



Generations game: Old Barn Preschool pupils past and present celebrate together

Happy Birthday to us!

Pupils past and present came along to celebrate the 35th birthday of the Old Barn Preschool group in their home at the Scouts Hall in Long Lane, N3.

The not-for-profit nursery had a double cause for celebration because it had just received a 'Good' rating from Ofsted. It has had previous homes at St Mary's in Finchley Central and in the former Old Barn Centre in Tarling Road, from where it got its present name.

Light at the end of the tunnel

This is a view not many of us see... the very end of the Northern line tube tunnel as it emerges close to Cherry Tree Wood on the slope up to East Finchley station.

Workmen can be seen laying new bedding for the track supports, replacing the existing drainage system and re-laying the tracks themselves as part of an ongoing modernisation programme. The photo was posted on the @northernline Twitter account.

Check your travel plans because track replacement work will close the Northern line north of Archway for two more weekends in September.

Replacement buses will run between Archway and High Barnet/Mill Hill East, including East Finchley, on 10-11 September and 17-18 September.

According to Transport for London, these are the last two weekends of closures scheduled for our branch of the Northern line this year. A 24-hour service for the Northern line is due to launch "in the autumn", meaning trains will run throughout Friday and Saturday nights.



Tunnel vision: Contractors re-lay the Northern line track at East Finchley. Photo courtesy ???

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Man convicted of two attacks

By Janet Maitland

A man who brutally attacked, raped and robbed two women in broad daylight has been convicted at Wood Green Crown Court.

Dylan McDonald, 19, targeted his first victim when she was walking along Southey Road, N15, on her way home from work at 2.30pm on 11 March. He forced her into a nearby stairwell where he stole her mobile phone, camera and watch before raping her twice at knifepoint and punching her repeatedly in the face. After he ran away the woman raised the alarm and was taken to hospital where she was treated for her injuries.

Three days later, McDonald attacked a woman who had gone for an afternoon walk in Alexandra Palace Park. He cycled towards her, produced a 30cm knife, grabbed her and demanded her rucksack. The victim was so terrified she struggled to remove it, so McDonald became impatient and stabbed her in the leg.

She fell to the ground in pain and McDonald removed her watch and took her mobile phone, money and house keys. Then he dragged her into the undergrowth and raped her twice at knifepoint. After contacting police, the woman was taken to hospital where she was treated for her injuries.

Overwhelming evidence

McDonald was arrested on the evening of the second attack. A substantial amount of evidence was found in his bedroom, including bloodstained clothing, the first victim's property and two silver kitchen knives. Forensic tests later matched the blood on one of the knives to the second victim.

Despite the overwhelming evidence against him, McDonald pleaded not guilty and subjected both traumatised victims to a week-long trial before he was found guilty on 26 July. He will be sentenced on 7 October.

Detective Inspector Mark Rogers said: "Because of the strength and determination of the two women, this dangerous individual has been brought to justice. He is likely to receive a substantial custodial sentence."

Weed war and walks in Coldfall Wood

By Ann Bronkhorst

After dealing with collapsing and vandalised bridges over the little stream that runs through Coldfall Wood (see THE ARCHER, June 2016), Haringey Council now has to contend with an invasive plant.

The dreaded Japanese knotweed has spread from the electricity substation on the eastern side of the wood into the grounds of its neighbour Coldfall Primary School, where it threatens their allotment. Potentially, too, it threatens the wood itself.

The problem was noticed last year but it has taken Haringey months of negotiation to achieve decisive action by UK Power Networks. The company has appointed a specialist firm to remove the knotweed over several weeks, starting on 17 August.

Contaminated soil will be vacuum-excavated, removed from the site and stored elsewhere for sterilisation. Further treatments of the site (the substation and the school grounds) may be necessary.

Coldfall School governors, staff and parents will be watching closely, as will the Friends of Coldfall Wood and Haringey Council. Japanese knotweed is notoriously costly to remove and destroy: a householder's and landowner's nightmare.

Woodland walks

On a happier note, the varied range of walks in the wood continues through the late summer and the autumn. On Saturday 10 September at 10am Iain Loasby will lead another of his popular Tree walks and if you missed Cindy Blaney's Bat walk in August she'll be leading another on Friday 23 September, starting at 6.30pm.

On Sunday 2 October at 2pm a Photography walk will search for woodland colours. Other walks will cater for fungus enthusiasts and the geologically-minded; visit www.coldfallwoods.co.uk for details and to book places.

Walking football

We were unfortunately provided with the wrong email address for Middlesex FA in last month's front page article about walking football. To find out about sessions near you please contact Andrew Perren@middlesexfa.com.



Sessional Youth Worker Wanted

The Green Man Community Centre in East Finchley are looking for a self employed Sessional Youth worker to lead a 2 afternoon a week Computer Homework Club for local Young people from September.

We are looking for a youth worker who is enthusiastic and self-started with IT skills.

For more information send your CV to helen@greenmancentre.org



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