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CARS & COURIERS

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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Champions: from the left Alma Strang, Arun Kapoor-Parsons, Louis Girling and Mingus Clark.

Fantastic four are quiz champions

By Jo Girling

Some of you may have seen the Fantastic Four film recently, but Martin Primary School can boast its own set of superheroes after winning the title of National Quiz Club Champions 2015.

The team is Alma Strang, Year 3, Mingus Clark, Year 4, Arun Kapoor-Parsons, Year 5, and Louis Girling, Year 6. A special mention must also go to William Morrison in Year 3, who was part of the semi-final team.

In January, Martin competed against 12 other London schools in the first heats of a general knowledge quiz organised by the Quiz Club. After winning their London heats, they faced the highest scoring schools from across the country: 12 final teams whittled down from an initial 1,700.

In the final against the Immanuel and St Andrew School from Streatham, the Martin team won the title by just 10 points on the final question.

Mingus said: "It was close at the end, but I thought we could win as we worked really well as a team throughout the whole tournament."

Tube ticket office to close and regular staff to leave

By Sheila Armstrong

Regular staff are being moved out of East Finchley tube station and the ticket office is to close by January 2016 as part of Transport for London's modernisation programme.

Ticket offices around us on the Northern line will close even sooner. High Barnet's and Highgate's will go by the middle of September, Kentish Town's and Archway's in October. Finchley Central, West Finchley and Totteridge and Whetstone have already lost their offices.

Machines, not people

With the disappearance of ticket office staff, travellers will need to rely on machines, online top-ups and contactless payments. Transport for London says all machines have been improved so staff can resolve problems on the spot.

Machines will sell most types of ticket with a few exceptions such as annual season tickets, which will be available online.

Our two regular station staff, Michael Haynes and Nino

Santos, will no longer be at East Finchley but will remain working at various stations in the area between Finchley and High Barnet.

Goodbye Michael and Nino

Talking to *THE ARCHER*, Nino said he will be sorry to leave East Finchley particularly as he has enjoyed working with the N2 Gardeners group on the Station in Bloom project.

Transport for London says adequate staff will still be deployed at all stations "equipped with portable hand-held devices loaded with information needed to help customers get around, including maps, real-time service levels, Journey Planner, ticketing options and prices and local information."

See Soapbox, page 11

Happy to be here

By Nick Young

East Finchley is the happiest place in London! Of course this is something that we at *THE ARCHER* have known for some time, but we now have the word of *Time Out* on this as well.

The magazine describes the High Road in particular as "groovy-yet-discreet" and East Finchley in general as an area

that "affords residents all the benefits of hipster culture while smugly wallowing in the chilled and reclusive charm of a leafy provincial bolthole". Hopefully they mean that in a good way.

East Finchley is also one of the friendliest places in London, the winner being nearby Muswell Hill, which was also a runner-up in the 'happiest' category.

These findings come from *Time Out's* Great City Living Survey 2015, published last month.

Continued on page 2

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

If you have a story for us, please contact us at the above address.
Comments to THE ARCHER may be published unless clearly marked 'Not for publication' within the text.

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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

Leisure 020 8489 0000
Alexandra Palace 020 8365 2121
East Finchley Library 020 8883 2664
Gt North Leisure Park 0870 240 6020
Muswell Hill Odeon 0870 505 0007
Phoenix Cinema 020 8444 6789
Tourist Info Service 0870 128 8080
Warner Cinema Village 020 8446 9933

Transport

BR Enquiries 0845 7484950
City Airport 020 7646 0088
London Transport 020 7222 1234
National Express 08705 808080
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Drinkline 0800 917 8282
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MIND 020 8343 5700
National Blood Centre 0845 7711 7711

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Victim Support 0845 303 0900

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Edgware General 020 8952 2381
Finchley Memorial 020 8349 7500
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Royal Free 020 7794 0500
St Luke's 020 8219 1800
Whittington 020 7272 3070
Western Eye Hospital 020 7886 6666

OAP's Advice

Barnet Age Concern 020 8346 3511
Contact (N2) 020 8444 1162
Independent Age 0800 319 6789
Help the Aged 0808 800 6565

Planning Applications

Barnet Council

Archer Academy Playing Fields, Stanley Road, N2

Details of community use agreement. Conditions pursuant to planning permission dated April 2014.

87 Bedford Road, N2

Roof extension, with two rear dormer windows and three front roof lights, to facilitate loft conversion.

1 Chamberlain Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

Cemetery, East End Road, N2
Rebuilding section of west boundary wall.

209 Creighton Avenue, N2

Roof extension, with hip to gable, rear dormer window and one front roof light, to facilitate loft conversion.

260 Creighton Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear and side extension. Plus lawful development certificate for roof extension.

10 Deansway, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Roof extension, with rear and side dormer windows and two front roof lights, to facilitate loft conversion.

34 Durham Road, N2

Alterations to ground floor fenestration, including adding rear double doors and moving front entrance.

10 Fairlawn Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Roof extension, including rear dormer windows to facilitate loft conversion.

Side of 56 Fortis Green, N2

BT Openreach cabinet, box, pillar, pedestal or similar.

101 Hertford Road, N2

Single-storey part side and rear extension.

122 High Road, N2

New shopfront. Internal alterations to provide disabled access WC. Extraction duct to rear.

336 High Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

First floor flat, 2 Chasewood Lodge, 366 Long Lane, N2

Roof extension, with rear dormer window and one front roof light, to facilitate loft conversion.

382 Long Lane, N2

Single-storey rear/side extension.

2 Sedgemere Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

31 Summerlee Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

Haringey Council

44 Aylmer Road, N2

Partial rear ground floor extension. New flat roof over ground floor. New clear toughened glass guarding.

7 Beech Drive, N2

Certificate of lawfulness for rear dormer.

44 Beech Drive, N2

Basement and associated works, including light wells.

Albion Cottage, Fortis Green, N2

Listed building consent for internal alterations to rear extension.

23 Ringwood Avenue, N2

Ground floor rear extension and internal modifications. Replacement of front dormer with two new separate ones.

24 Ringwood Avenue, N2

First floor side extension and loft conversion.

Austerity and mental health

By Diana Cormack

East Finchley station was the penultimate meeting point for Walk the Talk 2015, the aim of which was 'to raise awareness of social policies that are leading to psychological distress'.

From 17 – 21 August psychologists, counsellors and clients walked 100 miles from the British Psychological Society's office in Leicester to their London HQ, with some sleeping rough overnight or camping out in fields. On the way they visited centres connected with homelessness, food poverty and affected by the benefits system.

Organiser Stephen Weatherhead, a clinical psychologist, told The Archer that all in all 62 people had taken part, with others joining en route from



The Walk the Talk marchers at East Finchley Station.

Photo Mike Coles

different points. Another 25 joined at East Finchley including four from EFAB's weekly Talkie-Walkies group.

Happy to be here

Continued from front page

In it over 10,000 Londoners were asked about their lives, and how they rated their neighbourhoods.

The saddest area in the capital was Dagenham, the most stressed was East Ham, the best for families was said to be Twickenham and the most

drunk were people in Clapton.

What makes you happy about living in East Finchley? Email the-archer@lineone.net or drop us a line on Facebook and Twitter @TheArcherN2. You can also write to us: The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE.

