

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



60 escape Grange fire

Just before midnight on Tuesday 6 November a blaze started in the roof of Willow House on The Grange estate and spread so rapidly it took 100 firefighters more than two hours to put it out. All 60 residents managed to escape unhurt, thanks to neighbours hammering on their doors, but many lost everything except the clothes they fled in. Turn to page 3 for our full report.

Clock is ticking as Phoenix calls off deal with Curzon

By John Lawrence

A massive transformation drive has begun at the beleaguered Phoenix Cinema in an effort to safeguard its independence as staff and trustees warn that it won't survive unless people choose to watch films there more often.

Two emergency groups have been formed to find ways of boosting income after the cinema's ten trustees bowed to public pressure last month and halted the deal that would have seen Curzon Cinemas take over day-to-day operations and potentially invest thousands of pounds in new facilities.

Close to 100 people attended an open meeting after the cinema directly appealed for money-making ideas and practical offers of help. The meeting was told the cinema, a registered charity, needs to find £50,000 in the next three months to avoid the risk of insolvency.

Change is happening

Some initiatives are already under way. A £5 ticket for 15 to 26-year-olds is available at all screenings from Mondays to Fridays, fundraising through donors and grant organisations is being stepped up and operational cost savings are being examined, including replacing the expensive monthly colour programme brochure with a cheaper alternative. The cinema is also accepting donations directly on its website at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk.

How you can help

Practical help with new ideas or fundraising? Contact the Phoenix team on 020 8444 6789 (choose option 6). Willing to give cash support? Donate directly at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk. Thinking of seeing a film? Choose the Phoenix first.

New ideas

Suggestions made at the public meeting included: creating a short Phoenix promotional film to show before every screening; using the cinema to debut the hundreds of music videos produced every year for YouTube and other channels by London's vibrant music makers; bringing back all-nighters for modern audiences who are used to binge-watching; adding a discretionary £1 donation to every ticket sale; tying in with programmes from the British Film Institute and London film schools; hosting regular Q&A screenings with directors and actors every month; and stepping up the cinema's publicity via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Continued on p2



This tree is not just for Christmas

By Hilary Townley

A little bit of Christmas magic has already come to East Finchley, sprinkled by Paul Gardner, who has recently taken over Budgens.

The Christmas tree outside the store is now a permanent, planted tree that will be with us for many years, growing and thriving in the heart of our community. As ever, the lighting up of the East Finchley Christmas Tree heralds the start of seasonal festivities and this year we officially welcomed our tree with carols, lights and festive nutritional treats to celebrate the festive season in N2.

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Comments to The Archer may be published unless clearly marked 'Not for publication' within the text.

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Council Tax 020 8359 2608
Recycling & refuse 020 8359 4600
Primary Care Trust 020 8201 4700
Benefits Agency 020 8258 6500
Employment Service 020 8258 3900
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Alexandra Palace 020 8365 2121
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Gt North Leisure Park 0870 240 6020
Muswell Hill Everyman 0871 9069060
Phoenix Cinema 020 8444 6789
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Brush up your English conversation



New friends: Learners try out their English together at East Finchley Baptist Church.

Clock is ticking for Phoenix

Continued from page 1

Local support

The clear message given by Jelena Milosavljevic, the Phoenix's director of programmes and learning, and trustees Margaret O'Brien and Marta Montague was that time is short and they desperately need volunteers to get new ideas off the ground. "We will not be successful unless we have the support of the local community," said Margaret O'Brien.

This is true of ticket sales, too. Trustee Alison Gold told *The Archer* that audiences were down by 1,900 year-on-year in October and the cinema simply needed more people to come through its doors. "We are keeping a very close eye on our cash takings. If they don't start to build up, we may have to reconsider something like the Curzon partnership. What we cannot allow to happen is insolvency."

Curzon's director of cinema development Rob Kenny told us last month that his group was willing to put its Phoenix deal on pause but there is no indication that it will remain on the table indefinitely.

Free English language conversation classes have started running again at East Finchley Baptist Church and new learners are invited to drop in and take part.

"We used to run classes a number of years ago and they were enjoyed by many local residents," said Lucille Lowrie, one of the organisers. "Our church has a very multi-cultural mix in its congregation so it is a natural way for us to use our interests and skills to benefit the local community and that's why we can provide the classes free of charge."

"Numbers are small but growing and the atmosphere is relaxed and friendly, so it's a wonderful opportunity to make new friends. If anyone is interested there is no need to book, just come along and join at any time."

There are two classes conducted by a qualified teacher, both held on Mondays: a beginners' class at 9.30am and an intermediate one at 6.30pm. They are both held in the church in Creighton Avenue, N2, close to the junction with the High Road. For further information visit www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk.

