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CARS & COURIERS

June 2016 No. 267 **20p**
ISSN 1361-3952 where sold

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Snap chat: Coldfall pupils get to know Jack the baby allosaurus

Dino-mite day for young fossil hunters

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Year one children at Coldfall Primary School had a visit from a friendly dinosaur and got the chance to dig for fossils like real palaeontologists.

A dinosaur man brought in boxes of sand which the pupils were able to brush away to uncover the fossils of ancient creatures hidden beneath.

Then he introduced them to a baby allosaurus called Jack. Blake Morris, aged six, said: "Jack didn't like teachers but he liked being stroked by the children."

Claire Pippet, year one teacher, said: "We all had the most amazing day. The children learnt lots of fun facts, were totally fascinated and had lots of questions for the dinosaur man. It really brought to life the topic."

Charity looks for new home after 25 years

The Bobath Centre for Children with Cerebral Palsy is looking for a new home after being in East Finchley for 25 years and is putting its valuable premises in East End Road on the market.

The Bobath Centre for Adults with Neurological Disability, which shares the building, will move with the children's charity following a strategic review by trustees.

Impact of NHS funding

Proceeds from the sale of the property, expected to be completed in 18 months, will fund the relocation within north London and help to develop new services. The children's charity has struggled financially for a number of years following the restructuring of the NHS, mainly because the number of patients funded by the NHS has reduced significantly.

New beginnings

Chairman Stephen Latner said it would be business as usual until the move, which he saw as an exciting new chapter for the charity.

"The world has changed and we are changing with it," he said. "Selling the property will enable us to invest in new income-generating activities that will make therapy more affordable and develop new services to meet the needs of modern families."

The children's charity is developing an early intervention programme to support infants who are at risk of brain

damage but may not have a diagnosis of cerebral palsy. It is also planning to increase its outreach work.

Centre director Christine Barber, who has worked at the Bobath Centre for 35 years, said: "This is the fifth time the centre has moved in its 60-year history, and each move has benefited the children and families living with cerebral palsy who use our services. This move will allow us to adapt how we deliver treatment and training in the changing health landscape as well as modernise our facilities and upgrade equipment."

Historic site

The Bobath's building in East End Road is Grade II listed, meaning any new owners will need to seek special permission for structural alterations or any elements of demolition.

It was designed by architect Anthony Salvin in 1847 as the first Holy Trinity School. When Holy Trinity relocated to its current home in Eagans Close in 1974 the building was used as an English language school, then by Pardes House School. The Bobath Centre purchased the site in 1991 and undertook substantial renovations.

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Festival line-up

The line-up of entertainment at East Finchley's Summer Festival on Sunday 19 June in Cherry Tree Wood has been announced. Full story on page 5.



THE ARCHER

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Voicemail (messages only) 0800 612 0748 for editorial and general enquiries or 0800 612 4027 for Advertising enquiries only

Published by

East Finchley Newspapers

Copy Editor

John Lawrence

Production Editor

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Picture Editor

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Daphne Chamberlain

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Jeff Robson

Finance & Advertising

John Dearing

Distribution

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Printed By

Sharman & Co Ltd

Thank you to The Bald Faced Stag for providing us with a meeting place.

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.

Copy deadlines – **July: 10 June, August: 15 July**
September: 12 August

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Western Eye Hospital 020 7886 6666

OAP's Advice

Age UK Barnet 020 8203 5040

Independent Age 0800 319 6789

Age UK (general advice line)

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Cycle suburbia

It's time once more for East Finchley's annual cycling challenge, the 100km Suburban Breakout on Sunday 12 July, organised by Central London CTC, with help from our own Barracuda Cafe and Bike & Run.

Regulars may be pleased to know that there's a new route this year, still a fairly easy spin into Hertfordshire with one or two little lumps along the way. You can push hard or take it steady; it's not a race.

The only stipulation is that your speed overall must be above 15km/h and no more than 30km/h. It's an ideal first event and a good 'first on fixed'.

This is an audax event, so it's about getting round under your own steam. You have to follow the route sheet (no signs), and sort out any mechanicals (no

broom wagon). There are no timing chips, no gold medals, but there is a fine cup of coffee when you get back.

The start is at the Barracuda Cafe in the High Road. Advance entry is £7 and on the day it's £10. The start is at 9.30am. For more information, visit www.centrallondonctc.org.uk/audax. You can also contact the organiser Nick Bloom by email at nick@centrallondonctc.org.uk, by phone on 07768 354010, or pop in to Bike & Run on the High Road for advice.

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Nina Conti headlines comedy night

For the third year running, the Archer Academy is bringing a comedy night to the Phoenix Cinema. Headlining this year will be comedian, ventriloquist and actress Nina Conti, who has performed on Live at the Apollo on BBC1 and Sunday Night at the Palladium on ITV.

Com-pere for the evening will once again be academy parent Ian Stone, ranked by The Independent as one of the top ten stand-ups in Britain and a regular at the West End's Comedy Store.

He said: "I'm delighted to be doing this for the Archer Academy. The comedians always love the venue and fantastic audience. It is great to be bringing the funny back to the Phoenix once more."

Last year's comedy night featuring Stephen K Amos, Ian Moore and Sara Pascoe raised £7,500 which was used to enhance the school's enrich-



Star guest: Nina Conti

ment provision for students.

This year's event is at the Phoenix on Monday 4 July. Tickets cost £25 plus booking fee and are available at tinyurl.com/archercomedy2016. Doors open at 8.30pm for a 9pm show. Please note that the event is for over-18s only.

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Planning Applications

Barnet Council

Land to rear of 123-131 East End Road, N2

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12-18 High Road, N2

Demolition of existing buildings. Construction of two four-storey buildings, providing 22 self-contained flats and 265sq.m of B1 (business use) office space at ground level to block A. Associated refuse and recycling storage, cycle store, two off-street parking spaces, and amenity space.

105 High Road, N2

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335 High Road, N2

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381 High Road, N2

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361 Long Lane, N2

Single-storey side extension.

2 Stanley Road, N2

Single-storey side/rear extension.

Haringey Council

4-5 Cheapside, Fortis Green, N2

Variation of opening hours for previous planning permission. To extend to 7am to 11pm, Monday – Sunday, and public holidays.

59 Fortis Green Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

10 Woodland Terrace, Twyford Avenue, N2

Garden studio room.



“You can’t vote, you’re not on the list!”

By John Lawrence

We’ve occasionally seen reports of elections going chaotically badly in new democracies or developing countries but in May the same type of shambles was visited on the voters of East Finchley.



Early morning voters are turned away from the Youth Theatre. Photo Mike Coles

Hundreds of people wishing to cast their votes in the London Mayoral and London Assembly elections turned up at polling stations in Strawberry Vale, East Finchley Library and Finchley Youth Theatre only to be turned away because their names weren’t on the voting list. Thousands were affected in the same way at the 155 polling stations across Barnet.

As we all found out very quickly, Barnet Council had sent out the wrong voting lists. Council chief executive Andrew Travers has since stepped down over the blunder and an independent investigation has been launched.

