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THE ARCHER



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Ladder to the treetops: The tree stairs in Highgate Wood.
Photo by Alison Roberts

That's the way to climb a tree!

Families and walkers in Highgate Wood were thrilled when this spiral staircase materialised on one of the trees near the café to mark London Tree Week at the end of May. Called a CanopyStair, it lets people reach to the top of the tree on steps which are strapped on independently without damaging the trunk. Those who climbed up were treated to a view of the cricket and football fields from a lofty vantage point some eight metres up.

Allez, Archie!

By Daphne Chamberlain

Is it really four years since the London Olympics? We're hoping you all remember that our friend Archie, kneeling above the Tube station, represented Barnet on the official 2012 badge.

Archie, who is 76 on 22 July, was created by sculptor Eric Aumonier. It's too late to influence the EU debate, but Eric was descended from immigrant refugees. As you might have guessed, the Aumoniers were originally French. They were Huguenots (French Protestants), and at least one ancestor was massacred and another was persecuted before fleeing to London.

That was in 1685. Thanks to a copy of the family tree, kindly donated to *THE ARCHER* by Doreen Aumonier, we can see that the family were mainly craftsmen: weavers, jewellers, wheelwrights, and later carvers and sculptors.

As fans of Archie, we've run several articles about him. Here's a quick factfile on him:

- Archie is the only completed statue of several planned for new London Underground stations. The Second World War put paid to the rest. Other Aumonier statues are around St James's Park station and the LU headquarters.

- Archie weighs just over 300kg and cost £245. Nearly twice natural size, he is made of six hundredweight of beech around steel, covered with five hundredweight of sheet lead. His timber came from the former Czechoslovakia and gold from South Africa. His bow is English ash, bent by steam and coated with copper and gilt.

- He was probably constructed in three main sections and reassembled on site.

- Over the entrance to the canteen in London Underground's Acton Works are two stone reliefs made by Eric Aumonier. One is a pie and a knife and fork; maybe what's in the pie was shot by Archie!



Finishing touches: Eric Aumonier works on Archie in 1940

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New mayor

Councillor David Longstaff became the 52nd Mayor of Barnet when he was officially sworn in during the annual meeting of the council at Hendon Town Hall on 24 May. He takes over the role from Councillor Mark Shooter.

Councillor Longstaff has represented the High Barnet ward since 2010. Gillian Griffiths will be the Mayoress while Sury Khatri and Tara Khatri will be the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress respectively.