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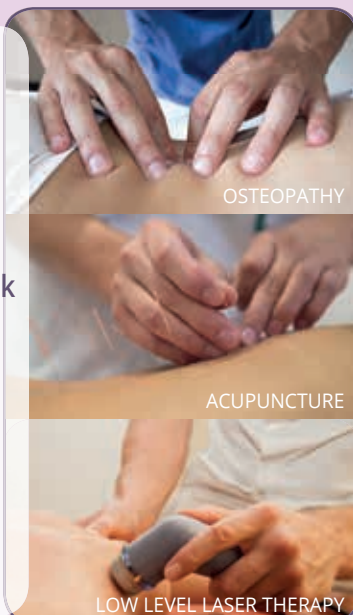
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Planning Applications

Barnet Council

61 Abbots Gardens, N2

Part single, part two-storey side and rear extension, following demolition of garage. Roof extension involving one rear and one side dormer window, and one front rooflight. Fenestration changes. New side openings. Front and rear landscaping works.

45 Baronsmere Road, N2

Single-storey side/rear extension.

3 Beresford Road, N2

Roof extension, including hip to gable end, with one rear dormer to main roof and two front roof lights. New flat roof level with existing two-storey rear projection, including one rear dormer to new roof. Single-storey rear extension, with proposed depth of 5.48 m, eaves height 2.85 m, and maximum height 3 m.

Big Yellow Self Storage, 401 High Road, N2

Replacement of six antennas and development ancillary thereto.

23 Brim Hill, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

49 Chandos Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension with three side roof lights and one roof light to adjacent side. Follows removal of existing single-storey rear extension.

26A Church Lane, N2

Construction of pitched roof following removal of existing roof. Includes raising ridge heights. 24 rooflights to all roof slopes. Alterations to fenestration.

Holy Trinity Church, Church Lane, N2

Conversion of two clerestory windows from fixed to opening. Installation of cable-based fall protection system.

Creighton House, Creighton Avenue, N2

Conversion of two windows into patio doors, repositioning and replacement of main entrance door, re-rendering, removal of rear metal staircase, and installation of protective canopy along 2nd floor access balcony. New refuse/recycling store, cycle

store. New automatic vehicular and resident entrance gate. New decking area and timber fence.

66 Deansway, N2

Alterations to landscaping to provide additional driveway parking.

23 Elmhurst Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Depth 5 m, Eaves height 3 m. Maximum height 3m.

Elmhurst Crescent Garages, Land Adjacent To 90-100 Elmhurst Crescent & 35 Pulham Avenue, N2

Amendment to planning permission includes re-organisation and relocation of car parking spaces perpendicular to the adopted highway, and introduction of crossovers to parking areas.

51 Fortis Green, N2

Roof extension including rear dormer window and three roof lights to front roof slope.

107 High Road, N2

Conversion of two upper self-contained flats on the first and second floor into four self-contained flats. Three-storey rear extension. Removal of external staircase at the rear. Alterations to chimney.

124 High Road, N2

Change of use from Class A1 (Shop) to Class C3 (Residential). Land to Rear Of 330 High Road, N2

New retail unit with basement level, following demolition of existing one. Two self-contained flats over first and second floors, with side balconies and privacy screens. Associated refuse/recycling store, cycle store, parking and amenity space.

392 Long Lane, N2

Amendments to planning permission for extension include relocation of kitchen, dining and living spaces, creation of courtyard, retention of existing eastern elevation openings and bathroom window, realignment of rear master bedroom and window, roof alterations, alterations to ground floor rooflights, amendment of the front door.



Community rallies round victims who escaped from blaze

By Janet Maitland

Just before midnight on Tuesday 6 November a fire started in the roof of Willow House on The Grange estate and spread so rapidly it took 100 firefighters more than two hours to put it out. All 60 residents managed to escape unhurt, thanks to neighbours hammering on their doors. Some lost everything except the pyjamas they escaped in.

"We're incredibly blessed that a heroic stranger ran up the stairs and came banging on our door as we were utterly oblivious to what was blazing on top of us," said a resident from a top floor flat. "The roof next to ours caved in just two minutes after we left the building. We're alive thanks to him."

Swift local response

East Finchley immediately swung into action. The Grange Big Local regeneration project led the way, working with residents, local groups, Barnet Homes and the council to support those made homeless, and launching a crowdfunding page with CommUNITY Barnet.

"We raised over £1,500 in the first 24 hours, which is a testament to our local community," said Helen Harte, from CommUNITY Barnet.

In the days after the fire, a group of residents sent us a statement praising the police and firefighters, and thanking Rev Helen Shannon and her team from church@5. "They were on site within five minutes, opening up the community centre to provide comfort, food, clothes and beds. We've also been so encouraged by the response from the community as a whole."

