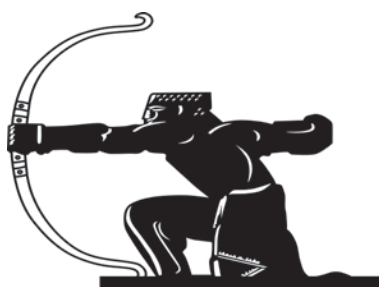




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Jane Ray in Uttar Pradesh. Photo by Allan Thompson

No jokes about a load of bull, please

Former BBC producer Jane Ray took *The Archer* to read in Uttar Pradesh in India a couple of months ago, as she says “while I was minding the cows”.

Jane, who lives in Long Lane, N2, now runs the Whicker’s World Foundation, which supports emerging documentary makers. She was in India reporting for the BBC, Dutch TV and Discovery Education on efforts to reduce avoidable blindness.

The campaign is led by the sight charity Orbis and the scheme aims to reduce the 80% of avoidable blindness through the distribution of free spectacles and referring children for free operations to cure their vision loss.

Quick-thinking residents and police thwart moped thieves

By Janet Maitland

A gang of brazen and reckless moped thieves caused an afternoon of havoc in the streets of East Finchley but thanks to police and local people working together, they didn’t manage to steal a single moped.

Police were first called at about 2.45pm on 5 April after members of the public confronted two men, a moped rider and his pillion passenger, who were trying to steal a moped on the High Road, just by the junction with Creighton Avenue.

Knife threat

The men sped off on their own moped, itself later found to be stolen, but crashed it in Elmfield Road off Long Lane a few minutes later and then ran off. A passer-by tried to stop them but backed off when they threatened him with a knife.

Another local resident then rang police to report two men running through back gardens and climbing over fences a few

streets away. Police sped to the address and managed to catch and arrest a 25-year-old man. He was taken to hospital for the injuries he’d sustained through scrambling over fences.

Officer injured

Two and a half hours later, as police officers were still in Elmfield Road dealing with the aftermath of the crashed moped, they were told by local residents that another moped theft was going on in nearby William Close. Officers charged over there immediately, disturbing the would-be thief who ran off.

But while they chased him, police spotted four men sitting in a parked Mercedes, which looked suspicious. When the officers approached the car, it was suddenly driven at them, running over a police officer’s foot before speeding away. The car, a Mercedes CLA 180, was found abandoned shortly afterwards. It is not yet known if it was stolen.

Co-operation between Met and public

“I am certain that this group did not plan to complete their afternoon of reckless criminality with two fewer vehicles than when they set out,” said Superintendent Paula Black. “I am pleased that a car and stolen moped have been seized since a good deal of forensics evidence has been obtained which will assist police in identifying suspects. The incidents, which we are treating as linked, show how the Met and the public can work together to tackle crime.”

Murder trial halted

After almost a month into hearing evidence in the trial of Obina Ezeoke, who is accused of the double murder of mother-of-nine Annie Besala Ekofo and her nephew Bervil Kalikaka-Ekofo in East Finchley on 15 September 2016, the jury has been discharged from delivering a verdict after the judge in the trial Stephen Kramer QC was taken ill with a bad back. Ezeoke, who denies the charges, will stand trial again on 6 November.



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