See also Ricky Savage, p9.

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Restaurant shake-up along the High Road

By Diana Cormack

The shake-up of eating places along the High Road that we first reported on last month has continued with two more restaurants going through refurbishment and opening with completely new menus.

Former Italian restaurant Va Pensiero is now Mama Jack, a gourmet burger restaurant, and former eastern Mediterranean restaurant Mezem has been replaced by Finch Restaurant and Lounge, offering British and international dishes.

Both these restaurants are reopening under their previous management but they follow the demise of Quality Tandoori, which closed after 34 years on the High Road, to be replaced under new management by Bangkok Lounge, serving Thai food.

New names, new offers

Finch Restaurant and Lounge proprietor Andrew Theodorou told *THE ARCHER* he hopes the new restaurants along the High Road will serve to raise

the standard for local diners.

His establishment is offering a 20% reduction to N2 residents on their first visit (proof of address required). Service starts with breakfast at 8am running through to dinner up to 10pm. There is a menu for children and Sunday lunches. On Friday and Saturday nights clients can enjoy a drink from the late licensed bar in the lounge area.

At Mama Jack the Union Jack burger takes top spot on the menu card with fish and chicken among the choices too. Vegetarians are catered for and there is a children's menu. Cocktails are available at the licensed bar. The restaurant is open from 11.30am to 11pm, and diners can get 20% off the main menu charges if they eat between 11.30am and 5.30pm.

Warm up for the winter festival

The first meeting to kick off the 2015 East Finchley Winter Festival will be held on Tuesday 29 September from 7.30pm to 9pm at Martin Primary School, Plane Tree Walk, off the High Road.

The successful winter festival has been held on the High Road for the past three years. To continue its success new ideas, volunteers, support and money are needed.

Roger Chapman, Chair of the Trust responsible for running the festival, said: "This event is a great opportunity to have fun and be involved in local voluntary action.

We are looking for people of all ages and backgrounds to make a contribution. Come along and share your ideas for making the festival better and to find out how you can get involved and contribute."

This year's East Finchley winter festival will be held on the High Road from 10am to 5pm on Saturday 5 December.



Feat of endurance: The record-breaking push-up session under way at Mighteefit.

Library march

Organisers of a march to save East Finchley Library are urging everyone to turn up and take part for a couple of hours on Saturday 12 September.

Children and families are being asked to swell the ranks of the marchers campaigning to save the library from closure or down-sizing under Barnet Council's budget cuts. Other Barnet libraries are under threat too.

Actor, writer and local mother Rebecca Front will launch the march at East Finchley Library at 10.15am. It will then go along East End Road to Church End Library where it will be joined by a brass band and a bus before heading up Ballards Lane to North Finchley Library.

Barnet Council is due to make its final decision on the future of the libraries at meetings this month and next. For more details about the march visit www.efug.org.uk or email savebarnetlibraries@hotmail.com

Strong arm tactics break a record

It's been a long wait but finally news has come through that keep-fitters at an East Finchley gym have helped to break a world record.

Back in March, Mighteefit Health Studio in Fortis Green was one of 43 venues in 12 different countries to take part in the Push-Ups for a Purpose event.

People of all ages sought to raise money for the Jay Fund, which helps children with cancer, by breaking the record for the most push-ups done in one minute around the world at the same time.

The record attempt day took on something of a party atmosphere, with participants receiving encouragement from gym director Tee Tarjan to the sound of music provided by local DJ Pat "Have Mercy" Leacock.

A total of 42 people at Mighteefit were able to complete

1,118 push-ups in the minute, raising £261 for the charity. They, and everyone else who took part around the world, then had to wait for several months before the Guinness Book of Records was able to confirm that the record had been broken, with over 50,000 push-ups having been completed in the same minute.

Push-Ups for a Purpose was the inspiration of American fitness expert Martin Rooney, himself an individual world record holder (having done 1,033 push-ups in 23 minutes last year). A live message from him to all participants had been live-screened at the gym just before the record attempt began.

Personal shoppers

EFAB and Advocacy in Barnet (AIB) are working together to recruit and train local people to get involved with the Personal Shopper Service, helping those who are less able to do their own shopping.

Many people have signed up in order to receive help, by either being taken out to shop, having their shopping done for them and delivered by a volunteer, or doing an "online shop" over the internet together.

All EFAB Shoppers will be given training and support,

along with Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, with no cost to themselves. To join up to become an EFAB Shopper, or to register your interest in receiving the service, please contact Heena Cornwell on 020 8201 3415 or email heena@advocacyinbarnet.org.uk.

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A celebration of art, music, drama and film

Final preparations are underway for this year's East Finchley Arts Festival, which runs at All Saints', Durham Road, and the Phoenix Cinema from 3-11 October. Here director Geoffrey Hanson introduces the full line-up:

Saturday 3 October to Sunday 11 October

Art exhibition: Enjoy our art exhibition every evening from 6pm during the festival and at weekends from noon until 10pm. Art of every kind is for sale, including original oils and water colours, prints, digital art, photographic art, ceramics, sculpture and individually designed jewellery. Twenty five artists, local and international are taking part and 40% of the selling price of each work sold will be donated to the two charities we are supporting this year, Noah's Ark Children's Hospice and the Harington Scheme.



Paul Archibald of LMP (Tuesday).

Saturday 3 October

• **Punch and Judy:** Geoff Felix presents his traditional Punch & Judy Show in All Saints' Church garden, or inside if it's wet. Admission is free with a bucket collection.

• **Come & Sing Handel's Messiah:** We invite you to join us in performing Handel's *Messiah*,



Some of the art that will be on show at the East Finchley Arts Festival at All Saints Church.

conducted by David Lardi. There will be an afternoon rehearsal from 3-6pm, followed by a 7.30pm performance. Refreshments will be provided. Bring your own copy of the music if you have one. Copies will be available. Book your place (telling us your voice): email: eastfinarts@btinternet.com or phone 020 3509 6418. £15 to sing. £5 for audience.

Sunday 4 October

• **Martin School Choir, Samba Band and soloists:** Performance at 2.30pm. Admission is free with a bucket collection.

• **Greenwich Soul Choir & Band:** An evening of the best of soul music from classic to modern – Four Tops, Stevie Wonder, Sam Smith and Emeli Sande – something for everyone who loves this genre of music. Directed by Abi Gilchrist. Performance from 7.30pm. Tickets: £20 / £15/ £10.

Monday 5 October

• **Michael Broadway:** Michael Broadway plays his Orchestrelle Company "Push Up Pianola" of 1914 in a programme of music by Holbrooke, Quilter, Albeniz, Ireland, Stanford, Casella and notably the *Tarantella Diabolica* by John Blood, a work virtually unplayable except on the pianola, 7.30pm. Tickets: £15/ 10/ £5.

Tuesday 6 October

• **London Mozart Players:** With works by Handel, Barber, Hanson, Copland and Schubert,

this is a welcome return visit of the renowned LMP joined by distinguished trumpeter Paul Archibald who breathes life into festival director Geoffrey Hanson's new work for trumpet



Dynamic ensemble Kosmos (Friday).

and chamber orchestra. They present an evening of distinguished music making from 7.30pm. Tickets: £20/ £15/ £10.