Relocation concerns

The residents claimed that, although Barnet Council is



The damage to Willow House Photo Mike Coles

now listening to them, they were "pressurised into making long-term decisions without legal advice" the day after the fire. "Some residents were told to accept completely unsuitable accommodation in places as far away as Peterborough and Romford. Many of us have lived on The Grange for years and we have all worked hard to build our lives here. We must be enabled to stay in the immediate area as we continue to depend heavily on local support networks. We want to contribute to the rebuilding of our community."

A council spokesperson said their priority was to temporarily house all displaced residents in the borough or as close to the borough as possible. "Just one household has been housed more than five miles away," he stated.

The future: can you help?

The plan is to carry out remedial works so Willow House can be lived in again. The Fire Brigade is investigating the cause of the fire.

If you want to donate money go to www.gofundme.com and search for Grange Estate Fire or contact Claire Meade on info@grangebiglocal.org if you want to give household items.

John the cobbler hangs up his boots

By David Melsome

He has plied his trade from the same shop for 30 years and seen generations of customers come and go, but now John Omar has been forced to hang a 'Closed' sign on the door of his shoe and luggage repair workshop in Manor Park Road, N2.

John was taken badly ill while visiting his daughter in the Midlands and, because the recuperation process looks like being a long one, he has reluctantly decided to retire.

'Extended family'

He told *The Archer*: "I'd like to say a great thank you to everyone far and wide for welcoming me to the neighbourhood. I've met some lovely people over the years, some that are unfortunately not with us but always in my memories, and my customers past and present have all been like my extended family. I'm grateful for all your custom over the years."

John opened for business in East Finchley in the late 1980s



Retired: John Omar

and soon built up a reputation for careful craftsmanship and excellent value for money, along with commuter-friendly evening opening hours.

He remembers odd commissions like being asked to mend some clown shoes and has happy memories of being invited to local street parties and sharing sweets with adults and children in the hectic run-up to Christmas each year.

We on *The Archer* team will miss John too; he has been a faithful advertiser in the newspaper for 18 years. On behalf of everyone who has ever used his services, we wish him a speedy recovery and a long and happy retirement.



Upper floor flats completely destroyed. Photo by Mike Coles

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Residents enjoy some poetry at the Spring Lane Care Home Photo Mike Coles

Poetry that connects us all

By Daphne Chamberlain

This year's National Poetry Day was celebrated with love at Spring Lane Care Home, Muswell Hill.

Residents, staff and visitors filled the big lounge to enjoy old favourites, new treats, and tea and cakes.

"Why do we love poetry?" asked organiser Caroline Elliot. Answers included: "It's a way of understanding more fully", "We can share and pass it on", "People have different tastes", "It brings people together".

When singer/songwriter Julie read her own pieces about love and change, someone told her: "They made me feel warm". Other original poems "brought back lovely memories".

Family members, friends, staff and residents all contributed. Some recited poems they had probably learned in childhood. Others read pieces in memory of loved ones.

We heard among others Lewis Carroll, Malory's Mort d'Arthur, Robert Browning, Sylvia Plath, Dylan Thomas, A.E. Housman, W B Yeats, Robert Burns, Jenny Joseph, Carol Ann Duffy, Wendy Cope, and new carer Craig, who read pieces he had written at the age of 14.

There is a poetry session every Monday at Spring Lane, always including something from storyteller Becky. On Poetry Day she told the story

of Persephone, which inspired talk about the beginning and end of life.

Ethel Mattison, whose life and passing at the age of 106 we featured in October's *Archer*, spent her last three years at

Spring Lane. She loved the poetry sessions, and as part of a warm tribute from Caroline we heard one of her favourites, Shakespeare's *All the world's a stage*. A reminder that we all indeed play many parts.

How to deal with monsters and mysterious beasts

Review by Diana Cormack

Local author Carey Miller's twelfth book for children was published in October. Having been a headteacher with 30 years of primary school experience, Carey knows what youngsters like and how to put it over to them. In this case *A Dictionary of Monsters and Mysterious Beasts* contains a wealth of facts and fiction on a subject which would actually be of interest to readers of any age.

Mankind has feared the sort of creatures which she describes since the beginning of time and it is interesting that similar ones are said to be found in different parts of the world. Think of Big Foot, Sasquatch or the Yeti. Intriguing too that some are part man, whilst others share the features of two, three or even more animals.

Dominate dragons

Plenty of uncommon ones such as the Squonk and the Kraken are introduced. Specific ways are revealed about how to escape from or even eliminate some, with readers occasionally given amusing tips on how to avoid certain creatures.

As well as learning more



Children's author Carey Miller. Photo Mike Coles

about home-grown dragons and dinosaurs, beasts from many parts of our planet are included; some live in water, others underground or in the air. There are characters from Greek and Indian myths and legends and even horror film-favourite Doctor Frankenstein's monster makes an appearance.

Along with stories of eye-witness accounts and unsolved mysteries in the 80 descriptions in the dictionary are illustrations by Mary French. Published by Olympia Publishers, the dictionary is available on Amazon.

