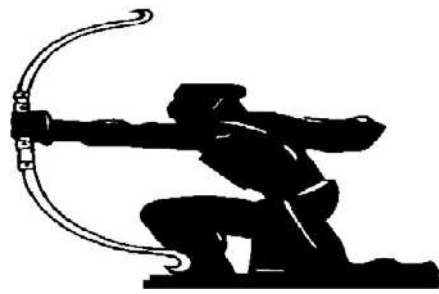


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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

The Institute is on the move again

By Diana Cormack

The Institute is, partially, on the move again, this time from The Bishops Avenue to Bishop Douglass RC School in Hamilton Road.

Last November came the revelation that the new Archer Academy is to be located alongside The Institute in its Arts Centre building behind East Finchley tube station; then came the question of space. As part of their agreement with the new school The Institute will retain access to the specialist art rooms on the ground floor. However, they have had to look elsewhere for premises to house other courses.

The Institute has been in negotiations with Bishop Douglass School and from September 2013 some classrooms in the school's art block will be reserved for the exclusive use of The Institute's classes. The Institute will also share some additional classrooms and move its administration to the school. There is also an agreement to construct a new dedicated shared building on the site which will become The Institute's permanent and long-term home.

This move follows three others made by HGSI since relocating from the Henrietta Barnett School in 2004. It was first based in Park House opposite the station and later used part of McDonald's headquarters. Meanwhile, a purpose-built Institute Arts Centre was constructed alongside Beaumont Close. The Centre opened in 2006 and, when the Institute quit McDonald's last year, became the main study base.

However, there were financial difficulties at the Institute, so the co-location arrangement with the Archer Academy has eased the situation.

In a letter to students the Institute's chairman Greville Waterman said: "This is an exciting moment for The Institute: we have guaranteed our survival, are back from the brink, in the black for the first time in living memory and about to enter into two significant life-long learning partnerships with two excellent local schools."

Armed robbery at bookie's

By Janet Maitland

Staff at a local bookmaker were horrified when two men burst through the door just as they were closing and held them up with a gun. The robbery took place at William Hill's on Church Lane at about 9.30pm on 20 March.

The men stole a quantity of cash, believed to be several hundred pounds, before escaping. No one was hurt, but staff were threatened and felt very shaken. "We always offer counselling when such things happen," said Kate Miller from William Hill. "But it's a hard one to get over, having a gun pointed at you."

One of the men is described as black, six foot tall, wearing a dark hooded top with a grey top underneath and armed with a black handgun. The other man is described as Asian, of medium build and wearing a grey hooded top and blue denim jeans. He had short black hair and hid his face behind a white surgical mask.

Anyone with any information should contact DC Mess on 020 8358 1751 or ring Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 if you want to remain anonymous.



TV star David Walliams with two of the Big Fun walkers. Photo courtesy of North London Hospice

Fancy meeting you here

You never know who you're going to bump into when you go out for a walk. These two participants in the North London Hospice's Big Fun Walk found themselves in the company of David Walliams at one point along the route.

They bumped into the TV comic actor out exercising close to his home in Primrose Hill, around the halfway mark for the walk's seven-and-a-half-mile route from East Finchley Station through London's Royal Parks to Westminster.

Story continued on page 6

In this issue:

Good news for Monday youth club.....p3
Residents lose fight over new homes.....p3
Academy plans for Stanley Field.....p4
Post Office strike.....p5
Big Local project update.....p7
Finchley Youth Theatre review.....p8
Farewell to an Arctic hero....p9
What's On.....p10
Your letters.....p11

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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 – June: 10 May, July: 14 June, August: 12 July

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

Safer money advice for older people

Lloyds TSB Foundation Trust has given a £78,000 grant to Advocacy In Barnet to provide a voice for older people in financial matters, and to protect them from financial abuse.

Would you like to help in this project? Do you have a financial or legal background? If so, you could be one of the 10 new volunteer advocates now being recruited.

As existing volunteer advocates do, you would make weekly visits to older people living in care homes, other residential settings, day centres, and hospitals.

You would receive free training and development opportunities, a free enhanced Criminal Record Bureau check, on-going support and supervision, and travel expenses.

The next available training date for Introduction to Advocacy will be this month.

To apply, please visit www.advocacyinbarnet.org.uk, or contact Janet Brand on janet.b@advocacyinbarnet.org.uk or via 020 8201 3415.

Advocacy In Barnet offers a free, independent and confidential advocacy service to all people over the age of 18 living in the Borough of Barnet. It takes two forms: Issue Based Advocacy for people living in the community in their own homes; and Advance, a voice through Advocacy for older people living in care homes.

Summer starts here

Now the cold weather is finally behind us, it's time to turn our attention to the glorious days of summer ahead, fingers crossed.

You can start by getting your garden in shape with the help of Finchley Horticultural Society's Great Spring Plant Sale on Sunday 19 May, which will have a great selection of garden flowers and vegetable plants at bargain prices.

A sunflower competition will also be running for children aged 16 and under. Young sunflower plants can be purchased at the sale for 50p and grown on at home or on allotments. Winners will be judged at the start of September.

The society's sale takes place in the Gordon Road allotments, off Dollis Road, N3, from 10am to 1pm. For more details on the sunflower contest, email fhssunflower@hotmail.co.uk

Get on your bikes

British Cycling, the national governing body for cycling, is encouraging more women in Barnet to get on their bikes.

Led by women, for women, Breeze Network is British Cycling's women-only programme aimed at encouraging women to cycle more. The Breeze Network is supported by Breeze Champions

who are a group of volunteers who deliver the bike ride to other women cyclists. There is no need to be a cycling expert, just be confident on a bike and have heaps of enthusiasm. To find out more about Breeze and to register for the training course, call Breeze Network on 0161 274 2117, email breeze@britishcycling.org.uk or visit www.breezebikerides.com.

Accident witness appeal

Police are still appealing for witnesses after a fatal collision in Finchley. On Monday 25 March at around 10.10pm there was a collision at the junction of the A406 North Circular Road with the A1 and the A598 Regents Park Road, N3.

A Saab containing a male driver aged 38, an elderly female relative aged 99 in the front seat, and his wife and two small children in the rear, was travelling south in Regents Park Road when it collided with a traffic island kerb. The front seat passenger suffered serious injuries and died six days later. Traffic officers are asking any witnesses to call the collision witness line on 020 8842 1817.