Wednesday 7 October

• **Divertimenti, string quintet:** This long established group of players has a well-deserved reputation for excellence of playing and choice of repertoire, here including Mozart, Smyth and Schubert. Tickets: £20/ £15/ £10.

Thursday 8 October

• **Kevin Moore in Crocodiles in Cream:** A portrait of Lewis Carroll by David Horlock, touring in celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the first publication of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* - a moving and compelling one-man show that has toured the world. Performance at 7.30pm. Tickets: £15/ £10/ £5.

Friday 9 October

• **Kosmos Ensemble:** Sophisticated jazz glides magically into wild Gypsy fiddling, emotive Jewish music into hot-blooded tango, Arabic and Turkish



improvisation into Greek melodies. As described by Richard Morrison, chief music critic of *The Times*: "telepathic rapport, dazzling virtuosity, serious scholarship, intellectual curi-

osity and impeccable musicianship. I defy you not to be mesmerised." Performance at 7.30pm. Tickets: £20/ £15/ £10.

Saturday 10 October

• **Massive Violins:** Seven singing cellists perform their genius versions of rock and pop classics, from Queen to Eminem via Abba, Clean Bandit, Beach Boys, Britney Spears and even some Mozart. It's a good laugh. Performance at 7.30pm. Tickets: £20/ £15/ £10.

Sunday 11 October

• **Brassed Off (15):** Screening at the Phoenix Cinema of the 1997 film starring Ewan McGregor, Pete Postlethwaite, Tara Fitzgerald and Jim Carter. This a typically British bittersweet comedy about a Yorkshire mining town turning to music for inspiration when faced with the loss of its way of life. From 12 noon. Tickets: £9.50/ £7 from Phoenix Box Office www.phoenixcinema.co.uk or 020 8444 6789.

• **Pop Up Opera:** Back to All Saints' for a 7.30pm staged performance of Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri* (*Italian Girl in Algiers*) from this talented young group of performers. Tickets: £20/ £15/ £10.

Booking information

Book online via Ticket Source: www.eastfinchleyarts.ticket-source.co.uk. Book in person at Black Gull Books, 121 High Road, 020 8444 4717. Buy tickets at the door, if available. (no credit cards). Full details at our website: www.eastfinchleyartsfestival.org.uk



Singing cellists Massive Violins. (Saturday 10th)



String quintet Divertimenti (Wednesday).

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Life inside a Russian prison

By Nick Young

Images of life inside a Russian prison during a theatre festival organised by East Finchley resident Alex Dower (pictured below) were on show recently at the Phoenix Cinema.



After meeting the Russian theatrical director Kirill Serbrennikov, Alex was invited to direct the festival project at Prison Colony 29 at Perm in the Ural Mountains in 2009.

"I didn't think anything would come of it," he told *THE ARCHER*. "Apparently I am the first foreigner to be allowed to

to teach the prisoners an acting technique that he himself had learned at the School of Science of Acting.

One prisoner was able to utilise these techniques to overcome a nervous laugh at a subsequent parole hearing, and after his release he got a place at a local drama academy.

Alex found the prison staff very helpful. "They saw the beneficial effect it had," he said. "Afterwards, the prison's governor said that the project had achieved more with his men in two weeks than a team of five psychiatrists had achieved in five years."

Visual records

Alex was accompanied by two photographers who recorded the project: Sebastian Lister, a documentary and portrait photographer, and Sergey Ponomarev, an award-winning photographer who has worked in war zones around the world. "It was unbelievable," said Sebastian. "All of the prisoners were very friendly towards me."

A film crew has made a

documentary of the project, but it has been shown only on Russian television. Alex had planned a similar project at a women's prison near Moscow but his permission to work in prisons in Russia was withdrawn in 2012.

His company, Creating Freedom, is run from East Finchley and has been involved in projects in prisons, refugee camps and orphanages in Lebanon and Australia as well as Russia.

For more details about Creating Freedom, visit www.creatingfreedom.co.uk. Sebastian's photographs can be seen at www.lensculture.com/sebastian-lister.



Two of Sebastian Lister's photos.

work within a prison there."

Acting beats psychiatry

He planned to stage three adaptations of short stories, one of which was written by one of the prisoners. Working via a translator, Alex was able



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The Archer's John Dearing presents the cheque to Maureen Clemetson. Photo Mike Coles

Fun on the field

Some of the funds raised from the sale of The Archer tea towels over the last year have been used to buy play and sport equipment for the Monday Club. Our finance manager John Dearing handed over a cheque to the youth club's organiser Maureen Clemetson during an activities session on Martin Primary School playing fields.

Fun day

The Monday Club hosted its own family fun day in the summer. There was a stage where visitors were entertained by a youth dance group, solo singers and saxophone players.

Five-a-side football was played on the field at Martin Primary School and there was a

bouncy castle, again donated by The Archer using money raised from our tea towel sales.

Monday Club leader Maureen Clemetson said: "There was something for everyone and it all went well. With so much going on by the end of the day I was ready to go home and put my feet up!"

Venue for coffee & chat

The Coffee and Chat social mornings run by EFAB have now settled in a new venue, the Clissold Arms in Fortis Green, from 10.30am to midday on Mondays.

Regulars have been dropping in, and new faces are always welcome. Tea, coffee and biscuits are just £1 a head and EFAB Friends are on hand with local community information for all to share. More information at www.efab.org.uk.

School history

Education in East Finchley will be the theme for the Finchley Society's outreach meeting being held at Holy Trinity School, Eagans Close, at 8pm on Thursday 24 September.

You can hear about the oldest schools up to the present day with the opening of the new Archer Academy building. Speakers will be David Smith, Roger Chapman and Lucy Harrison. All welcome. Non members £2. Refreshments available.

Cooking skills sharing sessions

A new session to help those wanting to learn, or improve, basic cooking skills will be starting soon on Thursday afternoons. EFAB Friends with flair in the kitchen are working together to devise simple healthy recipes which can be prepared on a budget, and will demonstrate their recipe to a small group of learners, who can then eat together afterwards.

The sessions are planned to be on Thursdays from 4.45pm to 7.30pm at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2, and will have a small cost involved to cover ingredients. To register your interest in attending, please write to us@efab.org.uk



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A good read anywhere in the world! Photo Ian Cormack

Is this *THE ARCHER*'s longest trip?

Diana and Ian Cormack recently made a 5,000km road trip in Western Australia. They spent a month in the country's largest state, on a round trip from Perth down to Augusta and back up to Exmouth in the north-west (the furthest point permitted in their hire car).

Here, having stopped off at remote coastal resorts en route for some scuba diving, Ian accomplished his long-held ambition to swim with whale sharks.

The only glitch on the journey was that Ian lost his *ARCHER* diary. A search ensued and an expensive mobile call traced it

to a motel in Jurien Bay over 1,000km south. So the drive back from Exmouth to Perth had to be via that motel, though in all honesty there weren't many other routes to choose from!

Of course, a copy of *THE ARCHER* accompanied them and was given an airing at the Tropic of Capricorn.