Carey is willing to give talks about her book, being particularly skilled at this in the primary school age range. To make enquiries, email her at careymiller21@hotmail.com.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

LOCAL POLICE, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Jan Lovell, of the East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team, updates us on the latest crime news. Jan and the team can be contacted by email at: EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk, or by phone on 020 7161 9014. Follow the team on Twitter @MPSEastFinchley.

HMRC scam

Thank you for the many emails from local residents about aggressive phone calls they've had from people who claim to be the HMRC (the tax office), telling them they owe money. One gentleman was told he was £2,000 in arrears and that there was a warrant out for his arrest. The callers even tried to arrange for someone to come within an hour to collect payment.

Remember that HMRC would never ring you, they would write; as would any government department or financial institution. Never give a caller or emailer any personal information. Never talk to a caller you suspect is a scammer. Just hang up.

There's a good sense of community here and we talk about these issues and no one has yet fallen victim. But please share this with everyone you know, especially elderly people who may not hear about it on the grapevine or social media.

How do the scammers get your number?

If you've ever bought anything from a catalogue, in a store, online, booked a holiday, bought or hired a car, and I think that's probably all of us, then there's a footprint of data somewhere with your name on it. Some companies buy this information for legal marketing purposes. But scammers buy it to con you out of money. These are facts and it's one of the unfortunate aspects of the vast goings on of the internet. And it's not going to go away.

If you give the police the number that called you, can they trace it?

The numbers that scammers use constantly change or they use untraceable numbers from disposable mobile phones. But you can report this scam to HMRC by calling 0345 300 3900 or emailing phishing@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk. You can also report any kind of scam to Action Fraud at www.action-fraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040. If the victim is vulnerable, then call 999 or 101.

Other scams

Cash point scams have dropped dramatically, but please don't drop your guard. Scammers are still getting folk to put their cards into parking meters to pay fines for being "wrongly parked". Remember the council do not collect fines in this way.



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Helping hands: Charlie and family with therapist Marie at the Bobath Centre.

Farewell and thank you from everyone at the Bobath Centre

The team at the Bobath Centre have just vacated their specialist treatment and training premises in East Finchley after 25 years of providing services for children and adults living with cerebral palsy.

The charity has left East End Road to embark on a new life 13 miles away in north Watford where they are renovating new premises with features that will better support those living with neurological conditions.

Chris Barber, Director, said: "We are very sad to leave this wonderful community. Over the years, it has formed a tremendous home for staff, clients and students. We thank everyone very much for their generosity and kindness, with special thanks to Sue White, our local long-standing volunteer of 10 years, and KOKOS Shoes & Repairs amongst many others. East Finchley has given us many memories to cherish."

Volunteer Sue White said: "The past ten years have given me an amazing insight into the work of the Bobath Centre. I have seen first-hand the wonderful commitment of everyone involved. The centre has been in the heart of East Finchley for many years and will be sorely missed, but the new location will bring a new energy and drive to help as many people with cerebral palsy as possible in the years to come."

Keeping in contact

Until the new centre is ready, the team will be providing therapy services from Finchley Memorial Hospital and Hornsey Neighbourhood Health Centre. For more information, please call 020 8444 3355 or email contact@bobath.org.uk.

You can continue to engage and support the charity by subscribing to their newsletter at www.bobath.org.uk and by following them on social media. Donations can be made via www.justgiving.com/bobathcentre.

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Teenager stabbed

By Janet Maitland

A teenager was taken to hospital after being stabbed in Muswell Hill on Sunday 28 October. The injuries to the boy, who is believed to be 15 years old, were not life threatening.

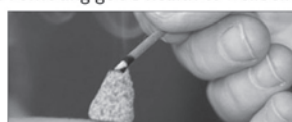
Police were called at 4.40pm to reports of a stabbing near the Mossy Well pub. They found the boy lying on the ground outside 77 Muswell Hill, a block of flats next to the pub. The London Ambulance Service came to his help along with paramedics from the air ambulance who landed in Alexandra Palace Park.

No arrests have yet been made and enquiries continue. If you have any information call police on 101 or contact Crimestoppers on 0800 500 111 if you want to remain anonymous.

Ding dong

North London chamber choir Voxcetera stages its Christmas concert *Ding Dong Merrily* at St Joseph's Church, Highgate Hill, N19 (nearest tube is Archway) on Friday 7 December at 7.30pm. Tickets are available from voxcetera.co.uk.

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Academy kick starts £250,000 campaign for new library

By Diana Cormack

An impressive crowd of supporters gathered at the Archer Academy's Upper School building in Beaumont Close, N2, for the official launch of its £250,000 library fundraising campaign.

Headteacher Lucy Harrison thanked children's author Anne-Marie Conway, who is donating money raised from the sale of the first 5,000 copies of her latest book *Unicorn Girl*.