Disenfranchised

THE ARCHER heard about the problems just 10 minutes

after the polls opened at 7am. Readers got in touch to tell us they were being turned away. Many were on their way to work and some said they wouldn’t have the chance to return later in the day.

“I’ve voted for many years but I wasn’t on the list and neither was my wife. But then my teenage son was,” said one of our deliverers. “The man in front of me was in the same situation and was shouting ‘You’ve disenfranchised me!’”

There was further confusion when people were told they would be able to vote if they brought their polling cards. Many did so and were still prevented from casting a vote.

Investigation

East Finchley’s councillors

Alison Moore, Arjun Mittra and Alon Orbach alerted council officials from the polling stations. The situation finally settled down more than three hours later around 10.30am when the council set up a system of emergency proxy votes and delivered new lists to polling station staff.

A Barnet Council spokesperson said: “Following problems with electoral registration lists on Thursday 5 May, which meant that some Barnet residents were unable to vote, the council is launching a full independent investigation.

“The terms of reference will include a full review of the issues that arose as well as the appropriateness of the arrangements in place for the EU Referendum in June. The review will conclude by the end of May and the findings will be presented publicly to the General Functions Committee.”

Ewe won’t want to miss the fair

Highgate’s annual fun day out The Fair in the Square returns on Saturday 11 June and coincides with the country’s big weekend marking the Queen’s 90th birthday, the theme for this year’s fair. The annual free event fills N6’s Pond Square and South Grove from 12.30pm to 5.30pm with live music, stalls and children’s activities.

Royal fun will be had by children playing Hunt the Crown and making their own crowns, tiaras and guardsmen’s hats in the Creative Tent being run this year by Cass Art and fair newcomer Mini Mozart telling the story of The Princess and the Pea. There will also be Punch & Judy, Shoot4Goal, fair rides and the ever popular Sheep Show.

Over at St Michael’s Church you will be able to listen to its choir whilst enjoying homemade cakes and tea at its café,

or take a tower tour for views over London. Lots of local businesses, charities and shops will be among the 100-plus



Ginger the sheep shearer at Fair in the Square. Photo Nigel Sutton

stalls selling crafts, plants, clothes, books and international foods. More details from www.fairinthesquare.co.uk.

Man dies on train line

A man died after being hit by a Northern line train on 10 May. Emergency services were called to reports of a man lying by the side of the tracks at Woodside Park station just after 6am. Officers from the British Transport Police and the London Ambulance Service arrived shortly afterwards, but the man was pronounced dead at the scene.

A police spokesman said: “The man’s injuries were consistent with being hit by a train. The death is not being treated as suspicious as there is no indication that a third party was involved.”

At the time of going to press, police were preparing a report for the coroner who will hold an inquest to determine the exact

cause of death. Officers were working to identify the man and inform his family.

Following the discovery of the man, the Northern line was suspended between Finchley Central and High Barnet, while services on the rest of the line were disrupted for several hours.

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LOCAL POLICE, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Jan Lovell, of the East Finchley Neighbourhood Policing Team, rounds up some of the latest news on crime control.

Caught red-handed

Good news. A male was caught red-handed by plainclothes officers stealing a cycle in an operation at East Finchley underground station. He was arrested and charged.

School visits

PC John Kenny and I are just finishing our primary school visits for this academic year at the Holy Trinity and Martin schools. It has been a real pleasure to meet the next generation of East Finchleyans, giving talks on a variety of subjects including strangers and making a 999 call for the little ones, to more serious subjects such as internet dangers and offensive weapons for the older ones. It seems a shame we have to teach youngsters about these things but I must say they all seem to take it on board with a bright keenness.

Burglary advice

Sadly, we are still experiencing regular burglaries, particularly in blocks of flats. Do make sure you have both a rim deadlock and a five lever mortice lock on your internal front door. Communal doors should close & lock well. Doors can also be reinforced with a London bar which unobtrusively fits over the lock staple on the door jamb and supports the lock.

Gardening tips

Be mindful of how you dispose of the packaging for new garden tools. Don't advertise them to burglars by putting empty boxes on display outside: fold them inside out or break them up and put them in a bag. If you register property at www.immobilise.com there's a greater chance of you getting it back if it does get stolen.

It's easy to become engrossed in what you are doing when working in the garden, so if the house is empty it would be wise to close and lock the door (don't forget the key though!).

Refit the padlock hasps and hinge plates on your shed using coach-bolts (where you can) as these are a much stronger fit than simple screws. Secure the door with a good quality close shackle padlock or (if the door is thick enough) a key operated mortice lock. Protect windows with a wire mesh and fit a curtain or whitewash the windows to prevent prying eyes seeing the contents.

Large, newly planted trees and shrubs that are vulnerable to theft can be anchored into the ground using ground pegs. Cement, anchor or bolt down vulnerable containers into the ground. Then enjoy!



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The exhibition photographers hanging at Budgens Photo Mike Coles

Window on life

Shoppers on the High Road had the chance to enjoy a pop-up exhibition of photos by East Finchley Open artists on show for free in the windows of Budgens for two weekends in May. The images were the first to emerge as part of a project documenting people, traders and life in the High Road.



EFAB table tennis at The Green Man. Photo Mike Coles

Table tennis group swaps ends

By Diana Cormack

For the past 18 months the table tennis group organised by East Finchley Altogether Better (EFAB) has been generously hosted by the Shree Aden Depala Community Centre in Church Lane. Recently on-going repairs to the roof of the building have meant a move to alternative premises.

Play now takes place on a Tuesday afternoon in the Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale, from 2.30pm to 4pm. The cost is £24 for six weeks if paid up front or £5 per session.

Refreshments are available and all equipment is provided.

This move necessitated the purchase of a second table, along with nets, bats and balls for the growing club, which was funded

by a donation. If you are interested in taking part, turn up at the Green Man or contact us@efab.org.uk. For more information or to ensure sessions are taking place visit www.efab.org.uk

Troubled bridges over water

By Ann Bronkhorst

Regular walkers in Coldfall Wood will have noticed the recent deterioration of two of the bridges across the stream. One of these is in a dangerous condition.

The stream has five crossing points; one is concrete and four are wooden bridges installed by Haringey Council just over three years ago. The top bridge near the reed beds, and the long boardwalk at the other end, seem to be safe, although the regular winter floods have overtopped the boardwalk several times and a section of its handrail has been broken off recently.

The old concrete bridge is fine; it has no sides but is wide

and safe. The faulty bridges have broken slats and the handrails of one have been vandalised: with some determination, since the structure is built of heavy wood.

Warnings ignored

Haringey workers have tried to stop people from using the two faulty bridges, firstly by taping them off (tapes immediately slashed) and then by erecting metal barriers (thrown aside). Warning notices have been put up, too, and promptly

pulled down.

At the time of writing Haringey council says the bridges will be repaired but has given no date for the work. A surprising number of people, including adults pushing prams and buggies or accompanying small children, still use the two dangerous bridges, although there are three safe ones.

If someone breaks an ankle when picking their way across the gaps will they blame Haringey or themselves?