The art of success

Former Institute teacher Henry Hagger has reached the finals of the Sunday Times/Smith and Williamson watercolour competition for the second year running. His entry will be exhibited in the Mall Galleries, near Trafalgar Square, from Monday 14 to Saturday 19 September.

A Muswell Hill resident, he taught painting and drawing at The Institute for 20 years, until it was relocated out of this area. From this

month he will be taking private classes. For further information, please contact 020 8888 5133 or henryhagger@yahoo.co.uk.

From the basement of Avenue House

By Daphne Chamberlain

Who doesn't love the idea of a house with an underground passage? You have until the end of September to see a tunnel that still leads from Avenue House into the surrounding grounds. You can't go through it, but you can enter the house down the cellar steps and through a reconstructed shelter, avoiding sandbags and plastic spiders.

The tunnel was an escape route in case of enemy action. Avenue House was used as a military hospital during and after the First World War, and as Finchley's Air Raid Precautions HQ in the Second World War.

Free exhibition

The current free exhibition contains a lot of material from The Finchley Society Archives, but there are also some interesting contributions from the public. I looked in during August, and I can now testify that a warden's tin helmet is heavy!

Fascinating, too, to see sets of cigarette cards: one showing the roles of the ARP, and another illustrating how to give first aid.

I was intrigued to see that the weekly ration of sardines per person was 16. Was there an estimated average of how many of these nutritious little fish could be packed into a tin?

Among new exhibits were two women's VAD uniforms; a reminder of the crucial role played by women in both world wars.

The exhibition continues

through September on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 2pm to 4.30pm, and Saturdays and Sundays, 12 noon to 4.30pm. Group visits may be booked by appointment for other times. Avenue House is part of Stephens House and Gardens, 17 East End Road, N3 3QE. Tel. 020 8346 7812. Website: www.stephenshouse-andgardens.com.

Ofsted to a good start

The Archer Academy has received its first Ofsted report after an inspection in June. The school was given a grading of 'good', with the behaviour and safety of students rated as 'outstanding'.

The inspectors praised the richness of the academy's curriculum and said high-quality teaching was providing firm academic foundations for students.

An Academy spokesperson said: "September will be the start of a new chapter at the Archer Academy, with an enhanced senior leadership team, a brand new campus and a full lower school for the first time. We are looking forward to building on the successes and the areas for development highlighted by this report, and to continuing our drive to be recognised as a truly outstanding school."

You can read the full report on the school's website at: www.thearcheracademy.org.uk/our-first-ofsted-report.

Sox appeal

An appeal has been launched as a novel way of helping more than 6,500 people who sleep out on the streets every year in London. A group called the 999 Club wants to unite your odd socks with people who need them.

Organisers of the Sox Appeal say they've realised there are 13,000 feet in the capital that probably don't mind if the clean, dry socks they are given aren't quite the same colour or matching pattern.

Andrew Mitchell, head of fundraising, says: "We have a podiatrist who comes to treat our homeless, who have all sorts of ailments, in extreme cases trenchfoot. Clean socks will prevent this and that would be an amazing feat!"

The club is looking for all spares and pairs in adult sizes of all styles and any colour. All they need to be is clean and hole-free. Drop them off or post them to the 999 Club, 21 Deptford Broadway, SE8 4PA.



Joy of singing: Jennie Ensor

Open your mind to singing

Anyone interested in joining a local singing group can pop along to an open evening being held by Singing in London at the Archer Academy building in Beaumont Place, off The Bishops Avenue, on Monday 14 September.

The group meets weekly on Monday nights and specialises in boosting the confidence of its singers, teaching technique and encouraging everyone to work together as a choir.

Member Jennie Ensor didn't take up singing until the age of 35 and has been with Singing in London for just over a year.

She says: "One of the best things about our Monday night singing sessions is how you can arrive weary and stressed from the working day and emerge two hours later, energised and blissed out."

"Our musical director Kieran is fantastic at drawing out the best in our individual voices as well as helping us work together as a choir. We're encouraged to aim for a high standard but there's no pressure."

"Lately I've begun to enjoy the challenge of learning more difficult pieces and have sung solo in the last two Singing in London concerts: scary but a real buzz!"

Find out more at www.singinginlondon.com.

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Courses begin 21 September 2015. For information contact the Highgate Literary & Scientific Institution, 11 South Grove, London N6 6BS (on 143 bus route); www.hlsi.net; 020 8340 3343.



YOUNG ARCHER



Table talk: Author Anne-Marie Conway discusses her book with young fans.

Secrets of the author

By Olivia Csaky

East Finchley author Anne-Marie Conway's latest book *Tangled Secrets* was selected by The Guardian newspaper as one of their best new children's books for 2015. Our book club read the book and we were lucky to interview Anne-Marie about being an author.

When and why did you decide that you wanted to become an author?

Anne-Marie: I have been running a theatre company for children for many years and one year I decided to write a comedy sketch for a group of boys who wanted to do something funny. I wrote a sketch about a group of women at the hairdressers discussing their husbands and put the boys in hairdressing gowns with their hair wrapped in towels.

The sketch was a big success and I began to wonder if I could write something longer. Shortly after that, my first baby was born and I had time off work at home;

that's when I started writing Phoebe Finds Her Voice, the first book in the Star Makers series. That was 13 years ago and I've been writing non-stop ever since. **What was your favourite childhood book?**

My favourite childhood books were the Malory Towers books by Enid Blyton. I can't begin to describe how much I loved them and how many times I read them. If you'd asked me at the time I would've said that Malory Towers was a real school and that all the characters were real people. I so wanted to go there and be best friends with Darrell.

And what is your favourite book of all time?

I change favourite books all the time, but one of my favourites of all time is Captain Corelli's Mandolin. I read it in Cephalonia where it's set, so that made it even more special.

How do you come up with ideas for your books?

My first series of books was based on my own children's theatre company, Full Circle.

Since then I've written three novels. I got the idea for Butterfly Summer after chatting to a friend about a day she spent at Butterfly World in St Albans. The setting sounded so idyllic, I decided to write a really dark story set in a beautiful place. The idea for Forbidden Friends came after a holiday to Portugal where there was a mix-up with my suitcase. I suddenly realised how easy it is to grab the wrong suitcase from the conveyor belt by mistake; then I thought how exciting it would be to have a plot where you try to swap suitcases on purpose in order to pass on a secret message.

How would you spend your perfect day?

My perfect day would have to follow a perfect night's sleep, which I hardly ever get. I'd then go to Hastings to stay with my sister and her family. We'd go on a long, long coastal walk together followed by a lovely dinner in a pub with an open fire. I'd then go to bed and have another perfect night's sleep!

Tell us a secret!

What do you mean? If I told you, it wouldn't be a secret!

A footloose and footie farewell

By Verity Smith

When the annual end-of-term concert took place at Holy Trinity Primary School at the end of July outgoing headteacher Tim Bowden was treated to some inventive valedictory performances.

The leaden clouds and light drizzle didn't deter the children from giving their carefully choreographed dances their all, from the tinies of the nursery, to the talented pupils of Year 6, themselves bidding farewell to the school.

Year 3 put together a clever medley of football songs, with various teams represented. For their finale, the whole class removed their top layer to reveal a Manchester City strip, to the delight of the club's number one fan, none other than Mr Bowden himself.