Anne-Marie, of Summerlee Avenue, expressed gratitude for what the academy had done for her son, who was one of its first intake in 2013. Full of praise too was *EastEnders* actor Steve McFadden. He told *The Archer* how impressed he was by the efforts of a group of local parents who set up the academy, thus enabling his daughter to attend a local school. He also described the significant role libraries had played in his career development.

Although happily housed behind East Finchley station in

a building designed specifically for the long-gone Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute, the academy's upper school lacks a library and resource centre. Lucy Harrison is passionate about the benefits this would bring to her students and encouraged parents of present and future pupils as well as the community at large to join in the campaign to 'Make Beaumont Brilliant'. There is already a suitable site at the front of the building which would link up with the present IT suite.

Unicorn Girl, the eighth of Anne-Marie's books, is published by Eponine Press and is available on Amazon. To contribute directly to the library fund, visit <https://tinyurl.com/archermbb>.



Books for books: Steve McFadden, Anne-Marie Conway and Lucy Harrison. Photo Diana Cormack

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New café is banking on its own style

By Diana Cormack

When the former NatWest bank building was being renovated earlier this year, the wooden palisade type construction along the front made passers-by wonder if the Wild West was coming to town! However, this turned out to be an innovative way for the latest coffee house on the High Road to accommodate customers outdoors within a narrow space, where a wooden counter along the front edge serves as a long table.

In fact innovation can easily be used to describe the set-up at Coffee Bank. Patryk Lipigorski, one of the five partners running the business, told *The Archer* that they are aiming for it to be their own creation and style. "We want it to be the way we want," he explained. "We have researched in more than 50 other outlets and are always looking for something different."

Finding the property was a bit of a fluke as Patryk was on the way to view another which had just fallen through when this one popped up on his mobile phone. He left the train at East Finchley and the deal was done virtually overnight.

Liquor licence

So cousins Patryk and Kristian with his fiancée Sandra and parents Anita and Roman set about designing the place themselves. Since opening in May they have built up a regular clientele and have recognised the special friendliness of the East Finchley community through their customers.

This may get even friendlier before Christmas as Coffee Bank is awaiting a liquor licence to add to its variety of bread, cakes, drinks and meals.



Patryk Lipigorski and Sandra Hemska at the Coffee Bank on the High Road. Photo Mike Coles

The lure of East Finchley

By Iqbal Ahmed

In 2007, I was living in a rented room on the south side of Hampstead. I was looking for a home not too far from central London, because I relied on a pushbike to get to the city centre. However, I wasn't prepared to move far from Hampstead because of my love of the Heath.

One day, I cycled up East Heath Road, past Jack Straw's Castle and along Spaniards Lane, which cuts through the Heath, before turning into The Bishops Avenue to explore East Finchley. It was like riding along a country lane in the middle of London to see a triangular traffic sign with an antlered deer painted on it, warning motorists to watch out for wild animals crossing the road.

First impressions

It was a summer's day and I sat in a coffee shop on East Finchley High Road to experience something of the local scene. A cinema in the High Road was showing arthouse films. There were a couple of bike shops and a second-hand



Author Iqbal Ahmed

bookshop. The bookshop's window display was very enticing and I was familiar with its sister shop in Camden Lock. I liked the neighbourhood. The shops in East Finchley looked a lot more useful than the boutiques in Hampstead

How healthy is our High Road?

By Peter Cox, author of *Growing Up in London 1930-1960* I had just embarked on a study of the shops in East Finchley and Muswell Hill for North London U3A, when out came a report into the health of our high streets from the Royal Society of Public Health (RSPH).

This looks at 70 major towns in Britain and every London borough and it ranks East Finchley 12th out of a total of 146 high streets in the capital. Muswell Hill comes top, North Finchley is 18th in a cluster behind Church End, Barnet and Crouch End, while ahead of us are Whetstone in 8th position and Hampstead in 6th. A similar study in 2015 put Whetstone top, Muswell Hill 7th and East Finchley 8th.

How the scoring works

Every kind of outlet is given a rating for 'health', made up of four components: 'healthy' choices, social interaction,

access to services/advice, and mental well-being. Top scorers are leisure centres and medical outlets, like pharmacies and opticians, followed by health clubs and libraries. Bottom come payday loan shops, followed by betting shops, fast food outlets and off licences. Pubs and bars, cake shops and cafés score comparatively well as places to socialise. But how do you score a take away that also allows you to eat in, like Poseidon? It's a simplistic system but it's all we have.

Making improvements

The RSPH report makes twelve recommendations, including reviewing business taxes to ensure shops can compete against online retailers, finding short-term uses for vacant stores and restricting the type of outlets that can open close to schools.