Planning Applications

Barnet Council

16 Beresford Road, N2
Single-storey rear infill extension, including pitched roof and two roof lights.

16 Elmfield Road, N2
Single-storey side and rear extension with three skylights. First-floor rear extension.

232 East End Road, N2
Roof extension to existing loft, including three roof lights.

58-60 High Road, N2
Two-storey rear extension, to provide additional retail space at ground-floor level and additional residential flat at first-floor level.

305 Long Lane, N2

Single-storey rear extension, with part single-storey side infill including a roof light.

39 Park Hall Road, N2

Roof extension including a rear dormer window with two roof lights to front roof slope to facilitate loft conversion.

54-60 Trinity Road, N2

Alterations to roof, including raising existing roof level to create additional accommodation and storage within loft space of flats 58 and 60. Two front roof lights, two rear roof lights and one dormer to roof of No 60.

Viceroy Parade Post Office, N2

Haringey Council

4 Bancroft Avenue, N2

Two-storey rear extension with four roof lights to side elevation. Outside Manor Court, Aylmer Road, N2

Replacement of existing 12.5m high telecommunications street work pole with new 12.5 high telecommunication street work pole, and three additional equipment cabinets on grass verge adjacent to Aylmer Road.

23 Twyford Avenue, N2

Certificate of Lawfulness for side dormer, and one rear and three front roof lights.

Robbery charge

A man who lives on the Grange Estate has been charged with a series of street robberies in N12 and N14.

Two of the robberies were allegedly at knife point. Ahmed Ali, an 18-year-old student, appeared in Hendon Magistrates Court on 27 March for a first hearing. All the alleged robberies took place in March, with only a few days between each incident.

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Happy days for Maureen and the Monday Club

By Daphne Chamberlain

Maureen Clemetson, co-founder of East Finchley's Monday Club for young people, was one of this year's Barnet Civic Award winners. Introducing the award ceremony at the Town Hall in the presence of the Mayor, Councillor David Longstaff said that all the recipients had made a tremendous impact on their communities.

Passionate

Admitting that she cried as her citation was read out, Maureen told *THE ARCHER*: "I have always loved young people; all of them. This is a passion with me. There is so much provision for nursery age children, but nothing for teenagers. One teenage boy told me that they are the throwaway generation."

It is this passion which drives Maureen to give teenagers a sense of their own worth, a safe place to go, and the opportunity to develop skills and talents. Since she and her "main right-hand lady" Maureen Antoinette started their phenomenally successful youth club in October 2005, hundreds of young people have enjoyed activities like music mixing, street dancing, cooking, art and craft, and organised football. Some have even appeared in a local film.

Finding a home

Though praised by local councillors and clergy, and by the Police Community Support Group for building bridges in East Finchley society, Maureen's biggest problem has been to find a permanent home. With membership growing from six to 300, at one stage, the club and its band of qualified vol-



unteer helpers have met in the Methodist Church, St Mary's RC Church, Martin School and the Old Barn.

It's been a bumpy journey recently, with membership dropping without the security of a permanent base offering all the facilities they need. But things are looking up again. From 15 April, the Monday Club is meeting in Holy Trinity School, from 6 to 8 pm. They can also play football on the HT field, and Maureen hopes that, with the agreement of the school, they can introduce cricket coaching for both boys and girls.

Congratulations, Maureen. In the words of the award citation, one of "the deserving people who do so much for the community".



The air ambulance prepares for take-off from Manorside School's playground. Photo by Mike Hughes

Phone shop break-in

By Janet Maitland

Two men broke into Phone City on the High Road in the early hours of 10 April. The men got into the shop by forcing up the metal shutters, smashing the lower panes of glass and then crawling in.

Police were called at 2am by someone who saw the burglars breaking in, but they had snatched a few phones and run off down the High Road by the time police officers were able to get there.

Anyone with any information about this burglary is asked to call the police on 101, or, if they wish to remain anonymous, to contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

Air ambulance lands in school playground

ARCHER reader Mike Hughes took this photo of the air ambulance landing in Manorside School's playground in Squires Lane on Friday 12 April. The school was open at the time and children were arriving for an Easter holiday club.

The crew took a pedestrian to hospital with head injuries following a collision with a car. Squires Lane was closed for more than an hour from 9.30am and traffic was diverted around neighbouring roads.

Mike told us that for a long time now Manorside parents have been asking for a crossing on Squires Lane in front of the school to make crossing the road safer for the school's pupils and other pedestrians.

Residents lose fight over new homes

By Mandy Rabin

Despite opposition from parents and staff of Tetherdown School, Fortis Green Community Allotments Trust and hundreds of local residents, Haringey Council's planning sub-committee has approved plans for building two luxury houses.

The homes will be built on a defunct depot site that forms part of an area designated as Significant Local Open Land (SLOL). The site, behind 2-16 Lauradale Road, lies north of the allotments adjacent to Fortis Green's covered reservoir.

Residents claimed the narrow access path to the site was heavily used by pedestrians and contained the entrance to

Tetherdown School, making the building of two houses a safety risk to pedestrians.

They have raised further concerns about the future of the SLOL after the archery club based on the open green space that forms the covered reservoir stated its intention to build a larger, brick club house after their wooden 1930s club house was destroyed by fire.

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Academy places filling up

By Nick Young

Four months remain before the Archer Academy opens, most of its places for the first intake have now been filled. At the time of writing, 125 Academy places have been accepted, a figure that will no doubt have changed by the time you read this.

The new free school received 310 applications, mostly from the N2, N3 and NW11 post-codes, for 150 places. The first offers went out in early March, followed by second-round offers later that month. There is a substantial waiting list.

Recruitment for the first intake of teachers is also under way. Headteacher Mick Quigley has been joined by the deputy headteacher, Lucy Harrison, previously the assistant headteacher at Hertswood School in Borehamwood.

Preparing to be secondary pupils

The transition from primary to secondary school can be dif-

ficult for pupils, and Mr Quigley and his team have met with many local primary school pupils to help prepare them. Alasdair Addison, a Year 6 pupil at Holy Trinity who has been offered a place at the Academy, told *THE ARCHER* that he is "more excited now" about starting at the new school, where he will be "looking forward to the sports focus".

The Academy's uniform of light grey shirts and charcoal-grey jumpers with the distinctive badge has also been revealed. Mr Quigley has emphasised that there will be no ties, as these are often a source of minor conflict between staff and students in secondary schools.



An unlikely encounter LR: Roy Satterthwaite, Diana Cormack, Ian Cormack and Margaret Satterthwaite.