The backs of some of the 'players' had been printed with letters so they could spell out "Good luck" to their headteacher.

Finally, the teaching staff joined together to perform another medley, this one of several more of Mr Bowden's favourite tunes. The man of the moment, unable to help himself, joined in with gusto from the sidelines.

It was a fitting and very memorable send-off for a head



Last day: Outgoing headteacher Tim Bowden

who, in his ten years at the school, did so much to create the outstanding educational environment and atmosphere of happy, enthusiastic pupils... who love a bit of disco.

Time to learn

The Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution, founded in 1839 and described as 'North London's hidden secret', is now booking for its autumn range of courses.

They range from creative activities, such as drawing and painting, embroidery and creative writing, to cultural studies including architecture, literature and the Mediaeval World, along with language courses for different abilities.

Among the new language courses being offered this year is Italian for Beginners, as well as more advanced classes. Other languages covered are French, German and Spanish, and there is a popular Latin class.

The Institution is in the centre of Highgate Village only a few yards from the 143 bus stop which makes it very

accessible from East Finchley.

Martin Adeney, a member of the Education Committee which organises the courses, said: "We already have a strong representation from East Finchley. A lot of people have already discovered us but we are keen to make our facilities better known, including our library and high quality weekly lectures and debates on current issues. We also have a Film Society and an Opera Circle."

Courses start on Monday 21 September. For more information, contact the HLSI, 11 South Grove, Highgate, N6 6BS on 020 8340 3343 or visit www.hlsi.net

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Changes at Chorak

By Ann Bronkhorst

Chorak has been a presence in the High Road for 25 years, providing coffee, cake, light lunches, art displays and discussion groups. After refurbishment this summer it will reopen with more seating capacity and some rather different food ideas: a new stage in its history.

When Chorak owner Javad Oskooee leased the building in the spring of 1990 he hadn't planned to become a baker. An experienced architect, he just wanted an office upstairs and hoped to rent out the ground floor.

The premises had been a wholesale bakery with a small shop at the front and had been empty for five years after closure on health grounds. Radical work was needed, stripping back to the structure and removing clutter and dirt. Finally, Javad says, he was faced with "a three-storey building and nothing to put in it!"

Bravely or rashly the architect decided to run a bakery on the ground floor. He recalls his utter inexperience with self-deprecating humour. For instance, on the first day he didn't have enough change for a customer's tenner and had to run out to buy mustard when someone wanted it in a sandwich.

Space and light

Since then Javad has gained experience in the food business while maintaining his architectural practice. Now, the plan includes a brighter, more modern frontage, space for more customers in rearranged eating areas and provision of some soft seating. Chorak will major on specialist, high-quality breads, baked in the morning rather than at night, and an expanded range of foods including light lunches. Opening hours may be extended, too.

Javad recalls Chorak's very first art exhibition, by local artist Tark Butler, as "a breakthrough" with excellent sales and feedback, so art lovers can look forward to enjoying art with their coffee and croissants in the redesigned Chorak.

Reading group venue change

The popular reading group run by The Reader organisation has changed its home again.

It still meets on Friday from 10.30am to 12 noon, but the venue is now The Old White Lion. This is the drop-in group where you don't know what you'll be reading until you discover it together at the meeting. Everyone is welcome.

Postman Bob, 1946 – 2015

By Eugene Myerson

Retired postman Bob Konig has died from Motor Neurone Disease at the age of 69. Born in Hackney, he and his mother moved to Highgate where he spent his formative years. As an adult, Bob moved to Hornsey, and after trying office jobs, he became a postman in East Finchley in 1969 until he retired in 2011.

From 1987 his round was south of the Fortis Green Police Station, where he endeared himself to us local residents by being reliable, friendly, good-humoured and polite.

We were so impressed with Bob that we gave him a tremendous retirement tea-party (*THE ARCHER*, July 2011). Freed from a full-time job, he indulged his passions for travelling and transport. However, in 2014 he was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease, and spent his last months in the Highgate Nursing Home.

By his bedside shelf were some miniature trams and buses as collecting such models had become a hobby. I learned of Bob's illness in March 2015, and visited him regularly since then. The first time I gave no notice of my arrival, but despite not seeing me for nearly four years he took one look and pointed saying: "23 Annington



Road." His prodigious memory was clearly still in perfect working order even though his body had deteriorated. I mentioned neighbours from five nearby streets and each time he gave me their correct address.

For his 69th birthday in June, ex-Post Office van driver Ros Lusardi and I organised a tea-party at the nursing home (*THE ARCHER*, August 2015). Seeing him enjoying it, surrounded by former colleagues and customers who had become friends, is how I shall remember him. Rest in peace, Bobby.

Stars of the silver screen

The Clissold Arms in Fortis Green is opening a new themed room to go alongside the area dedicated to The Kinks who started their performing career there.

The gastro-pub is devoting a room to the stars and masterpieces of British cinema, with walls decorated with photos and posters of classic British movies.

What's more, on certain nights there will be showings of

famous films such as *Bridge on the River Kwai*, *Great Expectations*, *Shakespeare in Love* and *The English Patient*.

Look out for the official opening on Friday 18 September and for film screening dates thereafter.

RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

Is everybody happy?

These are the grey days, autumn is approaching and the sun has emigrated. All that's left is a maxed-out credit card, embarrassing photos and a strangely ambiguous souvenir, so it's nice to know that if you lived anywhere else it would feel so much worse.

Maybe it's the pubs, the shops and the Phoenix, maybe it's *THE ARCHER*, but out here in zone 3 where you can enjoy the benefits of most of what is hip but not too nasty is where people are happiest. Well that's what Time Out claims. It doesn't give too many reasons, but it's nice to feel smug about the place.

Up the road in Highgate they drink more coffee and in Muswell Hill they are the friendliest, but here we are happy. It's why everyone looks so miserable as they get on the tube in the morning. Maybe it's the knowledge that they are leaving the fragrant environment and travelling away from Cherry Tree Wood. Or maybe it's not. All the same it is better than the rest of London.

Let's take Clapton where most people get drunk most of the time, or East Ham where people are too stressed to drink. Would you really want to move there? Or Dagenham, rated as the saddest place in London... and if you've been there you'll know why.

It's not all love and roses. If you want that, head for Wapping where more people have more sex more of the time than anywhere else. But once you've done that, you'd better head for Twickenham to raise the resulting family.

Of course you may not be in Wapping, you may be in Hendon, the place where more people watch more porn than anywhere else in London. Something that tells you everything you need to know about Hendon.

So, when it all goes pear-shaped and your cat loses out to a passing Range Rover or it rains or snows or the trains don't run, don't panic. Remember you live in the happiest part of London and anywhere else will feel so much more miserable.

Mary Barry, 1920 – 2015

Mary Barry, a familiar sight to many as she was driven round East Finchley and Muswell Hill in her Tazzari electric car, died in June at the age of 94 while staying at her family villa in the Tuscan town of Barga.

When Mary was in the UK she would spend many happy hours in her garden in East Finchley, sweeping the leaves or pruning her beloved roses.