Our future

The key question is: does online shopping's dominance mean that in ten years' time the only outlets left will be those that provide a personal service? Will there be among them a fishmonger, like we've had on the Scott's site for over 80 years; will newsagents like Pacey's survive, still named after Fred Pacey, who owned it before the war; and will our pharmacies still dispense medicines and health services?

Peter thanks The Archer's Jane Marsh for sharing helpful historical research.

Cook start

A cookery course for beginners is starting on Monday 4 February at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2, for men who have never cooked before. At the end of the course they will have a handful of dishes they can cook confidently at home.

For this and all other cookery courses for over 55s, contact Karen Williamson on 020 8150 0967 or email karen.williamson@ageukbarnet.org.uk.

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Open to discussion: Visitors of all faiths at the Jamatkhana

A visit to the cousins

By Daphne Chamberlain

Twice this autumn the Jamatkhana for the Ismaili Community, that attractive building in East End Road, has opened its doors to all local people; the first time on Silver Sunday in September and then for an open discussion day at the end of October. As Rabbi Mark Goldsmith put it: "We've come to visit the cousins for the afternoon."

Shia Ismaili Muslims give allegiance to the Aga Khan, who is a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad. The present Aga Khan, now celebrating his diamond jubilee, works constantly to improve inter-faith relations.

The day was planned as a

discussion between Muslims, Jews and Christians, but unfortunately no official representative of the Christian faith could be there in person.

It was just after the atrocious murder of Jews in Pittsburgh, and presenter Riaz Nanji expressed the general sadness

and shock. In his welcome, he strongly condemned hate crime, stressing the enormous importance of eradicating ignorance.

The discussion theme was the concept of sacrifice, as personified by the story of Abraham and Isaac, familiar to all three faiths. "We have the same family story, but the way of going about it is different, which is absolutely fair", said Rabbi Goldsmith.

Ismaili Dr Farouk Tobin agreed, pointing out the many parallels between Judaism and Islam, as well as differences in interpretation, and the Islamic recognition of Jesus as a prophet.

Tranquil setting

After general discussion groups, where a representative of Barnet Multi Faith said, "You people are an inspiration to the rest of Barnet", there was a tasty tea and a tour of the Jamatkhana.

A handstitched mural of birds reminded us to find God within ourselves. The spacious, all-white prayer-room with its geometric designs, window shutters and focussed lights is beautiful and very tranquil.

The message of the afternoon was that people who preach hatred and terrorism will not succeed. The most important thing is kindness. "Religion may divide us, but a common ethic unites."

Come dancing

By Malcolm Dunkeld

Emilia Georgiou has loved dance, the most ephemeral of the arts, since the age of two when her Greek Cypriot father (a frustrated breakdancer) encouraged her to join a dance class.

As a child she trained in ballet before swapping the stretched upper torso of classical ballet for the fluidity and improvisation of a Middlesex University degree course in Dance Performance, a course with philosophical underpinnings in American contemporary dance.

Emilia became a performance dancer until knee injuries required her to pursue her passion by becoming a teacher. In 2012 she helped form Something Out of the Ordinary (SOTO), a community arts organisation that introduces dance movement to young children but has since grown to include young people and vulnerable children.

Most of SOTO's work is done in schools such as the Archer Academy, East Finchley, where classes work towards Christmas cabarets, spring productions, summer community festivals and end of year fundraisers. Dance is used to build confidence, social skills, promote physical health and raise aspirations. Some children have gone on to become professional dancers.

Emilia, 30, from Southgate, is especially proud of SOTO's work with vulnerable children. The range of courses offered can be found at www.sotocic.org. Emilia can be contacted directly on 07949 235602 or by email at info@sotocic.org.



On stage: SOTO performers at this year's East Finchley Festival. Photo by Mike Coles



Sparks in the wind: Visitors watch the Long Lane Pasture beacon on Armistice Day. Photo Donald Lyven.

Sparks for the fallen soar into the heavens

By Linda Dolata

On the 11th day of the 11th month 2018, the day was filled with ceremonies commemorating 100 years since the end of the First World War and the signing of the Armistice.

At Long Lane Pasture, we decided to have a Beacon of Light, joining in with a thousand more beacons lit across the UK in a coordinated 'Battle's Over' ceremony. The beacons were to signify the light of peace that emerged from the darkness of four years of war.

The allotment holders at the adjacent Pointalls site were invited to join us, and the large beacon did not disappoint. Wayne Armsby had skilfully built a safe and effective bonfire that roared magnificently into life at the allotted time, despite the hours of rain earlier in the day.

As the fire sent up its flames,

a myriad sparks soared into the celestial heights and a lady next to me expressed the poignant thought that the thousands of tiny glowing sparks represented, each one, a life that was lost before its time.

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YOUNG ARCHER

Stories to tell about the human and natural worlds

By John Lawrence

Since he was young, Luca Pittalis has wanted to do what Sir David Attenborough does but getting a break in the world of natural history film making is not easy.



