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The Archer

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How football made my brother talk again

By Diana Cormack

Dhanu Tailor, who works at the CW Andrew Pharmacy, 32 High Road, proudly told *The Archer* about her daughter Manisha who was awarded the MBE in the New Year's Honours List for 'services to football and diversity in sport'. They do not yet know when and where the presentation will take place, but the story behind the award is compelling.



Manisha Tailor leads one of her coaching sessions

Manisha taught in primary schools for over a decade. She was preparing to become a headteacher when family circumstances caused her to choose a change of career. Her mother had undergone triple by-pass surgery, her sister had moved out to university and her twin brother was in need of one-to-one care.

Breaking the silence

Manisha has always been devoted to her brother. Sadly, at the age of 18, he had succumbed to depression and other mental health issues believed to have been brought about by bullying at school, and he stopped speaking.

But a breakthrough was to come from an unexpected quarter. During her teaching career Manisha had pioneered football amongst Asian children and had run school football clubs with both mixed and girls' teams from different ethnic backgrounds, achieving success in local leagues.

During this time, her brother recognised her football kit and said: "Football... Manisha." He had not spoken for almost 15 years.

"Football was our love and passion since childhood," says Manisha, "So I instantly decided to make a career in football work with the view of aiding his recovery, but also

helping others in a similar situation."

Changing lives

To this end she has worked with the provision of weekly football sessions at the Wingate and Finchley Football Club on Summers Lane, N12. Here those with a mental health condition can socialise with others,

engage with their carers and keep healthy in a non-pressured environment.

Manisha has also helped to establish a Disabled Fans Forum there, and continues to follow her belief that football has the power to change lives. It sounds like a New Year's Honour well earned.

Shakespeare's other countrymen: a talk

Current research shows that there was a notable population of African people living and working in Tudor England, providing skills and trades. The Tudor era, a period that is widely celebrated in theatre, contains a vast resource of history concerning politics, war, exploration and fashion.

However, what is often lacking from representations from this period, particularly depictions of Shakespeare's work, is the diversity of ethnicities residing in England.

You can join the historian Onyeka, author of *Blackamoors: Africans in Tudor England, their Presence, Status and Origins*, at the Phoenix Cinema, as he examines Shakespeare's other countrymen and the significance of their story in Tudor England.

This event on Sunday 30 April

from 2pm to 3.15pm has been organised by Barnet Libraries in conjunction with Cityread London 2017 and Narrative Eye. Tickets are £5 (£3 concs) and you can book in advance online at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk.

For more information visit Cityread and Barnet Libraries online, or visit www.narrative-eye.org.uk for more information about their educational programme.

Pub-goers do the timewarp

Anyone turning up for a quiet drink or meal at the Old White Lion on a Wednesday night could be forgiven for thinking they've slipped back in time by two or three decades.

Out on the tables are favourite old games like Buckaroo and on the television screen you can play some classic early video games... all part of the pub's regular Retro Nights that are really starting to take off.

Friends of Cherry Tree Wood

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood are holding their annual meeting at the Old White Lion on Sunday 23 April at 12pm.

Everyone is welcome to go along to raise concerns and hear about conservation work, progress with development of the pavilion, possible community activities, and also liaising with Barnet Council on any other matters relating to the wood. Friends of Cherry Tree Wood can be emailed at info@cherrytreewood.co.uk.

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