A typical week for her looked something like this: Monday at the Book Group at Hornsey Library; Tuesday at the Cancer Support Group in Tottenham (at 91 Mary was diagnosed with breast cancer and underwent a mastectomy); Wednesday playing Scrabble at Church End Library; Thursday playing Scrabble at South Friern Library; Friday enjoying a matinee at the Phoenix Cinema; Saturday attending mass at St. Mary's Catholic Church; Sunday enjoying visits from one of her eight children, 20 grand-children or six great-grand-children, or going out on a day trip.

During most of these activities she would most likely have been accompanied by her third-oldest daughter, Maria, who acted as her companion and electric car chauffeur, or "naggi-vator" as Mary called it.

Mary was born in Rothesay, on the island of Bute, Scotland, in December, 1920, the second oldest of six girls in a family that had moved there from Italy. Mary played a huge part in the security business Barry Brothers established by her husband Jack Barry in Paddington in 1946 and it is still a going family concern.

She took a lively interest in local events and only a couple of months before her passing would often be seen attending the many rallies and marches organised by local activists to try to prevent the closure of Barnet's libraries: places where Mary spent many a happy hour. Mary will be sorely missed, not only by her immediate family but by all those who knew her.



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- **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
- **Ladies Keep Fit Class** for over 50s. Tues 10.30–11.30am at Tetherdown Hall. Sheila 8444 0084.
- **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 Classes** Tue 9.30, Fri 9.15 & Sun 11am. www.pilatesineastfinchley.co.uk. Michelle 07767 804 564
- **Tai Chi & Qigong** in N2, Weds 1pm. James 8883 3308/07836 710281 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.
- **Women's kick boxing**, Thursdays 9.30am, East Finchley Combat Academy, Church Lane, N2. Contact 07956 340540.

Music, Dance & Creative Arts

- **Art Classes**. Call Henry on 8888 5133.
- **A-Chord**, friendly choir, all genres, open to all. Thursdays 8pm at NNLS, East End Rd. Laura 07732 120464. www.a-chord.uk
- **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.
- **Dance conditioning classes**. New body in 10 lessons. Diana: 07580 041270. www.boldbodies.co.uk.
- **East Finchley Writers Group**, Weds at the Old White Lion. Contact Ralph 8444 5903.
- **East Finchley Poetry Writing Workshops**. Monthly on Saturdays. Contact Dennis Evans 8346 9528.
- **Memory Lane Singing Club** - friendly singing club meets every Friday in Finchley. Call Valerie 8458 4508.
- **Over 50s Tea Dance** at Christ Church, North Finchley. Every Weds, 1pm. 020 8444 0280.
- **Learn to sing** at Finchley Methodist Church, Ballards La. Call 8888 4412.
- **Muswell Hill after school ukulele club**, Wednesdays 4.15–5.15pm, ages 6–10. Contact Margie 07909 439513.
- **Traditional music at TOC**, Highgate Hill, on 1st & 3rd Tues each month from 8.30pm. Free. 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
- **French conversation** in small friendly group with native speaker. 8444 9395.
- **Friends of Cherry Tree Wood** www.cherrytreewood.co.uk or 8883 7544.
- **Haringey Recorded Music Society** informal meetings locally. Call David Moldon on 8361 1696.
- **Muslim Ladies Lunch Club** 1st & 3rd Weds, Ann Owen Ctr., Oak La. Call 8432 1415 to book.
- **North London Bridge Club**, Muswell Hill. Contact 8348 3495
- **Bridge Club**, every Saturday 1.30–4pm, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2 8LT. Contact Ray Tiano 07944 562180.
- **Jewish Friendship Club** for over 60s, Tues 1–3 pm at Muswell Hill Synagogue, Tetherdown. Anita 8886 6140.
- **Muswell Hill Tetherdown Bridge**, contact 8883 4390

What's on at the Phoenix in September

By Nick Walker

In September the Phoenix is screening some not-to-be-missed films. Here are some of the highlights. To book tickets, come into the foyer or visit www.phoenixcinema.co.uk

In Woody Allen's *Irrational Man* an impotent, alcoholic philosophy professor played by Joaquin Phoenix finds a sense of purpose after overhearing a stranger's conversation. Woody Allen uses this darkly humorous quasi-thriller to contemplate the perfect murder, combining the weightiness of his best dramas with the playfulness of his best comedies.

Director Anton Corbijn offers a glimpse of James Dean's early career through the lens of Robert Pattinson, playing an ambitious photographer whose professional horizons open when he spots the actor's raw charisma. *Life* tells the story behind the 1955 photo spread that brought moody young heart-

throb Dean to the attention of the American public, just seven months before his tragic death aged 24.

Veteran actors Robert Redford and Nick Nolte go for *A Walk In The Woods* in director Ken Kwapis' adaptation of Bill Bryson's 1998 memoir. After two decades in England, travel writer Bryson (Redford) decides to hike along the East Coast of the United States on the Appalachian Trail, the longest continuous footpath in the world, as a way to re-connect with his homeland. Joined by a long-estranged high school pal they face off with each other, nature and an eccentric assortment of characters and learn that some roads are better left untravelled.

Choir awaydays

By Marian Bunzl

This summer North London Chorus has been playing away. In May we joined the Bury Bach Choir for a performance of Britten's *War Requiem* at the beautiful St Edmundsbury Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds.

Fortunately, Bury is a comfortable and scenic coach ride away, so we were able to visit each other for day workshops and Philip Reed, Bury's musical director, could commute to take several rehearsals with us.

By the performance day, both choirs were in tune with each other and ready for our dress rehearsal with all the forces involved in this epic work: two orchestras, three choirs, three soloists and two conductors. The

resulting performance received thunderous applause (magnified by the Cathedral's splendid acoustic) from a near-capacity audience. It was a most uplifting experience and we very much hope we can repeat it.

In June, we only went as far as Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church. We invited choral singers within reach of central London to join us there in a workshop day and evening performance of Handel's rarely



Mark of quality: Long Lane Pasture displays its Green Flag Award.

Pasture paradise

Long Lane Pasture has been named as one of the best green spaces in Britain and will be flying a Green Flag Award.

The open land, opposite the fire station in Long Lane, is a two-acre remnant of the original Finchley Common, once used for making hay and grazing horses. It is managed by volunteers under trust deed on a lease from Barnet Council.

Its Green Flag is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent facilities.

Dennis Pepper, Chair of the Long Lane Pasture Trust, said: "We are absolutely delighted to receive a Green Flag Community Award for the fourth year running, especially as it is the only one awarded in Barnet from Keep Britain Tidy.

"This achievement is entirely due to the imagination of our hard working management Committee and our volunteers. In eleven years we have transformed a bramble-covered wasteland into a peaceful haven for wildlife, and a place for enjoyment for the people of Finchley."

Snap to it

This year's Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association Photographic Competition is open for entries.

The theme is 'My Muswell Hill' and photographers are invited to submit entries that reflect their personal emotional or physical connection to anything about Muswell Hill.

First prize is £50 and the deadline is 30 September. More details from www.mhfga.org

What's On...