Film maker: Luca Pittalis

The self-taught 18-year-old has shown what he can do with a stunning 15-minute travelogue capturing the human life and natural beauty of New Zealand, Australia and Hong Kong from a trip he made to the region this summer to visit relatives.

Using a drone camera for some breathtaking aerial shots, along with GoPro and Canon cameras at ground level, Luca spent a couple of hours each night of his holiday editing his footage. Search 'Luca Pittalis'

on YouTube and you will find the end result.

Telling a story

Luca, who lives in Bancroft Avenue, N2, and has just started studying biology at Durham University, says: "I get an urge to make a film when I travel somewhere. It's the story telling that I like. Look at *Blue Planet 2*, which made people look at the world in a totally different way and started the whole move away from using plastics.

"I want to go into natural history film making so I'll try to tackle something on a larger scale like a full documentary, possibly on something like shark conservation. The hardest thing is to get the funding and get noticed."

High-flying

Luca practised his drone-flying skills at low level in East Finchley before taking the device high into the sky in Australia and



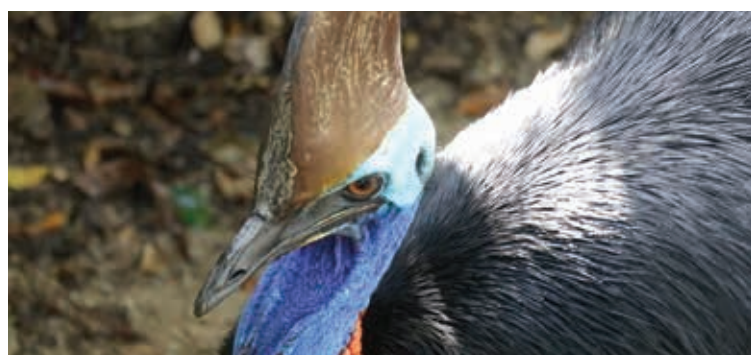
Luca says: "This was taken whilst paddling on the Swan River in Perth, Western Australia. It was taken on a GoPro Hero 5, which I used for a lot of the action and personal view shots."

New Zealand. He had to be careful to abide by the rules around where drones can be used but was still able to capture some eye-

popping shots, including soaring above the towering skyscrapers of Hong Kong.



Luca says: This was taken in Muriwai in the North Island of New Zealand. My cousin Dylan and I had ridden on dirt bikes out to this waterfall. It's a spot that I always go to when I'm out there seeing family and I wanted to incorporate it into the film. I got this one on the drone - I had it follow the course of the river very low down (just a few feet up in the air) and slowly turned the camera to reveal the falls."



Luca says: "This was near the Daintree rainforest, Cairns in Queensland, Australia. It's a cassowary, the third tallest and second heaviest living bird on the planet and just one example of how biodiverse the regions of north-eastern Australia are. I felt lucky to see one of these in the wild given their endangered status."

Miles of smiles

By Matt Beavan

Children and staff at Holy Trinity School in Eagans Place, N2, are boosting their fitness, mental wellbeing and brainpower by running for 15 minutes every day.

Year 1 teacher Anna Lacle introduced the Daily Mile this term as part of a drive towards a coveted Platinum sports mark. So now, throughout the day, children can be seen doing laps of the school playground. Children can walk for five steps if they get tired, but there's no stopping.

The exercise is timed to provide a brain break and help increase focus in the classroom. It can also help children eat and sleep better. The teachers are benefiting, too.

Senior Teacher and PE Coordinator Lisa Huegdon said: "It's great to see running shoes in every teacher's cupboard. And we're definitely seeing improvements in the children's focus. They're so enthusiastic about the run."

Just two weeks in, the school had collectively put in 18 hours of running. Just imagine how many miles the children and teachers will have covered by the time of the Tokyo Olympics in 2020.



Cool runnings: Holy Trinity pupils keep moving.

PARENT & BABY/CHILD ACTIVITIES

- ⊙ **Baby & U baby massage.** Contact Ruth at babymassagewithruth@gmail.com, www.facebook.com/babyandubaby-massage
- ⊙ **EFNCT** meet Tuesdays 2.30pm at The Old White Lion. Contact eastfinchleynct@haringeynct.org
- ⊙ **Musical Tots:** 10.45 Tue at The Angel, N6, Weds The Old White Lion and Fridays

The Five Bells N2. Katemusicaltots on facebook.

- ⊙ **Phoenix Cinema activities,** Bringing up baby screenings, Weds, 11am; Kids Club, Sat, 12pm; Toddler Time, Tues, 11am. Full details from box office on 020 8444 6789.
- ⊙ **Stay and Play** Thurs 9.30-11.15 Green Man Centre, Gary 8359 3640

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Coldfall net the wins

Pupils at Coldfall Primary School in Muswell Hill have enjoyed an autumn term of sporting success.