Summer festival: who's playing?

The full line-up of entertainment has been unveiled for this year's East Finchley Summer Festival on Sunday 19 June. As always, the event takes place in Cherry Tree Wood from 12 noon to 6pm and is free for everyone.

Returning to host the main stage will be Pat 'Have Mercy' Leacock and Mike Hughes. Meanwhile the acts appearing on the Archer community stage will be introduced by Cecilia Holmes.

As we reported last month, live owls will be the festival's fascinating new guests this year and there will be all the usual fun from the giant inflatables and fairground rides, along with dozens of stalls run by local groups and societies, and delicious food outlets alongside the beer tent.

On the main stage ...

The singers and bands booked to play on the main stage are as follows: **Rob Thom, Lisa's Changed, Gill Hunter/Martin Bush Soul project, Spring Park Revival, Dex & Mercy, Relentless MC, Snake Oil Rattlers, Ellie Occleston and Simon Stanley Ward.** Timings are to be confirmed. Check the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/East-Finchley.Festival.

... and on the Archer community stage

Over here, the line-up will be: 12pm, **Archer Academy Choir**; 12.15pm, **Airborne Circus** – circus skills; 12.35pm, **Martin School Samba Band & Dance Club**; 12.55pm, **Metropolitan Brass Training Band**; 1.20pm, **A-Chord Choir**; 1.45pm, **Fortitude Dance Company**; 2.05pm, **Holy Trinity School Choir**; 2.25pm, **S.O.U.P. Ukulele Club**; 2.50pm, **Finchley**

Youth Theatre & Soto Dance Company; 3.15pm, **Finchley Steel Orchestra**; 3.40pm, **Fixation Theatre**, Saturday classes; 4pm, **North London Ukelele Club**; 4.20pm, **The Long String Hawkers**; 4.45pm, **NLPAC**: break dance, street dance & boys tap squad; 5pm, **Fixation Theatre**, children & youth theatre group; 5.15pm, **Dorten Yonder**, folk band; 5.40pm, **Jazz Guitar Ensemble**. Timings and acts could be subject to changes on the day.

Look out for the festival programme coming through your letterbox and let's all keep our fingers crossed for sunny weather. *THE ARCHER* team will be there. Drop by our stall any time to give us a story or just to say hello. See you at the festival!

A business invitation

Members of the fastest growing business network serving all of the trades, shops and enterprises in East Finchley are inviting people to visit their stall at the East Finchley Festival in Cherry Tree Wood on Sunday 19 June. They will be launching their brand new business network and revealing their new logo and identity. Members will be there to discuss how they can help local businesses to grow and connect. They want to hear ideas and understand challenges.



The Long String Hawkers, pictured at East Finchley Festival in 2015, will be back this year

Bill's solo walk on Baltic shores

By Daphne Chamberlain

Muswell Hill charity Ambitious about Autism urgently needs money to help establish new college facilities for young people with the condition. East Finchley's Bill Tyler, a veteran fundraiser for autism organisations, is hoping to raise £15,000 for them this month.

Soon to be 82, he is aiming to walk 82 miles along the rocks and sand dunes of the coast of Bornholm, a Danish island in the Baltic he has known since 1961, when he was best man at a friend's wedding. His late friend settled there, and Bill has visited the island fairly often.

His connection with autism also goes back many years. *ARCHER* readers will remember his fundraising walks along the Inca Trail and the Camino de Santiago. His own nephew, Alex Harrison, is severely autistic. Now in his late 50s, he was not able to benefit from recent developments in combating the condition.

Training for young adults

Ambitious about Autism, who are responsible for the Treehouse School in Muswell Hill, are now extending their work to young people from late teens to mid-20s. They need furniture and teaching aids for their new quarters in the Tottenham College development, near Wood Green. They also have to move existing equipment from Hendon.



The round church at Osterlars on Bill's route. Photo Bill Tyler

Students will be trained to work responsibly within the community, with Sainsbury's at Muswell Hill among employers who are cooperating with the scheme.

Raise a glass

On Bornholm Bill will be walking alone, stopping overnight at B&Bs, and relying on Danish contacts. Being a Danish island, Carlsberg is always on hand, and Bill might well celebrate with a glass or two if his programme goes to plan.

Donations will be greatly appreciated. Please send cheques to Ambitious about Autism, The Pears Centre, Woodside Avenue, N10 3JA (mention Bill!) or go online at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com> and search for Bill Tyler.

Paws to help

The RSPCA is hosting a volunteer recruitment morning, with coffee and cakes, at its charity shop in the High Road, N2, on Saturday 18 June between 9am and 11am.

Branch manager Emma Prosser said the team was really keen to build up its volunteer base so that the charity could grow. They are looking for helpers in the shop and at the RSPCA clinic in Park Road, N2. They are also hoping to build up a fostering scheme in the area for homeless cats. Everyone is welcome to go along and find out more.



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Left: A new tree planted outside Budgens where the old one was dug up. Right: the old tree. Photos by Mike Coles

New resident takes root in the High Road

During the early spring, council workers seemed to be particularly energetic in removing dying or potentially dangerous trees from our streets and avenues. But it hasn't all been one way. New trees have been planted in selected spots too.

One such is a sapling that appeared last month in front of Budgens in the High Road and seems to be settling in well. It's in the spot occupied for decades by a tree which ended up leaning at a perilous 45-degree angle into the path of passers-by.

The council cut that tree down at the end of last year and left a severed stump behind. At the time, our local nature watcher and blogger Bug-woman grabbed the chance to peer into the tree's life history.

Reading the rings

"As we all know from our school biology classes, you can read a tree's age from its rings," she wrote, "but identifying clear rings on this trunk would be very difficult. And yet, we can make out the inner circle of heart wood, which forms when the cells in the trunk are no longer used to transport water from the roots to the leaves, and become a structural support instead.

"I am also intrigued by the very dark circle in the heart of

the stump, which looks almost as if a proper ring of bark formed, and was then grown over. Or is this a relic of some traumatic or unusual event? All I do know is that, just as the wrinkles on a beloved face tell us something about a person's life, so these rings have all the history of this tree, if someone with enough skill could read them."

Let's hope the tree that has taken its place has a long and healthy life in its new home... and keeps on the straight and narrow!

Is Woodside Copse in danger?

Did you know that we have a unique wildlife haven on our doorstep? Woodside Copse, just off Woodside Avenue, N10, is a small pocket of woodland, home to many birds and mammals, including bats. Free from human disturbance and untouched for 50 years, it is possibly richer in wildlife, for its size, than nearby Highgate Wood.

However, there are fears that Woodside Copse is now under threat. Despite substantial local opposition, Haringey Council has given permission for Ambitious About Autism (AAA), the charity that runs the neighbouring TreeHouse School, to develop the site.

Opponents of the develop-

ment fear that this will set a precedent allowing structures to be built on this site and argue that the long-term future of the woodland hangs in the balance now that an initial development has been allowed.

The Friends of Woodside Copse have opposed AAA's development at each stage,

claiming it allows excessive human intrusion into the copse.

