



Regular Events

Sport & Fitness

- **Finchley & Hornsey Ramblers Group**
Call Vivien 8883 8190
- **Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club**, Summers Lane N12. New and experienced bowlers welcome.
- **Muswell Hill Bowling Club**, Kings Ave, N10. New & experienced bowlers welcome. Tel: 8883 0433.
- **Outdoor Bootcamp** 9.30am & 10.30am every Sat; **Boxing and Kettlebells**, 6.45pm Weds, Victoria Park, N3. Contact Sarah 07956 589902.
- **Outdoor Fit Camp** Lyttelton Playing Fields, N2, 6.30pm Wed and 9.30am Sat. Call Martin on 07809 593952.
- **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 beginners' course** at Yogalogy, High Road, N2. Contact 020 70187377 or info@yogalogy.co.uk
- **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.
- **'Calm & Sing' workshops**. Contact Angie on missangiea@yahoo.co.uk
- **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.



Dr Sam Grove talks about his study of Charles Darwin at Black Gull Books. Photo Mike Coles

How Darwin's theory was hijacked

By Daphne Chamberlain

In his new book *The Reluctant Radical*, Dr Sam Grove argues that Darwin's theory of evolution or natural selection, the most radical idea of the 19th century, was taken over by reactionaries in the 20th century. When he developed this interpretation in his PHD at the University of Nottingham, he was told he was being "extremely audacious".

Last month he visited the Black Gull Bookshop on the High Road to explain his belief. East Finchley is home ground to Sam. His family home from the age of three was in Bedford Road. He attended Martin School, and now lives in St Pancras Court. Friends and family turned out in force to hear his views.

He pointed out that Darwin

was not the first evolutionist. He was, however, the first to conclude that not everything proceeds on "a pre-ordained conveyor belt". Nature is not perfect.

Darwin's theory was originally rejected and did not attain scientific status until the 1920s and 30s. By then, Sam believes, it had been made to fit a con-

servative world view, being portrayed as lawlike, stable and hierarchical. Through the 20th century complexities continued to be pushed aside.

To find out more, you should of course read the book. At present there is only a limited edition of *The Reluctant Radical*, but it should be published fully soon.

What's On...

Thursday 6 to Saturday 8 April

• **The Guild Players** present *Rude Awakenings* by Nicolas Ridely and *A Little Box of Oblivion* by Stephen Bean at Finchley Methodist Church Hall, Ballards Lane, N3, at 7.45pm. All tickets £10. Box office: 020 8346 6337 or book online at www.ticketsource.co.uk/theguildplayers.

Saturday 8 April

• In their LAUNCH programme providing theatre opportunities for young people **Jackson's Lane** presents *Extremism*, part of the National Theatre's festival of plays called Connections. *Extremism* shows a class reacting when a student is removed by his teacher ... and the police. Tickets £5. Jacksons Lane, Archway Road, N6 5AA. www.jacksonslane.org.uk.

• **Antiques Valuation Day** hosted by Finchley WI at Stephens House and Gardens, East End Road, N3, 10am to 3pm. Bring up to three items (no furniture) for valuation in return for a £10 donation to support local charities. The WI Cake and Crafts stall will be there and Sunday lunch can be booked with Stephens House direct via their website www.stephenshouseandgardens.com or telephone 020 8346 7812.

• **Free concert at East Finchley Methodist Church**, High Road, opposite Creighton Avenue, 7.30pm; Viola da Cunha, mezzo soprano, Andrea Whittaker, soprano, Litsah Tunnah, violin, and Caroline Soresby, piano, perform works by Handel, Faure,

R. Strauss, De Falla, Franco Leoni and others. Free admission; collection in aid of Reigate & Banstead Women's Aid. Venue fully accessible.

Friday 14 April

• **Battle of Barnet**: an anniversary guided walk with City of London guide Paul Baker. Meet at junction of Great North Road and Hadley Green Road at 2.30pm. More details from Paul on 07506 761294 or at www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net.

Sunday 16 April

• **Dickens in North London**: guided walk with City of London guide Paul Baker. Meet at High Barnet tube station at 2.30pm. More details from Paul on 07506 761294 or at www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net.

Sunday 23 April

• **Little Angel Theatre** presents *Wow! Said the Owl*, based on the acclaimed children's book by Tim Hopgood, at Jacksons Lane, Archway Road, N6 5AA. For ages 2 to 5 at 12pm and 3pm. Tickets £9.95. www.jacksonslane.org.uk.

Monday 24 to Saturday 29 April

• **Finchley & Friern Barnet Operatic Society** presents *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* at The Dugdale Centre, London Road, Enfield, EN2 6DS; 7.45pm and Saturday matinee at 2.30pm. Tickets £16-£18 (concessions available). Box office: 020 8807 6680 or www.dugdalecentre.co.uk.

Friday 28 and Saturday 29 April

• Fresh from the London International

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

Mime Festival, **Silver Lining** present a new **cabaret night** inspired by historical women from Anne Frank to Rosa Parks to Madonna, at Jacksons Lane, Archway Road, N6 5AA. The all-female cast overcome obstacles and perform amazing feats celebrating strength, wisdom and female legacy. 8pm. Tickets £12.95. www.jacksonslane.org.uk

Saturday 29 April

• **Hampstead Garden Suburb**: guided walk with City of London guide Paul Baker. Meet at Golders Green tube station at 2.30pm. More details from Paul on 07506 761294 or at www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net.

Sunday 30 April

• **A talk and Q&A session** by historian Onyeka on *Shakespeare's Other Countrymen: 'Blackamoore wenches' and Barbary African 'king children' in Tudor England*, Phoenix Cinema, High Road, N2, 2pm to 3.15pm; £5 (£3 concessions). Book online at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk or pay on the day.

Through April until the end of the year

• **East Finchley Open Artists** host an exhibition of new works on the theme of **Regeneration** at Stephens House and Gardens, East End Road, N3. This venue becomes an ongoing showcase for the work of these local artists. Open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm and selected open Sundays. More details at www.stephenshouseandgardens.com and www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk.

Behind the scenes at a university

Review by Diana Cormack

The idea of fast-track university degrees, recently outlined in the press, must have made local author Gordon Mott wonder if ministers and mandarins at the Department for Education had been reading his debut novel.

In *Higher: The Tale of a University* the idea of a two-year degree course is put forward as one of the ways to revive Mixton, an ailing university languishing near the bottom of the league tables. With only Bolton below them and Whitehall demanding to see an improvement, the university faces closure unless it can produce better results.

That is easier said than done and this amusing story, co-written with Andrew Crisell, has a multi-faceted plot following the machinations of the man sent to enforce measures to this end. His main objective is to get rid of old degrees and introduce new ones in non-academic subjects.



First novel: Gordon Mott

Much of the humour in the tale derives from the way he attempts to do this along with the reaction of students and staff to the proposed changes. So we have scatty student sit-ins and demonstrations, lecturers following their own strange agendas, conniving locals, sex, drugs, death and disaster, the absurdity of which bring a smile and occasionally a laugh out loud.

The book, available on Amazon, is a first for Gordon, of Greenhalgh Walk, N2, who is writing about a world with which he is familiar and he does it well. But don't just take my word for it. This comment from radio presenter Professor Laurie Taylor says it all: "A highly entertaining though savage satire on the current state of higher education - one which will resonate bitterly with anyone working in academia."