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

Saturday 5 September

- **Fabulous Finchley: guided walk** through 1,000 years of the history of Church End and East Finchley with City of London guide Paul Baker. Meet 2.30pm at Finchley Central tube station (Ballards Lane exit). More details from Paul on 020 8440 6805 or www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net

Sunday 6 September

- Caroline and David Broome open their beautiful garden to raise funds for the **British Red Cross Open Garden Day**, 79 Church Lane, N2, from 2–6pm. Entry £3 (under-14s free but must be accompanied by an adult).
- **Bothy Garden Party at Stephens House** and Gardens, East End Road, N3, 3pm to 5pm. Enjoy tea and homemade cakes in the walled garden. Home-made jams, chutneys, home-grown vegetables and plants will be on sale and there will be quizzes for children. Admission £5, children free, tea and cake included. More details from www.stephenshouseandgardens.com

Monday 7 September

- **Build a Capsule Wardrobe**, an expert talk with Daisy from Wardrobe Workshop, Clissold Arms, Fortis Green, 8pm. Tickets and more details from www.sortingself.com
- **Friday 11 September**
- **Family bat walk** in Coldfall Wood, led by Cindy Blaney, local bat expert. Meet 7.0pm (note change of time) at east entrance on Creighton Avenue. Free or voluntary donation of £3. Booking advisable: info@coldfallwoods.co.uk

Saturday 12 September

- **Cat and kitten rehoming day** at Goddards Kennels and Cattery, 160 Chingford Mount Road, Chingford, E4 (along N. Circular). Lots of RSPCA-checked cats and kittens available for rehoming. More information from Derrick Yapp on 07715 540279 or derrick.yapp@rspca.org.uk
- **Children's March for Libraries**. Protest march against Barnet library cuts. Starting at East Finchley Library at 10.15am and marching up East End Road to Church End Library, where we will be joined by a brass band and open-top bus, then on to North Finchley Library. All welcome. See www.eflug.org.uk for info.

Sunday 13 September

- **Heritage Open Sunday at Stephens House** and Gardens, East End Road, N3, 12 noon to 5pm. Access to upstairs rooms of Avenue House, including tower, and to the Bothy, the Lodge and the Water Tower. Tours at 1pm and 3pm, maximum of 20 people per tour. More details from www.stephenshouseandgardens.com
- **Battle of Barnet: guided tour** of the famous Wars of the Roses battlefield of 1471 with City of London guide Paul Baker. Meet 2.30pm at junction of Great North Road and Hadley Green Road. More details from Paul on 020 8440 6805 or www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net.
- **Monday 14 September**
- **Singing in London choir open evening** at the Archer Academy, Beaumont Place, N2, from 8–10pm. Find out more about

this welcoming singing group. Book your place online at www.singinginlondon.com

Sunday 20 September

- **St Mary's Church International Sunday**: come and celebrate the diversity of cultures in our community. Mass at 12 noon followed by lunch and entertainment in the Parish Centre, 279 High Road, N2. If you'd like to share your culture bring a dish or come dressed in your country's national costume, or just turn up and enjoy the day with us. All welcome.

Wednesday 23 September

- **Garden Suburb Theatre perform** a semi-staged reading of *'The King's Own Boys'* in the drawing room and salon of Avenue House at Stephens House and Gardens, East End Road, N3, 7.30pm. The play is written and directed by Adam Sutcliffe, set in the closing months of the First World War and tells the story of his grandfather in the Royal Flying Corps and the unsolved mysterious disappearance of one of the war's unsung heroes. Tickets £8, £6 concessions, call 020 8346 7812 opt 1 or go to www.ticketsource.co.uk/date/185401.

Thursday 24 September

- **'Education in East Finchley'** will be the theme for the **Finchley Society's 'outreach' meeting** at Holy Trinity School, Eagans Close, N2. Hear about the oldest schools, Holy Trinity and Martin Primary, up to the recent opening of the new Archer Academy building. Speakers: David Smith, Roger Chapman and Lucy

Harrison. All welcome. Non members £2. Refreshments available from 7.30pm.

Saturday 26 September

- **Austen's Women**. At artsdepot, North Finchley: 3.0pm. Tickets £13 or £11 for over-60s. Box Office 020 8369 5454.
- **Muswell Hill United Reform Church's Live Music Day**: organ and piano festival 10.30am to 3pm at the church at 34 Creighton Avenue, N10. Coffees and pastries from 10.30am; refreshments available throughout the day. Admission free but donations welcome as this is a fundraising event for the running and repair costs of the church organ.

Sunday 27 September

- **Grange Big Local Community Festival** 12 noon to 4pm at Bishop Douglass School in Hamilton Road, N2. Come along for games and activities and find out what the Grange Big Local project has been doing over the past year.

Saturday 3 October

- **Fun Palace**, 11 am to 4pm artsdepot, North Finchley Box Office 020 8369 5454. Included free events for older people.
- **Fungi walk in Coldfall Wood** led by Andy Overall, local mycologist. Meet at 2.30pm at east entrance on Creighton Avenue. Free or voluntary donation of £3. Booking advisable: info@coldfallwoods.co.uk
- **Saturday 3 October**
- **And this is my friend, Mr Laurel**. 4.30pm. artsdepot, North Finchley. Tickets £14 or £11 for over-60s. Box Office 020 8369 5454.



Letters

Old Barn questions

Dear Editor

While I am fully supportive of the Old Barn being brought back into use for the local community, I think that knocking down and replacing a perfectly good facility is a total waste of tax payers' money. Although the building requires upgrading, complete demolition seems an extraordinary approach for the council to take in these days of austerity.

I am also against any part of a public building being set aside for the exclusive use of any single community. As a society, do we not promote and strive for integration? Just because the council has chosen to provide segregated premises for the Bravanese Association in the past does not mean that it was a good or the right decision.

Any enlargement in the capacity of the facility would also cause an issue from a traffic perspective, particularly if the small numbers of Somalis living in East Finchley means that many would be travelling to the centre by car.

It would be good to see green open space adjacent to the centre developed as a small park, as proposed, provided it is properly maintained and supervised.

Questions that remained unanswered by the council include the cost of the demolition and rebuilding as opposed to the cost of refurbishment; how the new development will be funded and whether the areas allocated to the Bravanese will be available for use by other groups when not being used by the Bravanese.

Yours faithfully,

Sue Stevens,
Vanderville Gardens, N2.

Stanley Field for all

Dear Editor,

I was most gratified to hear that The Archer Academy is so graciously "keen to ensure that local people of all ages benefit from the investment that has been made, and so will be making the sports facilities available to local people outside school hours" (*The Archer*, August 2015).

Perhaps your readers will recall that this was a condition of the provision of the site (the former Stanley Field) to the school, its planning permission and funding, and not a voluntary gesture on their part.

Yours faithfully,
Lawrence Robinson,
East End Road, N2.

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.

Macabre fox tale

Dear Editor,

I was interested to read Isabella's fox story in *THE ARCHER* (August, 2015). It reminded me of a very unpleasant incident that we had with foxes in Muswell Hill.

Our three children decided that it would be a good idea for us all to buy two Burmese kittens for their dad's special birthday. When we bought them and took them home they were much loved and it was a very happy present that lasted nine months.

Dad was alone in the house one weekend when he was told by a neighbour that Phoebe, one of the cats, was lying dead two doors away. Absolutely horrified and afraid of the rest of us seeing her dead, he dug a hole in our garden and buried her. He gave us the bad news later that evening and with great sadness we all, including Mingus her brother, went to stand at her grave.