N2 meeting in Oz

By Diana Cormack

Scanning the sea front restaurants in St Kilda, Melbourne, for a suitable place to have breakfast, my husband and I were surprised to hear someone saying, "Look at her T-shirt". Whilst I think my N2 shirt is rather special (when I wear it in the summer to deliver *THE ARCHER*, people often ask where they can get one) it isn't that remarkable.

However, the person who noticed it and made the comment to her husband wasn't expecting to see a reference to their local area when they were over 10,000 miles from home! Margaret and Roy Satterthwaite of Brighton Road were spending a few months travelling around that part of the world to visit the various places where Margaret had once worked as a community nurse.

The Academy's plans for Stanley Field

So what will The Archer Academy look like and how will it make sports facilities on the Stanley Field site available to everyone in the community? John Lawrence spoke to chair of governors Avis Johns to find out.



If all goes well, the Academy team will be submitting detailed building plans for Stanley Field in July with a view to construction work starting on the site in the autumn. Building work would then be finished by September 2014.

When I meet her, Avis Johns, chair of governors, has just come from a five-hour planning meeting where changes and improvements were being made to the team's blueprints and dozens of other issues were tackled to help them meet this ambitious timetable.

The single school building will be constructed in such a way that members of the community will be able to use some of the indoor facilities, such as the sports hall, while all classrooms are kept separate and secure. Outside, there will be an all-weather pitch, several hard courts and space for organised games, together occupying a significant majority of the field. Again, these will be available for public use outside school hours.

Avis said: "We want to make sure we have got excellent facilities for children at the school and for the wider community. Our first priority is to keep the children safe; then to make sure that other people in East Finchley can enjoy what we have to offer."

Consultation

The finer details of the Academy's building plans will be available to the public from July, when a number of public consultation events are planned. In advance, the team will be meeting local

residents in the roads neighbouring Stanley Field, to hear their questions and concerns.

An example might be the extra traffic generated by the new school and the availability of parking spaces. Avis said: "We have been very clear with all our prospective parents right from the start that this will be a local school and they should be coming on foot, by bike or by bus rather than by car."

That also applies to the Academy's other site at The Institute's Arts Centre in Beaumont Close, behind the tube station, where teaching of the school's first year intake begins in September, and

where parking space is already limited.

During this preparation period, Avis said the Academy has been consulting with Tim Bowden, headteacher of Holy Trinity Primary School, next to the Stanley Field site, to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum during the construction phase, and also to consider ways in which the two schools might work together closely in the future.

As soon as we hear the Academy's public consultation dates, we will publish them in *THE ARCHER*. Also look out for details on Facebook and Twitter (*TheArcherN2*).

Sale of Stanley Field

Daphne Chamberlain reports on the conditions of sale and the proposed extent of community use of Stanley Field.

Barnet Council has defined the terms of the proposed sale of the Stanley Field site as follows: "The Department of Education is buying the Stanley Road site for the free school for £3.55 million on the basis that the Archer Academy will enter into a deed of dedication, or similar agreement, to ensure no less than 60 per cent of the playing field remains available for sports and recreation use by the local community in perpetuity, outside school hours."

"Before completing the transfer, the deed of dedication will be sealed on behalf of the council and approved by council members. The purchase price is one of the terms which will need to be met to transfer the land as approved at public committee. Any changes to this agreement will need public approval."

A Barnet spokesperson told *THE ARCHER* that "outside school hours" meant just that: i.e. including weekends, Bank Holidays, evenings (until a

reasonable time). They also confirmed that 60% of the playing field meant 60% of the total area of the existing field.

Matters for negotiation

Sport East Finchley's Roger Chapman told us that the extent of land to be covered by a deed of dedication was one of the issues to be resolved, but he wanted to ensure that at a minimum it includes the field plus indoor sports facilities.

Whether it will include any teaching space is one of the matters to be negotiated.

He said that a meeting with Fields in Trust about a deed of dedication had been "very productive", and although further discussions are necessary he hadn't come across anything else that seemed to fit the bill.

At the moment he understands that London Marathon Trust will support the site financially where a significant amount of it remains in sports use. Other backers are being approached, but none is firmed up yet.

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Post Office closed in strike action

By John Lawrence

East Finchley's Post Office was closed on Easter Saturday after the Communications Workers' Union called a strike to protest at plans to sell it off to a private operator.

Throughout the morning, customers were seen turning up to a locked door where a small notice had been placed, explaining the reasons for the one-day closure. A further half day strike followed on Friday 19 April.

Union position

The union's Huw Davies, who represents Post Office counter staff in the Greater London area, said: "The potential loss, through franchising, of an impressive number of years of expertise, loyalty and dedication amongst highly skilled and experienced staff will have a significantly detrimental impact on the Post Office counters' service provided to our local community."

"In the event that the Post Office does gain a partner, there is no guarantee that this franchise partner will continue to offer, in the long-term, Post Office services, as this will be its secondary consideration behind its primary business."

Transformation plan

East Finchley is one of 70 Crown Post Offices under

review because they are said to be losing money. The Post Office aims to find a local retailer who could operate its services from existing premises or a partner who would be willing to run them from the current building.

The Post Office said it was disappointed at the strike action, saying it was essential that the transformation plans were delivered because public money is subsidising the £40 million annual losses of the Crown branches.

Kevin Gilliland, network and sales director, said: "We are committed to keeping a Post Office branch on high streets such as East Finchley and to maintaining the same levels of service for our customers."

"The best way for us to do this is to partner with a retailer, using an approach which has met with high customer satisfaction levels across the UK. This is not a closure plan; our aim is to find a suitable retailer from which the branch can operate. Any new branch would offer the same range of Post Office services."



An electric 40 years in business

Local traders face tough conditions these days and have to adapt quickly to survive. No one knows this better than Dino Loizou, owner and director of East Finchley Electrical, which is celebrating 40 years in business. It started out in 1973 as a small electrical shop on the High Road, employing two people. Today, the company has 14 employees and two premises serving hundreds of local homes and some of London's most high profile organisations.

Many customers who used the services of East Finchley Electrical back in 1973 are still customers to this day and Dino thanks them and the local community for their custom

and support over the years. Through the decades Dino and his father, who originally set up the business, have witnessed many changes. He says: "It's interesting to look back on what used to be our best sellers in the shop decades ago. Things like record players, analogue radios and video players had people flocking back then. Now it's all about audio visual integration, home automation and intelligent lighting."

Role of recommendations

Building long-term relationships is crucial for Dino and

his team as recommendations make up 80% of the company's business. Adapting to change is also crucial.