Concern for trees

"It is part of an important green corridor and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation in Haringey's Local Plan, and should have been protected from development," say the Friends. "Shrubs and trees that have naturally grown for over 50 years will have to be removed to accommodate new structures, despite Tree Preservation Orders."

It is alleged that the site is already being cleared, even though it is not permitted to disturb birds during the nesting season from late February to late August. The Friends of Woodside Copse is asking people to report any tree cutting to them by email at friendsofwoodsidecopse@gmail.com or write a complaint on the Haringey Council website.

THE ARCHER has approached Ambitious About Autism for a comment but at the time of going to press had not received a reply.

New home care plans for children with limited life expectancy

Noah's Ark's Children's Hospice has partnered with Life Force, part of Whittington Health, in a new project to provide children's hospice care in the home to more families.

Life Force is a hospice at-home support service working across Camden, Haringey and Islington. The new project will rely on dedicated volunteers and the search is on to recruit more of these to help in family homes. Noah's Ark is calling its contribution to the pilot 'Project Applesed'.

Already volunteers magnify the hospice support Noah's Ark supplies in Central and North London communities by 8,000 hours a year. As well as providing support to new families, the pilot will capture vital information about the positive impact of volunteers in community hospice provision.

Relieving pressure on families

East Finchley resident and Barnet Civic Award winner Mary O'Toole introduced the Noah's Ark volunteer model in 2008. She

welcomes the new pilot saying "I'm delighted that the impact and value of this model is garnering interest nationwide. Certainly our experience has been that the benefits are proven to volunteers themselves as well as families, along with providing vital efficiencies to our organisation."

Mary emphasised how matching volunteers with overwhelmed families takes

the pressure off. Help with household tasks, gardening and with brothers and sisters allows families more precious time together. Staying on top of medical appointments and other arrangements can add to the strain, but those who feel the need for help can make a start by calling 020 8449 8877.



Mary O'Toole. Photo courtesy of Noah's Ark Childrens Hospice

This is also the telephone number for care queries, to donate, to volunteer or to support the hospice's charity shops. If you would like to sign up as a Home Support Volunteer please visit: www.noahsarkhospice.org.uk/family-support-roles.

For information on the successful charity partnership between Noah's Ark and Spurs visit www.ForPreciousMoments.com.

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Rubbish pile “an eyesore and a hazard”

Our article documenting the rising tide of litter locally (‘Are East Finchley streets getting more untidy?’ in *THE ARCHER*, May 2016) sparked a response from reader Kate Barnett.

Kate has been emailing Barnet Council for weeks about the large amount of rubbish being left around the commercial bins where her road Baronsmere Road meets the High Road.

Kate says: “It’s there nearly every day and it’s a complete eyesore. It’s a hazard for everyone, particularly the elderly or those with prams and buggies, as the bins and rubbish are on the pavement and the road next to a tree which almost completely blocks a way through. That’s not to mention the health hazard from rubbish spread around the road and pavement.”

Kate was keen to know why the bins couldn’t be moved to the alleyway behind the nearby

shops and put out only on the day of collection.

After some weeks a response arrived from Barnet Council to say there is not enough room for the bins at the back of the commercial premises and that they are therefore placed at the widest section of pavement.

The council claimed that black bags of rubbish left around the bins were from residents living above the shops and were collected daily.

Kate and other residents of Baronsmere Road who share her concerns will no doubt be keeping a close eye on the situation to see if the unsightly piles of rubbish can be properly managed.

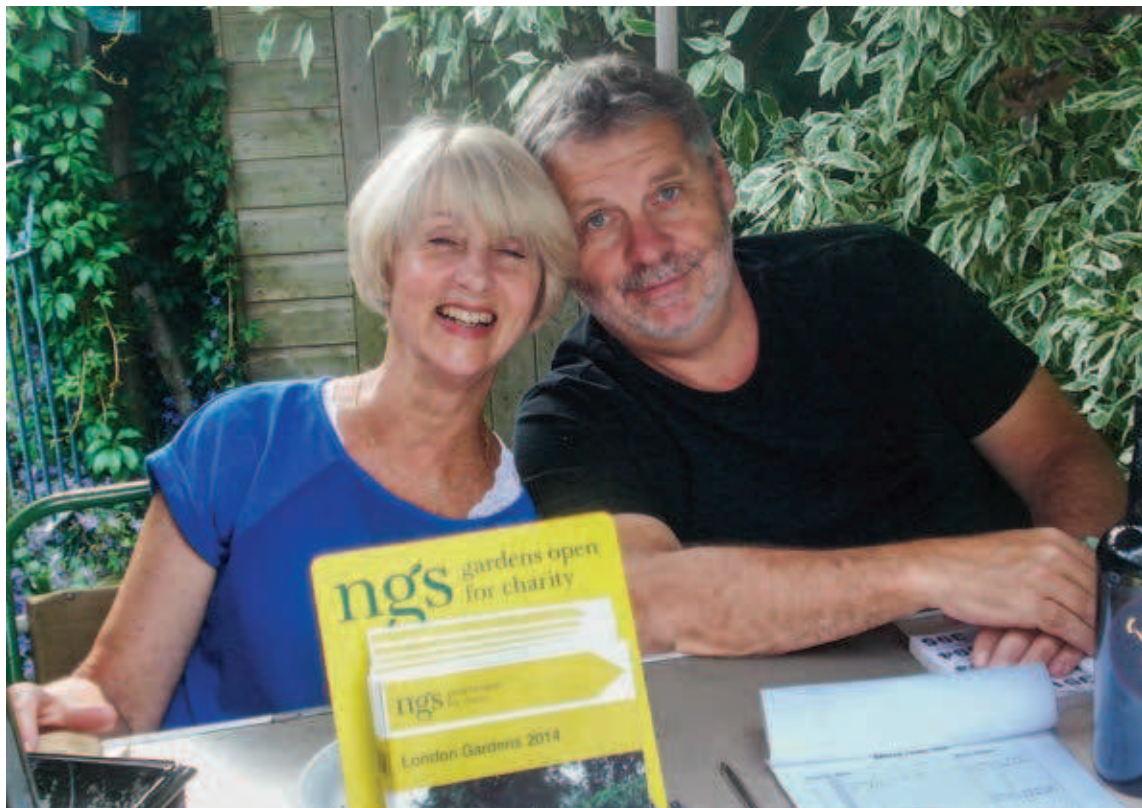
See Letters, page 11.



Unsightly piles: Rubbish mounts up on Baronsmere Road

Open house

East Finchley Open artists will be throwing open the doors to their homes and studios once again this year to welcome visitors over two weekends. A string of venues across East Finchley and Muswell Hill will be open for viewing, browsing and buying art works including jewellery, photos, textiles, paintings, sculptures and more. A full list of venues is available at www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk.



Tribute: Edwina and Nigel Roberts last year

Open season for gorgeous gardens

The Open Gardens season is with us again, giving people a chance to enjoy the creativity and share the knowledge of some talented host gardeners, all in aid of caring charities like Macmillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie and Parkinson’s UK.

