



Gathering of the Soil

As we enter 2014, the year that marks a century since the outbreak of the First World War, there will be many local, national and international events commemorating the anniversary.



Nathan Mann, right, with the Duke of Edinburgh.

One of the largest and most symbolic took place on 11 November when 62 schoolchildren from Britain joined 62 pupils from Belgium in a ceremony called The Gathering of the Soil.

This was the first stage in creating a Flanders Fields Memorial Garden in London to honour those who fought and died during the First World War and provide

a lasting symbol of hope and peace. The garden will be located alongside The Guards Chapel at Wellington Barracks, adjacent to Buckingham Palace.

The Belgian schoolchildren collected soil from 70 military cemeteries across Flanders and put it into sandbags, which were loaded onto a gun carriage and brought back to London where the soil

was scattered on the site of the garden. Whitefield School, NW2, was one of the British schools invited to send a pupil to both events. Nathan Mann, and his mother Nicola Mann, represented the schools and Nathan was one of a small number of students chosen to meet the Duke of Edinburgh on the day.



Margie on the ukulele.

Fancy picking up the ukulele?

There's a chance for children to learn an infectiously enjoyable musical instrument with the arrival of an after-school ukulele club.

Musician Margie Jammy is hoping to run the club for two terms, resulting in a performance at a local summer festival.

Margie is a ukulele fan and an established children's activities leader. Find out more about the classes at www.margiegianni.wix.com/ukeclub

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Regular events at the Ann Owens centre

The Ann Owens Centre in Oak Lane runs a wide variety of regular events for older people. Here are some of them:

1. Arts and crafts for all abilities, 10am to 12 noon, Thursdays.
2. Computer suite at Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2: free to use every weekday except Wednesday afternoon. Booking essential, and at least 24 hours in advance. Call 020 8432 1418.
3. Hear to Help Hearing Aid Clinic: last Thursday of every month. To book, call 020 8369 5325 or 07423 430 383.
4. Nail cutting: for older people having difficulty in cutting toe or fingernails. Every Wednesday at Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2. Call 020 8432 1423 for booking and details.



This poster welcomed crowds to the Brookland winter fair.

Excitement at school fair

On Saturday 7 December Brookland Junior School hosted their Winter Fair. This annual fundraising event has been organised for over 35 years by the Parent Association and is a firm fixture on the school's calendar.

Much to the delight of the children this year's fair was brimming with excitement. A wide variety of entertainment was on offer including outdoor water balls, a fabulous magician, Santa's grotto, delicious culinary dishes from around the globe, a fun photo booth, plenty of artisan stalls, chess competitions and an online auction.

Funding cut

This year's fundraising was particularly dedicated to the PA's attempt to maintain the

treasured school swimming pool and to prevent its closure since Barnet Council has now cut all funding.

Twelve months of the glorious pasture

It's not too late to find a beautiful calendar for 2014. Volunteers at Long Lane Pasture have their own again this year, packed full of photos of the pasture in all its glory throughout the seasons.

Money raised from sales goes to support the upkeep of the wildlife area alongside the North Circular Road. The calendar costs £5 and is available to buy on Saturday mornings between 10am and noon at the pasture opposite the fire station in Long Lane.

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