Dino says: "Back in the 1990s when I first got involved in the business, the Yellow Pages and leaflet drops just about summed up our marketing. Now it's our website that drives our promotions and we've embraced social media and email marketing too. But the best marketing we can do is a good job so we can boost our recommendations. They are free."

How secure is your parked car?

By Janet Maitland

Thieves stole items from the boot of a car parked on Summerlee Avenue some time between 7pm on 5 April and 8.20am on 6 April.

To prevent this kind of theft happening to you, the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) advises you not to leave anything of any value on display or in the glove compartment as even a coat can be a temptation for someone to smash and grab.

They also advise you not to hide anything in the glove compartment, but to leave it

open to show there's nothing inside. If you shut it, thieves may break into the car to look inside and won't find out that there's nothing of value in there until they've damaged your car.

Always close and secure all doors and windows and activate the alarm when you leave your car unattended, even if only for a short while. Take your Sat Nav

with you or lock it in the boot, after removing the sucker marks from the windscreen.

The SNT recommends that you register your possessions with Immobilise as this will not only help you get them back if they're stolen but also capture thieves and speed up insurance claims. The service is free at www.immobilise.com

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Paris in the 60s - Parisian life - One of the images from the Local Gallery show. Copyright Alan Scales

Parisian memories

By Sheila Armstrong

A recent chance meeting between Matt Humphrey, owner of the LOCAL gallery (sic) and photographer Alan Scales brought a nostalgic collection of black and white photos of Paris in the 1960s to Muswell Hill in March and April. They can still be seen on the gallery's website.

It was photographic love at first sight, with Matt recognising the appeal of scenes from a time gone by in that most photogenic of cities, and Alan being delighted to discover the small gallery in Avenue Mews.

Alan lived in Paris in the sixties and his photos bring back memories of a Paris that has disappeared. The eccentric characters and crumbling buildings are no longer there: it has been tidied up. Inspired by Cartier Bresson, and using a Leica 111 and Rolleiflex, Alan has made the old city spring to life.

Matt worked on the sixties negatives with modern technology to enable them to be displayed at their best in the gallery. He and Alan, who runs his own TV production company, Imagicians.tv, have plans to collaborate on a multi-media photographic and video show entitled *You, me and Paris*, a pictorial history of Paris spanning 50 years. Contact matt@thelocalgallery.co.uk and watch this space.

Fantastic Finchley

A poem by Roy Sunderland

I must have dropped off at The Angel
And dreamt of Finchleams of yore.
People and places all mixed together
And others from ancient folklore.
Whilst I fitfully slept with my chin on my chest,
More tipsy than you could envisage,
The tunnel loomed large in a surrealist way
Each station induced its own image.
A choleric monarch and stag hunting bowmen
Were chasing a poor old white lion
Who, cornered, rose up like a Phoenix from ashes
And roared from the spot he then died on.
From out of the mist, came three well-known faces
Named Bloodnok, Bluebottle and Neddie.
Behind them there stood a fair-haired old lady
Her handbag aloft at the ready.
"I'm neither naked nor turning," she cried to us all,
"This line is a misery, don't you think?"
"Tally ho!" we agreed as we lifted our cups
And without more ado we did drink.
Just then I awoke as the train re-emerged
To a cold and wet East Finchley Station.
"I must get out here," I explained to the throng,
"I've arrived at my dream destination."

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Allotment holders go it alone

East Finchley Allotments have finally been signed over to ploholders, taking them out of the control of Barnet Council.

The allotment holders' association at the site off Plane Tree Walk started the process towards independence early last year.

There were many reasons for the move but it also came in the wake of worrying signals that the council was preparing to raise annual allotment charges significantly.

Chairman David Holt and outgoing secretary Richard King signed the 38-year agreement earlier this year, making it only the second site in Barnet to go it alone.

It means the allotment holders themselves have full responsibility for site management, giving them freedom to carry out improvements and make repairs as necessary.

"This gives us rather more freedom than we had before and includes only a limited number of things about which we have to involve the council," says the association's newsletter, adding: "But it is all down to us now. If we want a good site, we shall have to work for it."

Richard King steps down as secretary of the East Finchley Allotment Holders Association this year after many years' service and his role is being taken over by Janet Francis and Cathy Schling.

Good life on the allotment

Plots of various size are available at Vale Farm Allotments, off Tarling Road, N2. Many allotment sites have long waiting lists, and local residents will be given priority for these new vacancies. Anyone interested in applying should email lily@valefarm.org

Fancy meeting you here

Continued from page 1

This year's event on Sunday 7 April was blessed with beautiful spring sunshine and a massive turnout of more than 1,200 sponsored walkers.

Now in its 19th year, the Big Fun Walk is an annual highlight attracting young and old, some with their four-legged companions. Hospice community nurse specialist Susi Greham, who completed the walk with her family, said: "What an amazing day! We loved every second and are already talking about next year's event. There was a real family atmosphere and fabulous team spirit." Marshal Carole Jordan added: "It was a splendid, sunny day. It was great to see so many smiling faces pass my marshalling point and to see the enthusiasm and excitement first hand. Well done to all the participants."

The Big Fun Walk is a vital event for the hospice, raising about £120,000 every year, which is a massive contribution towards the annual £6 million cost of providing specialist end-of-life care to patients and their families in Barnet, Enfield and Haringey.



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Your chance to get involved with Big Local

The £1 million Big Local initiative which aims to improve life for residents on the Grange Estate and surrounding roads in a 'forgotten' part of East Finchley has got off to a good start.

Local people and organisers held a meeting in mid-April in Church Lane to work out how to generate ideas from members of the community for the improvements they'd like to see.

Important steps will be to engage schools and young people, talk to existing community groups and consult with local businesses.

Other ideas include simply knocking on people's doors and setting up a website where people can post their thoughts.

As reported in *THE ARCHER* in January, money for the Big Local project is coming from the Big Lottery Fund, and a successful sister project is already under way in south London.

The Grange Estate and

neighbouring roads were identified as being a part of the capital which had been forgotten in recent years and which could benefit from new community facilities or safety and security measures.

Project co-ordinator Paul Bragman said that at this early stage it was all about collecting ideas and agreeing how East Finchley's project will work.

The next Big Local meeting takes place at Boyden's Pantry, Church Lane, on Thursday 9 May at 6.30pm and everyone is welcome. Don't be shy if you have an opinion and would like to get involved. If you miss the meeting you can contact Paul directly on paul@communityregen.net or 020 8442 2379.