Local organiser Susan Bennett, who regularly opens her garden in St Regis Close, N10, says gardeners support each other’s events by donating plants, serving tea and manning the gate.

A tribute to Nigel

She particularly remembers the help given to her by East Finchley couple Edwina and Nigel Roberts, who created their fabulous garden from scratch in two years. Sadly, as plans were afoot for this summer season, Nigel died suddenly at the gym, aged 62.

Edwina is holding a pop-up event inviting the public, friends and colleagues to celebrate his achievements. It takes place at their home at 58 Summerlee Avenue, N2, on Sunday 3 July from 2pm to 6pm. Admission is £3.50 (free for children) and there will be delicious

home made teas, plants for sale and a stall with jams, pickles and produce donated by fellow allotment holders.

June openings

Locally, Caro and David Broome’s garden at 79 Church Lane, N2, will be the first to open, on Sunday 12 June from 2pm to 6pm. The couple have two notable new features for 2016: a



Electric-tree: David Broome’s new installation

redesigned front garden and an ‘electric tree’ designed by David.

Caro and David will have plants for sale, homemade cakes and a raffle with prizes donated by local businesses, as well as a children’s treasure hunt with small prizes for everyone who takes part.

Susan Bennett and Earl

Hyde’s garden at 5 St Regis Close, Alexandra Park Road, N10, opens on Sunday 19 June from 2pm to 6.30pm, with homemade teas, a plant sale and a chance to see the tea house in their oriental garden. The garden has wheelchair access.

Find details of the full list of garden openings in the area at www.ngs.org.uk.



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YOUNG ARCHER



Generation game: Grandparents are welcomed to the Archer Academy

All ages together

Archer Academy staff and students welcomed more than 100 of the students' grandparents into school in May for their first ever Grandparents' Day.

After being greeted by enthusiastic student hosts and treated to a range of dance, drama and musical performances, the guests were given tours around the premises off Eagans Close. They then had time to ask questions and chat to students and staff while relaxing over afternoon tea.

As one of the guests put it: "It was wonderful to be able to

see the Archer Academy and its students in the way we did. The facilities are impressive as are the many messages displayed round the building for students to read and digest as they go about their daily lives. It must all contribute to the students' charm, respect and courtesy for others, and of course their ease with adults, which was demonstrated by every child we came across.



Wood work: Martin School pupils in their natural classroom

Pupils put their backs into outdoor learning

By Rachel Ellis

Classroom learning is being taken into the great outdoors as part of a new 'Forest School' initiative at Martin Primary School.

From this month, children in years two and six will undertake some of their learning in the 650 square metres of woodland attached to the school.

This pilot project will allow pupils to follow and explore the national curriculum surrounded by nature as part of a Forest School learning programme. It is designed to encourage children to care about the environment, provide safe opportunities to explore and take risks, improve physical and social skills, and increase resilience, self-confidence and independence.

Martin Primary is the only school in Barnet with its own woodland area. Coldfall Wood, an ancient wood, is just a few minutes' walk from the school and some of the Forest School learning will take place there.

In recent years, the school

has worked hard to integrate use of the school field and woodland into pupils' everyday learning with a number of initiatives including developing a fruit orchard, a pond and a small wildlife area.

The pilot scheme has received over £2,000 funding from the Martin Home School Association for equipment and protective clothing for the children.

Sambas and voltas on the road to Rio

Bishop Douglass School had a taste of the carnival with a Road to Rio tea party in May. Sixth form students teamed up with Age UK Barnet to host the event which included a samba lesson, a Brazilian buffet and a special game of bingo.



In the rhythm: Bishop Douglass pupils danced with their visitors

Students paired up with the older visitors to learn voltas, bota fogas and whisks before putting them all into action in a group dance. They also enjoyed a conga before tucking into empanadas and Brazilian meatballs called quibe.

The event was part of Get Set for Community Action, a new UK-wide programme created by the British Olympic Foundation and British Paralympic Association, made possible thanks to the Big Lottery Fund. Get Set for Community Action supports young people to plan and run projects which help to make their communities healthier and more active places to live.

The Bishop Douglass students are among thousands of 14-19 year olds from schools and youth groups across the UK working in teams to plan and deliver events like this in the run-up to the Olympics in Rio 2016.

Age UK Barnet holds tea dances every month at the Ann Owens Centre in Oak Lane, N2. Everyone is welcome. For more details visit our website www.ageukbarnet.org.uk or call 020 8432 1415.



Entertain and educate: Robert Winston with Holy Trinity's infants

Big thinker's science fun

Professor, medical doctor, scientist, television presenter and politician Robert Winston visited Holy Trinity Primary School at the end of April. Year four pupils William and Eddie report:

When Professor Lord Robert Winston visited Holy Trinity our science ambassadors greeted him and showed him to the hall where he gave an amazing assembly to the infants.

They were able to tell him their science thoughts and ask science questions. Most of the infants asked questions about the body and biology since that is Professor Winston's specialist subject. The children were then shown an experiment on the force of gravity and entry velocity.

Next Professor Winston went into the junior classes to do question and answer time.

It was fascinating! The older children asked questions about differences in their family, like being left handed when nobody else in their family was. Professor Winston did an experiment on getting an egg into a bottle and we were all amazed!

We also asked questions about mostly black holes, worm holes, aliens and calories. Then Professor Winston had to leave because he was very busy. After an unforgettable visit we were all star struck! "It was a unique and special experience, like nothing I've experienced before," said Jahmai, aged seven.

Cricketers in the pink

Mascot Pinky joined in the celebrations, pictured, when young players from the North Middlesex Cricket Club picked up the trophy for winning the Lady Taverners Under-11 one-day competition.

In fact three teams finished on the same number of league points but North Middlesex were declared overall winners for the number of runs scored. If your daughter would like to join the team, based off Park Road in Crouch End, email the club on nmcc.colts@gmail.com



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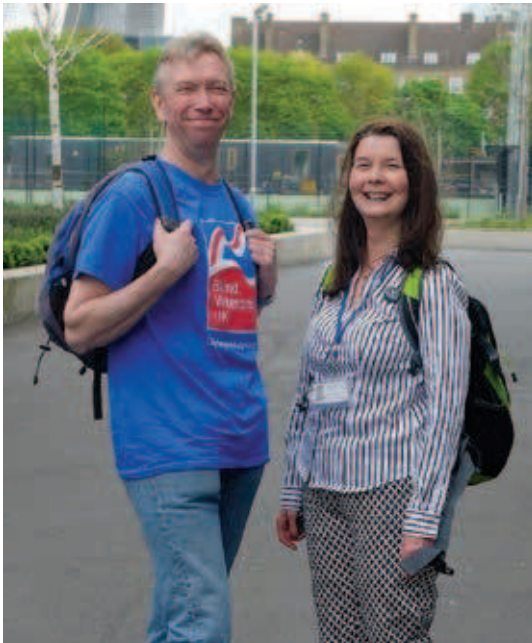
Are we there yet?