The following morning, to our horror, Phoebe had been dug up and spread-eagled on the lawn. Dad quickly returned her to her grave and dug a deeper hole which we covered with more earth and flat stones. As you can imagine all of us were shocked and upset.

The following morning she was back on the lawn in exactly the same place. Fortunately the kids were not around at this time so we decided to give it one more try by putting a heavy metal incinerator on top of the grave.

It didn't work. The next day the same thing happened again and we had to take her poor corpse to the vets. It was explained to us that foxes use a situation like this to teach their cubs how to dig. Whether or not this was true, there still are, a number of smug-looking foxes lurking at the bottom of our garden.

Yours faithfully,
Carey Miller,
Address supplied.



Green transport: Some of the plants beautifying East Finchley station.

Splash of colour on the tube

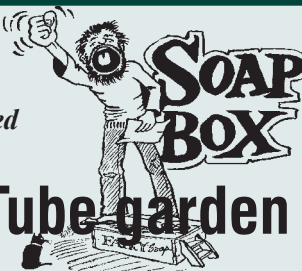
East Finchley station is once again taking part in the Underground in Bloom competition. This year, member of staff Nino Rocha Santos decided to paint the pots on the platforms in vibrant pastel colours in an attempt to catch the judges' eyes.

Apart from the tubs on the platforms, the station was also judged in the categories for baskets, fruit and vegetables and established gardens. The cultivated bank of land outside the station, worked by local volunteers N2 Gardeners and other community groups, is putting on a particularly good show this year.

Nino said: "I'm really happy with the display this year. Most importantly, commuters seem to love it too." The winners will be announced on 8 October in a ceremony at London City Hall.

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.



Not rosy in the Tube garden

By Mary Whiting

I've just had a shock at Finchley Central station. I went to look at the wonderful garden there and found it derelict. Heavens! Had someone retired? I asked a station official. But he said: "No, he's been sent to Tottenham!" "He didn't want to go," he added, "but it's all this ticket office closure business. Everyone's being sent somewhere else. We don't know what we're doing any more."

He told me he'd been at Finchley Central for 26 years, but now he's being sent to the Angel, and that of course he didn't want to go. And of course no one wanted to take over the garden because they'll soon be moved. The former gardener turns out to be Mark Kirwin, who was station supervisor. He'd created the garden on a long strip of waste land. It had won awards and was enjoyed by many. What a body blow for any keen gardener who's been robbed of the garden they've created and tended for years. And what staggeringly callous treatment of employees! And meanwhile, passengers can gaze upon an expanse of weeds. Anyway, I decided to check this out elsewhere, starting at Golders Green. All corroborated! Staff there said they're being reduced from five to two and have no idea how they'll manage. I asked: "Is it all Boris?" Hereplied: "Ohhhh, yes!" So who could passengers complain to? TfL, perhaps? That question got a snort of laughter: "Boris is the chairman of TfL! You'd have to go higher, but no idea who." So what could possibly be the point of sending everyone somewhere else against their will, surely the perfect way to alienate the entire workforce? He said there was no good point: "It's deliberate. He just wants to break everybody up. He wants to crush the union." But maybe if enough people complain, at least Mark Kirwin might get his old job back - and his wonderful garden.....

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Time travel in Twyford Avenue

By Ann Bronkhorst

It was June 1953: a young queen on the throne, rationing and wartime shortages nearly over. There was no East Finchley Festival yet but the annual fete at All Saints' Church had been planned for months and must have been a major community event.

For a fortnight the Rex cinema, now the Phoenix, showed a short publicity film about the coming fete, Miraculously it still exists and the BFI (British Film Institute) has given *THE ARCHER* these black and white images from it.

Handkerchiefs and pram races

It's a fascinating glimpse into the past. Church records allow us to picture the scene: teas on the lawn and dancing displays (the church had more space around it then, as well as a church hall). There were sideshows, such as Roland the

Roller Horse and the Wheel of Fortune. Dads could take part in a dads-only pram race (someone's practising for it in one of the stills) and mums could enter the cake competition with local baker E.P.Hahn as the judge.

Stalls included some categories we'd find surprising today: household goods; grocery and provisions; handkerchiefs and china. After years of rationing it must have seemed wonderful. The two-day event raised nearly £145.

One of the Boy Scouts shown here still lives locally and next month he will share his memories with *THE ARCHER*. Can he recall what was in that enormous basket? Poet and local resident Fleur Adcock has searched the parish council



Two boy scouts carry a basket to the fete. Photo courtesy of the BFI.

records and found the details of this fete and of its predecessor, a 'mediaeval fair' held in 1952. Could the publicity film for it still exist, too?

Watch the All Saints' fair film for yourself by going to <http://player.bfi.org.uk> and typing 'Thurs June 25' into the search box. You can search the BFI's full archive at <http://player.bfi.org.uk/britain-on-film>

Artsdepot seniors

By Daphne Chamberlain
Artsdepot at North Finchley wants to welcome everyone in the community. There has been some criticism that their programmes have been slanted towards younger people. However, a grant from the City Bridge Trust will enable them to run a three-year project to bring in more senior citizens, especially those over 75.

Estelle Buckridge, artsdepot's newly appointed community champion, told *THE ARCHER* that they are already establishing links with Age UK and sheltered accommodation.

There is a limited budget for transport to events for groups of older people. Unfortunately this doesn't extend to individuals, though all escorts and drivers will be welcomed. Programmes will be planned to interest most of the community, as the aim is to use the arts to address social isolation.

The project is still at the planning stage, but will include monthly workshops, social activities and special events.

Estelle told us: "I'm new to the area and want to know more about it, and to hear your ideas. Artsdepot is in a good location, with disabled access, and we welcome everyone."

For further information, please contact Estelle on 020 8369 5496 or at estelle.buckridge@artsdepot.co.uk. There will be free events for Older People as part of the Fun Palaces event on Saturday 3 October from 11am-4pm.



A man demonstrates the pram race in a Twyford Avenue free of parked cars; All Saints' is in the background. Photo courtesy of the BFI.

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26 things about East Finchley

"Nestled in the heart of north London, only just in zone 3, East Finchley is often made to feel like Muswell Hill's ugly little sister, but people who grew up there know that it's so much more than that!"

So reads the introduction to an evocative online article called 26 Things You'll Understand if you Grew Up in East Finchley.

Tapping into the memories of anyone who has had their formative years in N2 from the 1980s onwards, the article lists the special things that bind us together.

For instance, number 16 is VidBiz, the old video shop on the High Road that closed down something like a decade ago. "Their eclectic collection of new releases, world films and cult classics was unrivalled,"

says the writer Evlin Kazancel.

Then, do you remember the 7-11 we used to have way back when, and more recently the much-missed street celebrity Horace, whose cheery "Best of luck!" kept everyone smiling?

The article is full of memories that will mean something to you if you're an East Finchley-ite. Find it by searching for East Finchley on the website www.lifedeathprizes.com What would you add to the list? Email us at: the-archer@lineone.net or message us on Facebook and Twitter @TheArcherN2.

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