Malta honour for fundraiser Dennis

By Diana Cormack

An ancient and distinguished honour has been awarded to Dennis Gimes of East Finchley High Road in recognition of his services to charity. At a ceremony held in February in Valletta, Malta, Dennis was made a Knight of the Order of Saint John.

Readers may recognise his name from last year's *ARCHER* (April 2012) when Dennis was busy raising funds for the upkeep of the long-awaited RAF Bomber Command Memorial, which was unveiled by the Queen at the end of June.

Dennis hit on the novel idea of raising public awareness by getting well known people from all over the world to have their photo taken with Roger, a teddy bear dressed in a Bomber Command pilot's outfit. He persuaded more than 50 celebrities to pose with the bear and believes that this has helped to bring in well over £10,000 for the cause.

Charity dynamo

As well as working hard for this, Dennis is involved in several other charities. He is a director of The Heritage Foundation, is active in the Variety Club of Great Britain and sits on the committee of the breast cancer charity A Splash of Pink. His latest charitable role is that of a trustee for the Soldiering On Through Life Trust, which

aims to help past or serving members of the armed forces and their families suffering from financial hardship and physical or mental disabilities (visit www.soldieringon.org)

Dennis is a former soldier himself with more than 30 years service in the army. He now works as a security consultant but somehow finds the time to put in an amazing amount of work for worthy causes.



YouTube hit for local music maker

By Diana Cormack

Four years ago local resident Derek Harris lost his mother to the throat cancer through which he had been nursing her. Seeking solace in the aftermath of this sorrowful event, Derek bought a guitar and gradually began making up songs to help himself cope. Sometimes he would play and sing outdoors in parks and open spaces.

"I like to share my music with others," Derek told *THE ARCHER*. "People began to compliment me and ask if there was a CD available." Then someone asked if they could film him and suddenly Derek was on YouTube with well over 1,000 hits

This self-taught musician doesn't own a computer and is astounded that so many others are able to have access to his music. Derek says he believes his songs are different because they are simple and come straight from the heart. Now he is thinking of performing at charity events and would like to take to the stage at the East Finchley Community Festival.



Troubador - Derek Harris in Cherry Tree Wood. Photo by Diana Cormack

Find Derek on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=simKiebdkgg

Suite to boost computer skills

By Rob Robertson

The ICT suite at the Green Man Community Centre in Strawberry Vale is now open for business with eight computers, a printer and a scanner.

Peabody, which is one of the oldest and largest housing associations in London and which owns the community centre, is keen for Strawberry

Vale residents and those living in the wider community to have the opportunity to use and improve their IT skills.

There is normally open access to the suite from 9am to 12.30pm and from 1.30pm to 5pm Monday to Friday. From 2pm to 4pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, the suite hosts an online computer class called

Learn My Way. Volunteers are available to coach learners towards a certificate of proficiency.

Local resident Gary Connelly says: "Being computer literate is so important in the modern world so why not visit the centre's ICT suite and improve your existing skills and learn some new ones? You'll find a very warm welcome and it's totally free."

For further information about using the ICT suite or becoming a volunteer, contact Patrick O'Brien at the centre in the first instance on 020 8883 4916 or patrick.o'brien@peabody.org.uk.



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Sainsbury's staff and charity workers raise awareness about autism

Awareness of autism

Staff at Sainsbury's and the TreeHouse centre in Muswell Hill got together on 12 April to host a day to promote the awareness of autism sufferers and the work that TreeHouse does to help young people and their families understand and live with the condition. The store raised over £150 on the day with a Taste & Donate stall and collection boxes.

Rare and threatened visitors

By Nick Young

As the winter weather continued well into March, so did sightings of winter birds in East Finchley, with Fenella Reed of Eastern Road reporting siskins and redpolls in her garden.

"The redpolls arrive usually before Christmas; the siskins usually as soon as there's some very cold weather. They've been with me over the winter for the past four years: a delightful addition to the garden as they grow brighter and brighter into their spring colours," says Fenella.

These colourful birds are small members of the finch family and are in fact present in the UK all year round, although both species tend to breed in northern England, Scotland and Wales and only tend to visit the London area during the winter.

The siskin has a streaky

yellow-green body and a distinct forked tail; as is the case with some finches, the female is paler and greyer than the male. They prefer coniferous forests but do venture further afield, especially into gardens, during the winter.

Redpolls are identified by their red foreheads, pale double wing-bars and dark-streaked rumps. Unfortunately, redpolls have suffered a decline in recent years and are now one of 52 species on the RSPB's "red list", which indicates the most threatened species in the British Isles.

Sticky fingers

By Janet Maitland

Police officers are to be equipped with portable fingerprint machines. The machines will be used by officers on patrol when people they suspect are involved in crime either lie about their identity or refuse to reveal it.

A scanner on the machine quickly records the suspect's fingerprint which is then immediately checked against fingerprints held at New Scotland Yard.

"This does not mean random ID checks," said Chief Superintendent Adrian Usher. "An officer can only request your fingerprint if they reasonably suspect you are involved in criminality and only if they cannot identify you or believe

you are giving false details."

Police believe that the machines will save a considerable amount of investigation time by quickly eliminating an innocent person from enquiries. They also think that, by confirming an identity, police may not need to make an arrest but can deal with someone by means of street bail, where an appointment is made for the person to attend a police station.

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YOUNG ARCHER

Something Wicked This Way Comes

Review by Daphne Chamberlain

Finchley Youth Theatre's latest production was dark, disturbing and thought-provoking. Based on a Ray Bradbury novel, but with additional characters and dialogue created by the company through improvisation, it explored what happened when the evil Mr Dark brought his carnival to town.

Directed by senior arts worker Liz Sacre, the young people worked on this project for six months. Liz told *THE ARCHER*: "We played around with the theme of time; wanting to have time again, wanting to fast forward to see what the future holds. We also explored the character of Mr Dark, looking at manipulation and threat."

"Both the angry girl and the bereaved mother were created early on; the blinding scene, and the scene where the mother has to choose between her girls and her dead son, were entirely devised by the young people. In the first improvisation her mother was restored to the angry girl once she had paid with her eyes, but the girl was therefore unable to see her. The thinking behind this is that going back, trying to capture something that has passed, is not a healthy thing and is destined to go wrong."

"These are very dark scenes and we talked a lot about the balance of the piece. Right up to the last week we were still wondering whether we should magically restore her sight as Dark dies (as the girls who had become Siamese twins were freed). The young people felt strongly that the girl should not regain her sight – and at the end needs to learn to trust people and allow them to help her."