East-Finchley based journalist Jeff Robson and his partner Sue Bayford are about to step out on a staggering 50km walk to raise money for a veterans' charity. They will be trekking the distance from London to Cambridge on Saturday 2 July as part of a charity event in aid of Blind Veterans UK, which provides support for vision-impaired ex-servicemen and women.

Jeff, who works as a sub-editor for the 'I' newspaper and volunteers as a sub-editor for *THE ARCHER* too, said: "We're doing it because Sue's 91-year-old dad, Jack, served in the RAF during World War Two and has had vision problems for some years now. "Blind Veterans have made a huge difference to his life through an amazing range of gadgets and support services, as well as the support of a new circle of friends. "But they also help ex-service personnel who were wounded during more recent conflicts and terrorist attacks or have simply developed problems with their sight. They're a terrific organisation and we want to raise as much for them as we can. We've never done anything like this together before, but we're really looking forward to it."

Follow the blisters

The couple have set up a JustGiving page and would welcome all donations large and small. They'll also use the page to keep everyone updated on their progress. And they plan to post the odd picture of their blisters on Facebook too. Find Jeff and Sue's page at www.justgiving.com/Jeffrey-Robson.



Kitted out: Jeff and Sue start their training. Photo Sian Bayford.

Multicoloured workshop

By Daphne Chamberlain

"Loosen up! Have fun! There's no right or wrong way. Just enjoy it." Words from a smiling Laura Fishman to her mixed group of anxious novices and practising artists. It was the start of a watercolour workshop in Stephens House and Gardens last month. Did her easygoing approach work? Undoubtedly yes.



Laura Fishman's water colour of *The Bothy* at Stephens House.

Formerly anxious novice Pamela Ojok summed up the day as "Fun, informative, positive and encouraging", saying, "I now have a new hobby!"

It's a hobby which is easier to pursue now there is no need to lug around water containers and large palettes. We practised working with brushes designed like fountain pens, with an inbuilt reservoir of water, and folding mini-palettes the size and weight of a diary.

Out in the grounds we sketched flowers and shrubs, looking for shapes and outlines, not details. Back in the house we had a free hand, with the less experienced playing with the many different ways of using brushes. This is a wonderful way of producing abstract pictures. Laura demonstrated and gave us handouts of the various techniques.

Laura Fishman was Artist in Residence at Stephens House and Gardens last year, and is now their Art Curator. She is a member of East Finchley Open, many of whose pictures are on display in the house.

Catch up with more of EFO in their Open House programme in July, and Laura herself will be running an Autumn Colours Workshop in October. For further information, see www.laurafishmanworkshops.blogspot.co.uk and www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk. Stephens House and Gardens is at 17 East End Road, N3.

RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

In. Out. Shake it all about!

We can't pretend any longer that it's not happening. Yes, the time has come to decide which old Etonian you loathe the least and to choose between cheddar and camembert.

According to the stayers, leaving Europe will lead to a total meltdown of everything. The rich, super rich and stupid rich will move to Monte Carlo leaving abandoned investment opportunities all across the country. No more will the sound of gold-plated Bentleys be heard echoing down the canyons of Kensington and the only sound will be of wailing property speculators leaping from half-finished luxury apartments. All of which sounds pretty good to me.

But it won't all be good news as foreign companies move their factories to parts of Europe where no one goes to on holiday. And seeing as hardly any factory is not foreign owned, Birmingham will look like the more run down bits of Detroit.

Blond Boris, mad Nigel and the Smith twins (Ian and Duncan) want to sell you a different story. If we leave, the country will be great again. We will be able to go back to the good old days of Victoria and Empire complete with poverty, injustice and child labour.

We'll be able to kick out foreigners, save the pound, the monarchy and Blond Boris's career. Not sure if I want to save anything of Boris, let alone his career. And if we don't leave, Nigel Farage will discover his secret Scotsman and demand referendum after referendum until he gets the answer he wants.

But let's not get too hung up on the downside. Here in N2 we have French food fairs, the Continental stores, good Italian coffee outside the station, great restaurants of all nationalities and, as Time Out concluded, we're the happiest people in London. So why don't we just ignore the politicians, declare independence and then we can decide to stay in Europe or leave and become an offshore tax haven that welcomes not just hedge funds, but gardeners from everywhere.

Big Local public meeting

People who live, work or volunteer in the north west corner of East Finchley are invited to the first Annual General Meeting of the Grange Big Local (GBL) on 5 June at the Ann Owens Centre on Oak Lane, N2, from 4.30pm to 6.30pm.

The GBL project team recently launched plans for how it will spend £279,000 of lottery money to transform local estates and surrounding areas in the area bounded by Church Lane, East End Road, the North Circular and the High Road over the next two years (*THE ARCHER*, May 2016). The remainder of the £1 million award will be spent over the following eight years.

The project team is looking for people interested in becoming members of a new GBL Partnership Board, who will be elected at the AGM. The board will have up to 17 people, at least nine of whom must live in the GBL area. If you would like to put your name forward for election, please email Jon Woolfson at info@grangebiglocal.org or ring him on 020 8364 8400, ext 241. Please also get in touch if you're planning to attend the meeting, as this will help with arrangements on the day. A programme can be found at www.grangebiglocal.org.

Needle match duo

By Sheila Armstrong

Sewing is still a popular hobby as demonstrated by the return of the BBC TV series *The Great British Sewing Bee*, from the same stable as *Bake Off*.

For this series, there have been two contestants from East Finchley to root for: Charlotte Newland and Duncan Carter.

Charlotte lives with her husband and three children. Her day job is working as an editor for a medical research journal, but after hours she sews anything and everything and has done from an early age. Taught by her mother, grandmother and at school, she can be recognised by the tattoo of a needle and

thread on her arm.

Duncan hails from Scotland originally and teaches physics and maths by day. A newcomer to sewing, he took it up three years ago because he was bored with men's clothes in the shops. His interest is in modern men's wear and designer clothes. He is also an online vlogger.

Unfortunately the judges decided to say goodbye to Duncan in the first week, leaving Charlotte to carry the banner for N2.

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- **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.
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- **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.

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- **Art Classes**. Call Henry on 8888 5133.
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- **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 tunes** @ TOC Highgate Hill, join in playing by ear - 1st & 3rd Tues monthly 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.
- **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.

Strings attached

Violinist Katya Popylanska, 24, reached the final of the Tunbridge Wells International Music Competition on Sunday 1 May. She came through the three-day preliminary rounds to reach the semi-finals on Saturday beating a field of more than 80 entrants from countries as far as China and New Zealand.

Katya, who lives in East Finchley, is originally from Toronto, Canada and is part way through a Masters programme at the prestigious Guildhall School of Music and Drama, in London. She came joint second in the Strings section and described the Competition as "a wonderful experience".

The Tunbridge Wells International Young Concert Competition is held biennially and this year became part of the Mayfield Festival of Music and the Arts, in East Sussex, now in its 46th year. The Competition started in 1979 and is recognised around



Finalist: Katya Popylanska

the world as a unique event for outstanding young musicians as they embark upon a professional career.

