.

If you want a breakfast at seven in the evening, that's no problem, or lunch and dinner. The manager always tells me about the day's specials and you can have a lovely red or white wine or beer with your meal.

Let's just say I can't wait for my next visit. As the youth of today would say, sweet.

Yours faithfully,  
Briget Kelly,  
Address supplied.

Summer festival... can you help?

A reminder that East Finchley's summer festival will take place this year on Sunday 23 June in Cherry Tree Wood.

The organisers of the festival have managed to keep it a free event for over 35 years. It has never been grant aided by Barnet Council and is run entirely by local volunteers. They are still actively seeking people to help with publicity, press and marketing.

On the day, at least 50 volunteers are needed to sell raffle tickets, steward the event or help in the bar. If you can spare some time over the next couple of months or an hour during the day on 23 June and make a contribution to the success of the festival, ring 07983 360 834 or email: [eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com](mailto:eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com)