Liz made sure that there was hope as well as tragedy in this piece, and I felt that the balance was helped too by taking advantage of the setting to show off some of the young people's brilliant circus skills. The acting was convincing, especially in the pivotal role of Mr Dark, who exuded evil.

Don't miss the Youth Theatre's next production!



Soloist Asagi Nakata

Catch an outstanding performance

By Betti Blatman

When I first saw Asagi Nakata compete in the North London Festival of Music, Dance and Drama eight years ago she was only 10 years old, and I was absolutely mesmerised by her performance. I have continued to attend her competitions and concerts ever since and it has been a privilege to witness her outstanding performances each time.

Although it's Asagi's last year at Latymer School, she has won a scholarship to attend the Royal Academy of Music later this year where she will continue her musical education.

There is an opportunity to see her perform on Saturday 18 May 2013 at 7.30 pm, with the Finchley Chamber Orchestra in association with the North London Festival of Music, Dance and Drama at Muswell Hill United Reformed Church, Tetherdown, N10 1NB.

Seen and heard
David Smith of Abbots Gardens, governor and former pupil of Holy Trinity Primary School, was interviewed at the school for BBC London television news on the day Baroness Thatcher died. A plaque in the entrance hall commemorates Margaret Thatcher opening the school in 1975 when she was Minister of Education.

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- **Newstead Parent & Toddler Group,** Thurs 9-12-30, Green Man Ctr. Sajni 8359 3460.
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Over 50 years of keeping fit

By Diana Cormack

Like The Kinks and the Saatchi brothers, who graced the corridors of the William Grimshaw School (now Fortismere) over 50 years ago, another group which was housed in the building then is still going strong.



Sheila Eyles has the ladies at full stretch. Photo by Diana Cormack

"I was an original member there 55 years ago," Susan Felix told *THE ARCHER*. "It was just after the birth of my second baby when I joined a keep fit club that met in the school". Now aged 84, Susan still belongs to that club but she is not the oldest by any means.

The Tetherdown Hall Ladies Over 50s Club has members ranging in age from 50 to 92, some of whom are East Finchley residents. They meet on Tuesday mornings in term time, including half terms, at Tetherdown Hall, Tetherdown Road, N10, where they are put through their keep fit paces by Sheila Eyles and Wendy Jones. These two ladies make sure that everyone can participate, despite the variety of physical conditions amongst the group.

Keeping mobile

"We have women with hip and knee replacements, as well as those with physical

disabilities or who've suffered a stroke," said Wendy, whose chair exercise work is very popular. Susan falls into that category as she has a walking disability, but she's certain it is the club that keeps her moving even if she can't join in all the activities. Many of these are done to a musical accompaniment provided by pianist Lawrence Estrey, a professional musician and local author.

Instructor Sheila emphasised how friendly and supportive of each other club members are, with newcomers always being introduced. The hour-long sessions cost £3 a time and are followed by a convivial coffee on the premises. Should you be interested in joining, just turn up on a Tuesday at Tetherdown Hall for a 10.30am start. If you wish, you can just sit and watch on your first visit for free. Whatever you decide to do, you can be sure of a warm welcome.

Ted Bagley: Arctic hero ... and demon bowler

By Daphne Chamberlain

THE ARCHER was very sorry to hear of the passing last month of Ted Bagley at the age of 90, following a hip replacement.

Featured in our pages last August in the white beret of the Arctic Convoys, he told us about the reality of existence in wartime Russia. In intense cold (minus 40C) and under heavy bombardment, the convoys brought vital supplies to people literally starving as they resisted German occupation.

It is something the Russians have never forgotten, but it was only in the last few months that our own Government announced that these veterans could apply for a medal. Learning the news in hospital, Ted said, "Jolly good. At long last!". Eve, his widow, has the relevant form, but has been told that, even if she does receive his medal, it may take some time.

Born in King Street, Ted lived in Church Lane from the age of five, and was a founder member of EFVRA (the East Finchley Village Residents' Association). Their Chair, Bob Owens, wrote, "Together with his wife, Eve, he was involved in many local organisations and charities. He expressed his views in our meetings with eloquence and humour, and always had something of interest to contribute. The little community of neighbours in Church Lane will miss him, and will remember him with great respect and affection."

Ted was always very active. A gym instructor in his youth, he played tennis and table-tennis, but bowling became one of his passions. He was President of both Glebelands Club and



Ted and Eve Bagley at home last year. Photo by Toni Morgan

Finchley Victoria, where he was a member for over 30 years. A qualified bowling instructor, he is remembered for his helpfulness to other players.

Ted and Eve spent many happy days, too, at East Finchley Allotments. Eve told us, "When

Ted's bad back and legs made it too difficult to continue, our very kind neighbour, Gavin, worked the plot for him".

We send our sympathy to Eve, who has received many cards of condolence "from all over the place".

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Rust to rust

They say you shouldn't speak ill of the dead, but I'm going to make an exception. As half the country mourned and the rest either cheered or went online to find out who That Cher was and if she's on Facebook, I knew it was time for me to put the boot in.

No one ever divided the country quite like Margaret Thatcher. Either she saved the country or she destroyed everything that was great about Great Britain. You either cheered her on or wished to see her burn in the fires of hell. And me, I wanted to be one of the stokers, turning up the furnace.

When I heard she'd gone I managed a hint of sorrow before doing what I did when she fell from power: celebrating. I opened the champagne and went all retro, listening to The Jam's Town Called Malice and Ghost Town by the Specials to remind me of the harm she'd done.

So why do I have no sense of human feeling for the woman who was our MP for 33 years and transformed the country into a land fit for millionaires? Well, apart from the fact she would have had none for me, where should I start?

The country she inherited in 1979 was the most equal it had ever been and poverty was falling, but her mad-cap economic policies quickly destroyed industry and replaced factories with three million unemployed. Yes, we had no jobs, but did have the longest dole queues and the fastest rising poverty in Europe. Next, she happily sat back and watched the IRA hunger strikers die and couldn't understand why she was hated for it.

She didn't see unions as partners in the way forward, but as enemies and there was something creepy about the way she relished crushing the miners. The more she spoke about Victorian values, the more it seemed that she wanted to return to the days of the workhouse and put a rough sleeper in every doorway. Her oh-so-popular sell-off of council housing created today's housing crisis.