A triple treat

Review by Ken Carter

The excellent London Ripieno Singers and soloists performed at All Saints Church, Durham Road, N2, at the end of April.

We began the evening with Mary witnessing the dying of her son, followed by a bare, ecstatic setting of the mass progressing, after the interval, to a short requiem. That is, we heard the Stabat Mater of Josef Rheinberger, the Missa Choralis of Liszt and the Requiem Brevis of Geoffrey Hanson.

Rheinberger was a prolific late 19th century composer. He began as an organist, before becoming conductor to the Munich Court. The Stabat Mater had a dignified sobriety, given weight by the rich organ commentary.

Liszt's Missa Choralis mass dates from 1865 when, aged 54, he received minor orders of the Roman Catholic church. The result was a distinguished, simple and heartfelt statement of belief, reaching sublime sonority in a soaring soprano, sung purely and ravishingly by an unidentified member of the Ripieno Society.

Geoffrey Hanson's Requiem Brevis was dignified and austere,

too, given humanity through richly voiced interventions from the four soloists. It benefitted from the occasional awkward intervals which jauntily introduced a note of realism into the proceedings.

Among the 'other works' by Geoffrey Hanson, I particularly enjoyed the impishness of his setting of Osbert Sitwell's Orpheus and the mellow authority of his Soliloquy for organ.

What's On...

Saturday 11 June

- **Fair in the Square**, Pond Square, Highgate, 12.30pm to 5.30pm: live music, colourful stalls and lots of children's activities, plus the ever-popular sheep show.

- **Wild Flower and Pollinator Day** at Long Lane Pasture, opposite the fire station in Long Lane, N3, 10am to midday. With the help of warm, dry weather the pasture will look its prettiest in June. Wild flowers, grasses and insects will bring the pasture alive. Booklets and advisors will be available to identify finds.

- **Historical High Barnet: guided walk** with City of London guide Paul Baker. Explore over 1,000 years of history and royalty in this fascinating area. Meet outside Barnet College, Wood Street, EN5 at 2.30pm. For more details call Paul on 07506 761294 or visit www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net.

- **Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society's Flower Show** on a royal birthday theme, 3-5.30pm at the Free Church Hall, Northway, NW11 6PB. Includes 'first-timers' classes, photography and flower-arranging. Children's fancy dress parade and adults' fancy hats competition at 3.30pm, Punch and Judy, Hospice preserves table sale. Teas. Entry £2; free for members, under-18s and anyone wearing fancy hat or accompanying kids in fancy dress. More details from www.hortsoc.co.uk

Sunday 12 June

- **Open garden** at 79 Church Lane, N2, in aid of the National Garden Scheme charities, 2pm-6pm, with homemade teas, plant sale and a raffle. New for 2016: a redesigned front garden and an 'electric tree'.

- **Free concert** at East Finchley Methodist Church, High Road, N2, opposite Creighton Avenue. Stephen Hadley, baritone, and Ian

A spirited world

Local artist Harriet Connides, fresh from her successful exhibition at the Phoenix Cinema, is currently writing a book about Victorian mediums, which she is illustrating.

"I particularly love painting women, love the decorative elements of dress, the combination of static figures and movement, like billowing wind which makes hair blow, or creates intricate patterns," says Harriet, whose work often incorporates Art Nouveau and fairy tale motifs.

She has exhibited widely, including shows in the Friends Room at the V&A Museum, The Obsidian Gallery, Canterbury Cathedral, Burgh House and artsdepot in North Finchley. Her work can be seen on the website www.harrietconnides.com and she also takes commissions.



Fairy tale: One of Harriet's works

Reading challenge

Barnet Libraries are looking for volunteers aged 14-18 to help with the Summer Reading Challenge at East Finchley Library, which encourages younger children, aged four to 11, to read six books.

Volunteers spend eight hours over the course of the summer which can count towards the Duke of Edinburgh and Challenge Awards.

A copy of the application form and role profile is available

to download from www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/libraries/teenage-library-services.html. Alternatively, contact Lucy Merritt on 020 8359 4411 or email lucy.merritt@barnet.gov.uk. Closing date is Friday 10 June.

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

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Letters to the editor



Starling tree's summer clothing

Dear Editor,

I just read your article about the London plane tree on the High Road ("The Starling Tree", May 2016) and remembered taking a photo of this tree in June 2014 on a lovely summer's evening, above, thinking not many places in London can boast of such a large beautiful tree as we have in East Finchley.

Yours faithfully,
Tony Dennison,
Address supplied.

Heritage of the starling tree

Dear Editor,

Your photograph on page 6 of the May edition "The Starling Tree" prompted me to hunt down in my loft a poem I wrote dedicated to that very tree shortly after first encountering it in 1983 when we moved to East Finchley.

I was much moved then by the lingering heritage of the ancient wild wood amidst which we live, and which continues to reappear in the shape of foxes visiting our gardens and streets.

Interesting how your preceding article on page 5 "Are East Finchley streets getting more untidy?" almost prefigured the poem's penultimate line. Here is the poem:

A KERBSIDE TREE

Once it was a question of magic
the centre of a forest unseen.
Once it was a question of worship
a king and his lady queen.
Once it was a question of outlaws
hiding in the thickest green.
Now it is a matter of empties,
damp where the dogs have been.
Though look up
and see how the starlings gleam.

Keep up the good work, keeping the spirit of the Archer in East Finchley alive!

Yours faithfully,
Paul Thompson
Huntingdon Road, N2.

Tree-mendous

Dear Editor,

With regard to your article "The Starling Tree" in May's issue, after living happily in East Finchley for nearly 30 years, I am delighted to find that I have my own tree.

Yours faithfully,
Nick Starling,
Durham Road, N2.

Litter is everyone's problem

Dear Editor,

I had to smile reading last month's ARCHER article about litter on the High Road. A shopkeeper commented that he has to clear litter from his front entrance every day. Much of the litter problem is caused by shops that over-fill their bins, spilling rubbish over the pavement. And when there is food material, foxes cause mess in searching for that. Shouldn't shops be penalised for littering, or can they get bigger/more bins? Of course customers of fast food and coffee outlets cause much of the mess, but to be fair to customers, even if they might want to bin their rubbish, there aren't enough bins in strategic points. If you just look at where rubbish accumulates, such as the seat outside the Youth Theatre, put bins right there. And could fast food and coffee outlets be encouraged to sponsor extra bins?

We can't keep on pointing fingers at others if we don't train our children to do the right thing, or do our bit to make our environment better. Personally I keep the pavement clean outside my own home. And on my walks around the neighbourhood I'm the funny bloke picking up litter and putting it in the next bin.

Yours faithfully,
Roger Beeson,
Address supplied.

Editor's note: Please send us your own photos of litter horrors around East Finchley. Email them to: the-archer@lineone.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.

What's the rush?

Dear Editor,

Regarding your "Soapbox" in May's issue complaining about the 20mph speed limit along Spaniards Road in Hampstead, the distance from the Spaniards Inn to White-stone Pond is about half-a-mile.

Assuming no congestion, this would take 60 seconds at 30 mph and 90 seconds at 20 mph. I wonder what Charles Lewis would do with the 30 seconds saved?