And her 'crowning glory' the Falklands War was the result of incompetent policies. If the Argentines had waited another six months the ships that made the task force possible would have been scrapped or sold and the Buenos Aires branch of the Boy Scouts would have been able to capture the place.

I could go on. I could ask how the ConDems can claim to have to take a chainsaw to society in the name of austerity, but can still find £10million for her funeral, but I won't. Instead I'll just quote the words of her predecessor as Tory leader on hearing that she'd lost power. In one word, rejoice!



The Manor Fitness Centre crew get fit for Red Nose Day

Class-a-thon day at fitness centre

On Saturday 16 March a special day of classes to raise money for Comic

Relief took place at The Manor Health and Leisure Centre, Fortis Green.

Marta Sterbakova, Schwinn indoor cycling coach, organised classes for five hours. These consisted of Step and Tone, Bosu, Latin Dance, Aquacise, Circuit, Studio Cycling and Ashtanga Yoga. At the end of the day members, staff and instructors at The Manor raised an amazing £1,054.40 for the Red Nose Day appeal.

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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. Michelle 07767 804 564
- **Tae Kwon Do** for children & adults at Finchley Lido Mon & Fri 7-9pm 07949 612 706. www.taekwondo-uktd.co.uk
- **Tai Chi** class at EF Methodist Ch, Weds 1pm. James 8883 3308 or james@taiji.co.uk
- **Tennis club** with four clay courts off Southern Road. Call 8883 7723.
- **Yoga, breathing & relaxation**. Weekly drop-in classes - N3, N6, N10. Phone Judy on 07956 375607.
- **Yoga**, pregnancy yoga, meditation classes. Call Sunnah 07941 321 772 www.stretchingpeople.co.uk.

Music, Dance & Creative Arts

- **Art Classes**. Call Henry on 8888 5133.
- **Ballroom Dance Classes**, Wednesday eves for beginners & improvers. St Mary's Church Hall, N3. 8444 0280.
- **Ballroom & Latin American Dance Classes** - beginners & improvers. Wed & Fri eve, Bishop Douglass Sch. 8207 2323.
- **Creative writing classes** in informal, friendly atmosphere. Tel Sallie Rose 020 8444 7217.
- **East Finchley Writers Group**, Weds at the Old White Lion. Contact Carola 8883 5808 or Lilian 8444 1793.
- **East Finchley Poetry Writing Workshops**. Monthly on Saturdays. Contact Dennis Evans 8346 9528.
- **Ladies Keep Fit** Class for over 50s. Tues 10.30-11.30am at Tetherdown Hall. Sheila 8444 0084.
- **Memory Lane Singing Club** - friendly singing club meets every Friday in Finchley. Call Valerie 8458 4508.
- **Over 50s Tea Dance** at Christ Church, North Finchley. Every Weds, 1pm. 020 8444 0280.
- **Learn to sing** at Finchley Methodist Church, Ballards La. Call 8888 4412.
- **Symphonic Wind Orchestra** Contact Caroline Egan 8340 2706
- **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

Listen carefully, I shall say zees only once . . .

Michelle of the Resistance is back in the café with more vital information for René and the rest of the staff in the Garden Suburb Theatre's production of 'Allo 'Allo.

Based on the popular television comedy series by Jeremy Lloyd and David Croft, the play follows the hapless café owner as he tries to keep his wife Edith happy and in the dark about his dalliances with his waitresses, while dealing on a daily basis with the Nazis, the Gestapo and the local Resistance.

You can catch all the characters at The Bull Theatre, High Street, Barnet, from 9-11 May at 8pm and also at 3pm on 11 May. Tickets cost £12 and £10 for concessions and are available at www.ticketsource.co.uk/gardensuburbtheatre and from the box office on 020 7723 6609. All information is on the Garden Suburb Theatre website www.gardensuburbtheatre.org.uk



Good moaning... a scene from the Garden Suburb Theatre's production of 'Allo 'Allo

Dual art show at Phoenix

By Sheila Armstrong

Work by two different artists from the East Finchley Open group complemented each other well at a show in the foyer of the Phoenix in March, when Adam Justice Mills and Jane Dorner had a joint exhibition.

Apart from being such a good visual match both artists' works were concerned with memories, and both were about vivid colours, layering and abstraction. Jane Dorner's blown glass works were exhibited in photos by Gudawer Kalirai who focused his camera very effectively on details of her glass pieces.

It is great to have the opportunity to show work at the Phoenix where many people pass the pictures, but often they are given only a quick sidelong glance as people queue to get into the auditorium to see the film.

It is frequently really advantageous to be able to view pictures from a distance; think Monet and the Impressionists, and in this case from the café at the other side of the upper foyer. Viewing at leisure with a cup of coffee or glass of wine made appreciation of Jane and Adam's work a rewarding experience.



Caged Light, one of the works by Adam Justice-Mills that was on show at the Phoenix

All the fun of the fair... but no pig chasing

The Fair in the Square will be held in Pond Square, Highgate Village, N6 on Saturday 15 June from 12.30pm to 5.30pm. Everyone is invited to enjoy this annual event with live music, children's activities, 150 stalls and entertainment for all. Find out more at www.fairinthesquare.co.uk

Pond Square is a remnant of the ancient Highgate village green and has been the scene of a Highgate Fair for hundreds of years. John Lloyd's History of Highgate reprints a notice from July 1744: "This is to give notice, that Highgate's Fair will be kept on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday next, in a pleasant walk in the middle of the town. On Wednesday a pig will be turned loose, and he who takes it by the tail and throws it over his head shall have it."

Baa baa

Alas, in June 2013, no pig chasing will take place, although there will be sheep in St Michael's Church forecourt where the Sheep Show, a humorous educational live stage show about sheep and wool will take place.

Children will enjoy being creative in the kids' tent, cheer for Punch & Judy, have a go on the bungee fly, dance to the Hornsey School for Girls Steel Band, and practise their

juggling skills at the So & So Circus Workshop.

The Fair is once again organising a Country Fair arranged in conjunction with the Highgate Horticultural Society. There are 17 different classes for children and adults to enter ranging from a vegetable or fruit monster to a basket of summer flowers, lemon drizzle cake or handicrafts. All are welcome to join in and entry forms can be downloaded from the website www.fairinthesquare.co.uk

What's On...

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

Thursday 9 May

- **Big Local Meeting** to discuss regeneration plans for Grange Estate and surrounding roads in East Finchley, 6.30pm at Boyden's Pantry, 42 Church Lane, N2. All welcome.