Yours faithfully,
Mike Holt,
Chandos Road, N2

Free Art

Fair tickets

By Daphne Chamberlain
Archer readers are offered complimentary tickets for the Affordable Art Fair on Hampstead Heath, 15-19 June.

The offer comes from East Finchley resident Flora Teh-Morris, director of the Mint Art Gallery. Mint Art will occupy Stand J3 on the Lower Fair-ground Site, East Heath Road, NW3 1TH, and their exhibits this year will include paintings by Laura Fishman from her residency at Stephens House and Gardens.

The complimentary tickets also include entry to the Charity Private View and Summer Art Soiree. For free tickets please email info@mintarts.com with a postal address indicating which day you would like to attend and for how many people. Flora has a combination of print and digital tickets for different days so readers need to specify days and numbers.

Tickets are limited, so do put in your request as early as possible. For information about the Fair, see affordableartfair.com/hampstead.

Governors

wanted

Martin Primary School is looking for volunteers from the local community to join its governing body.

Katalin Aradi, the new chair of governors, says: "We are in particular keen to hear from people who have experience or interest in special educational needs, finance, premises and facilities and procurement."

If you are interested you can find out more by emailing: chair@martinprimary.barnetmail.net.



Tidy up: The litter pick team in action

Litter: some people are picking it up!

Not everyone is leaving litter lying around. On Saturday 14 May, a group of stalwarts from The Finchley Society gathered at the junction of the High Road and the North Circular to spend two hours gathering all sorts of rubbish from both roads. A total of 16 bags of litter was collected and the area looked a lot smarter afterwards. Let's try and keep it that way.

Titans of romance

By Stephen Warner and Tim Read

The North London Sinfonia comes to All Saints' Church, Durham Road, N2, for its summer concert on 9 July with works by two titans of Austro-German Romantic music: Mahler's ebullient *Symphony No. 4* and Wagner's passionate *Wesendonck-Lieder*. In both works they are joined by the prize-winning Australian mezzo-soprano Lotte Betts-Dean.

A long-established community orchestra, the Sinfonia gives three concerts each year, in recent years performing in various parts of north London: at home in North Finchley but also in Highgate, Hampstead Garden Suburb and Palmers Green.

The orchestra is particularly known and admired for the range of its repertoire and its imaginative programming. Under adventurous conductor Owen Leech it performs not only warhorses of the canon like Saint-Saëns' 'Organ' Symphony or Beethoven's 'Eroica' but also more rarely-heard gems and forgotten works.

Every concert also features a gifted young professional musician in a concerto or vocal work, which members say is always inspiring for the orchestra and provides a wonderful opportunity for soloists to perform with a friendly and supportive

orchestra.

If this all sounds a bit challenging, the orchestra's 'no auditions' policy gives many local amateur musicians the opportunity to come and play with a professional conductor. The emphasis is very much on the local community from which the musicians and audiences are drawn.

The orchestra is always keen to recruit new members, particularly brass and string players. Further information can be found at www.nlsinfonia.org.

Fast-track

coaching

Farhad Divecha from East Finchley, managing director at AccuraCast, a digital agency and consultancy, has been selected as one of only 30 directors in the UK to attend a special business coaching programme held in Google's London headquarters.

The agency was handpicked from 30,000 British digital agencies that participate in the Google Partners programme, based on the agency's outstanding results on client advertising campaigns and potential for growth.

The three-month coaching programme is designed and delivered by renowned business consultant Robert Craven. It involves lectures, workshops and one-to-one coaching sessions.

Martin

memories

John Pickering will be retiring as deputy headteacher of Martin Primary School at the end of the summer term. If any ex-pupils or parents would like to contribute a written memory for a 'This is Your Life' style book please email your memory to office@martinprimary.barnetmail.net.



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Take the plunge in wild and beautiful spots

By Nick Young

Fancy a holiday in Spain that doesn't involve a crowded beach resort, but does involve swimming in somewhere other than a crowded pool? Local man John Weller has the answer, for he has recently had his first book published on this subject.

Wild Swimming Spain, co-authored with Lola Culsan, is not your average guidebook. It contains details of more than 150 wild swimming venues across Spain: rivers, lakes, waterfalls.

It has been three years in the making. John, who did the photography, says: "Most of it was desk research, then photographing them in Spain took most of last summer."

Finchley Lido veteran

A project manager for Camden Council, John is a keen landscape photographer as well as an enthusiastic swimmer. "I've always swum outdoors," says John, who is a year-round user of the men's pond on Hampstead Heath. He has lived in East Finchley for nine years, but his connection with the area goes back much further, for as a child he used to swim in the

open-air pool at Finchley Lido.

He describes his book as being all about "trying to get away from the beaches and discovering beautiful places to swim". It is one of a series of books published by Wild Things Publishing which aims to get people to experience the great outdoors. John got in touch with them when he heard that they were looking for contributors to a book on Spain.

In good company

Wild Swimming Spain has received favourable coverage in *The Guardian*, and was the subject of a recent evening at Stanfords, the famous map and travel bookshop in central London. "It was very successful. We sold out!" John told *The Archer*; "The biggest honour was when I saw, either side of my photo in the window,



Leap of faith: One of John Weller's stunning photos from his new book

George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* and Laurie Lee's *As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning*... I was really chuffed to be sharing a window with such illustrious and inspiring

writers."

John Weller will hand deliver signed copies of his book to East Finchley residents

for a special price of £11 (RRP is £16). Anyone interested can email him on johnweller67@gmail.com.

Amazing story of the Huntingfield Paintress

By Daphne Chamberlain

You can read all about a lady called the Huntingfield Paintress in a new book by local writer Pamela Holmes, and then go and look at what she painted! Huntingfield is a remote Suffolk village, but it has a church with its entire ceiling painted by this 19th century vicar's wife. It took her seven years, by the end of which she was described as crippled.

Why have we not heard about this before? That was the question bothering Pamela Holmes after she was shown the church by a friend. Virtually nothing else has been recorded beyond the facts that the solitary painter was Mildred Holland, who painted the work in the 1850s and 1860s, and her husband paid for the paint and gold leaf.

Credible fiction

So, as Pamela's book clearly states, it is a novel. It is her interpretation of Mildred's personality and what drove her to climb ladders, and later to be winched up, to lie on her back for hours, creating an amazing 15th-century-style work of art.



Mildred Holland's labour of love. Photo courtesy of Pamela Holmes

Her Mildred is very convincing. Using imagination and extensive research into life and conditions of the time, she tells the story of a lively, imaginative,

but deeply frustrated woman who had admired works of art all over Europe, but had never been allowed to develop her own talent until she seized upon this project.

Pamela Holmes, who won the Jane Austen Short Story Award in 2014, told *THE ARCHER*: "The church is stunning and Mildred should be celebrated."

This is an absorbing book, easy to read, but providing plenty to think about. I hope to see that ceiling for myself this summer. *The Huntingfield Paintress* is published by Urbane Publications, ISBN 978-1-910692-66-0.

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