Saturday 11 May

- **Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society's annual plant sale**, 10.0 am-12 noon. Fellowship House, Willifield Way (opposite Green), NW11. Entry free, raffle for Chelsea Flower Show tickets.
- **Wild Flower Walk** in Coldfall Wood, led by naturalist David Bevan, 2.0pm. Details from www.coldfallwoods.co.uk

Sunday 12 May

- **Dickens in Barnet**: guided walk with City of London guide Paul Baker. Explore the many Dickens connections with Barnet and Finchley. Meet High Barnet station 11am. Details 020 8440 6805 or visit www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net
- **Free concert at East Finchley Methodist Church**, High Road, opposite Creighton Avenue, 7.30pm: Opera Scenes and Personal Favourites. Sopranos Lucy Elizabeth Elston, Emma Davis, Claudia Haussmann and Alice Usher, tenor Laurence Milne Panter and baritone Rory Mulchrone perform scenes from Mozart operas, Puccini's La Bohème, and works by Handel, Donizetti, Schumann, Lysenko and Bernstein. Free admission with collection in aid of mental health charity MIND. Venue fully accessible to people with disabilities.

Saturday 18 May

- **Battle of Barnet**: guided walk with City of London guide Paul Baker. Explore the famous battlefield of 1471. Meet at junction of Great North Road and Hadley Green Road, 2.30pm. Details 020 8440 6805 or visit www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net
- **Finchley Chamber Orchestra concert**, Muswell Hill United Reformed Church, Tetherdown, N10, at 7.30pm. Programme includes Mozart's Symphony No. 40 in G minor, Saint-Saëns Piano Concerto No. 2 and Beethoven's Symphony No. 4 in B flat major. Tickets: £12 (concessions £10 and under-16s £6) available at door. Details from www.finchleychamber.org

Friday 24 May

- **Barnet Ghosts**: guided walk with City of London guide Paul Baker. A spooky tour of High Barnet and Monken Hadley, the second most haunted village in England. Meet High Barnet station 7.30pm. Details 020 8440 6805 or visit www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net



Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page", The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE or e-mail the-archer@lineone.net. Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be printed. Contact details can be withheld on request at publication. We reserve the right to abridge letters for reasons of space.

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

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

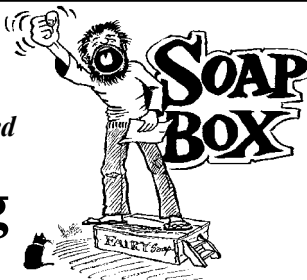
Dear Editor,

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.

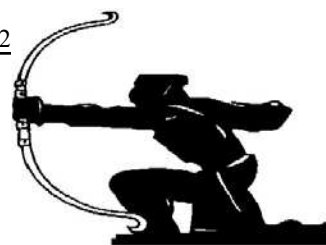
Yours faithfully,
Briget Kelly,
Address supplied.

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



Jeweller hits a high in London skyscraper

By Isabelle Aron

Local artist Vicki Ambery-Smith has been making jewellery and ornate boxes inspired by architecture around the world for nearly 30 years. Recently she was commissioned to create the jewellery line for London's newest skyscraper, The Shard.

The line includes earrings, cufflinks, pendant necklaces, and brooches. "For a brooch it works nicely as an elegant shape which is quite abstract; you wouldn't necessarily realise it's The Shard."

The pendant earrings are most recognisable as The Shard, and while there's no ring in the range ("They asked me to think about a ring, but what on earth could I do for a ring?!") The Shard was very busy on Valentine's Day, which meant a good day for business for Vicki. "They had no fewer than 23 couples who got engaged up at the top. The shop did really well that day."

Although she's the jeweller to The Shard, Vicki doesn't limit herself solely to jewellery. "I don't really do diamonds and pearls," she says. "It's small-scale 3D that I'm interested in."

Intricate boxes

She also creates small boxes, which can function as condiment sets. The weirdest piece she's ever made was a condiment set inspired by the A4 Westway flyover, commissioned as a gift for a man who'd worked on the development for 30 years but was retiring. This was slightly less glamorous material to work with than The



Vicki wears her Shard-inspired brooch.

Photo by Isabelle Aron

Shard. "It wasn't a promising start," she says, "but it worked out all right in the end!"

As well as famous London landmarks, and buildings around the world, Vicki has also created pieces based on local architecture, inspired by Edwardian houses in the area, from brooches of the stained-glass front doors to delicate boxes that replicate the houses as a whole.

Vicki's Shard-inspired jewellery can be found in The Shard shop, and you can find out more online, at www.vickiamberysmith.co.uk, about where else her work is exhibited.

Circus comes to town

There's no need to run away with the circus when youngsters can learn acrobatics, trapeze, tightwire and juggling right in the heart of East Finchley.

Airborne Circus have been teaching circus skills to children aged 8 to 19 at Finchley Youth Theatre for the last 18 months and now classes are being extended to take children aged 5-7.

Sessions are run by Finchley resident Adam Cohen, a leading youth circus teacher in the UK, who says they give youngsters an exciting and alternative way to develop their physical, mental and social skills.

He says: "Young people improve physical fitness including strength, flexibility, coordination and balance, as well as social and emotional skills like their ability to focus, problem solve,



Youngsters try out their skills with Airborne Circus

cooperate and communicate."

Airborne Circus's classes run on a Monday and Wednesday afternoon at Finchley Youth Theatre. They also have two Friday morning classes for children aged 5+ who are home educated and taster workshops for adults who just want to have a go and try it for themselves.

Find out more at www.airbornecircus.com or contact Adam by email at adam@airbornecircus.com



New number for health care services

A new NHS 111 phone line launched last month for patients in Barnet to access unscheduled healthcare.

While 999 remains the number to call for serious emergencies, the new NHS 111 phone number gives patients a single point to access the most appropriate care when the need is urgent but not life threatening.

NHS 111 operates round the clock, 365 days a year; calls to the number from both landlines and mobile phones are free.

NHS 111 is staffed by trained advisers and supported by clinicians, who will ask callers questions to assess their symptoms, give them the healthcare advice they need and direct them to the right local service as quickly as possible.

Services that callers will be referred to can include their GP surgery, another doctor, urgent care centre, walk-in services, community nurses, emergency dentist or late-opening pharmacies. The new NHS 111 number will be linked up to the emergency services so if patients do need an ambulance, one will be called for them.

You should call NHS 111 if it's not a 999 emergency but you still need help fast and you don't think it can wait for an appointment with your GP.

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