Their mixed netball team won the Haringey High5 tournament in competition with 17 other schools. Their Under-11 table tennis team qualified for the London Championships in January and, for the second year running, won the Haringey Boys competition. Congratulations to all concerned.

Winter bazaar

Everyone is welcome to the Nazareth House Winter Bazaar on Saturday 8 December from 2pm to 5pm in the residential care home's main hall at 162 East End Road, N2.

There will be music, tea and cakes, a tombola, raffle and stalls selling Christmas decorations, bric-a-brac, good-quality clothes and books. Entry is £1 for adults, children free.

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Tuesday 25th December

Christmas Day

10.00 am Sung Mass of the Day

followed by refreshments

For more details, contact:

Fr Christopher Hardy 020 8883 9315

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Moment of fame: Nick Young, right, with a fellow extra and star Domhnall Gleeson, front, in the film *Goodbye Christopher Robin*.

The day I was paid £50 to shake someone's hand

By Nick Young

On my first day at work, I was paid £50 to shake someone's hand. I was a journalist at the time, but I've also been a farm labourer and an MP, in addition to my most frequent role as someone in the crowd.

Why? Well, for a couple of years, 'work' for me partly meant being a film extra: a low-level inhabitant of a world of early starts, free haircuts, fried food and lots of waiting around, sometimes without a mobile phone due to the secrecy surrounding the film in question (*Fantastic Beasts* or, as it's known in my house, 'the one with the £50 handshake').

All I'd had to do was send my details to a casting agency which would contact me in advance with dates for a job, usually referred to by a code name. Confirmation about whether I would actually be needed would only be forthcoming a day or two prior to shooting. Not the most reliable way to earn a living, but it was fun while it lasted.

Being background

For the most part I was 'background', which could mean placing bets in a casino (*Film Stars Don't Die in Liverpool*), attending a royal garden-

party (*Victoria & Abdul*) or walking around, either in Gray's Inn (*The Children Act*) or along a mock-up of Downing Street (the second series of *The Crown*). My most prominent role was in *Goodbye Christopher Robin* as 'man standing next to the female lead'. Margot Robbie is a much nicer person than most of the characters she plays!

Where's Nick?

I was an MP in *Darkest Hour*, for which a mock-up of the House of Commons was constructed at Leavesden Studios. Several hundred people dressed as 1940 MPs were gathered together for the set-piece speeches by Winston Churchill, played by Gary Oldman.

Before he appeared on-set (thanks to spending hours in make-up, he was always the last to arrive), the director kept us entertained by playing music, and at one point he had the 1940 House of Commons singing along to The Beatles'

Hey Jude. If you can find that on YouTube, I recommend it. Good luck spotting me in the crowd!

Dietitian scoops top award

Cath Fogarty, a specialist paediatric dietitian from East Finchley, won top prize at the Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust staff awards.

Cath won 'Registered healthcare professional of the year' awarded to a staff member who has consistently provided excellent care and support to service users, families and carers. Close to 400 staff from across the organisation came together for the annual staff awards at Porchester Hall in Bayswater.

Positive signs of progress from Grange Big Local

By Ruth Anders

The last Saturday in October dawned bitterly cold, but the welcome awaiting visitors to the Grange Big Local project's annual meeting at St Mary's Parish Centre on the High Road was warm enough to thaw any nerves or icy fingers. Smiles and coffee greeted everyone from the very young to those well past retirement.

Pudding persuasion

Guest speaker John Mayford launched the proceedings with a lively talk about community leadership and the skills and experience required to constitute an effective Board. As Chief Executive of OLMEC, a social enterprise organisation championing race equality through economic and social justice, John had heaps of wise advice to share.

He began by asking everyone to tell him who they were, what they hoped to gain from his talk and their favourite pudding. This banished any shred of resistance in terms of everyone's willingness to take part and be heard!

Range of achievements

After John's valuable insights, we were given a summary of Grange Big Local's achievements over the past 12 months. These included a Fun Palace festival, development of an imaginative open spaces

strategy, negotiations on the Tarling Road community hub and a weekly local Citizens Advice Barnet service that has put £34,000 into the pockets of local people.

One of the largest projects GBL is funding is their Art Against Knives initiative, which provides activities, support and mentoring for local young people. And everyone was delighted to hear that funds have now been raised to improve the infamous Trinity Road underpass.

Thanks were given to outgoing chair, the tireless Pat Murphy, and a warm welcome to her replacement, James Masters. GBL's principal challenge is to attract a more varied membership that represents the community, to help spend the lottery funding awarded to make the area an even better place to live. To find out more text Grange to 66777 or visit www.grangebiglocal.org.



TV's Topsyie opens the Holy Trinity Autumn Fair. Photo Mike Coles

Raise the rafters

Drag artist Topsyie Redfern opened the autumn fair at Holy Trinity Church in Church Lane, N2, on Saturday 10 November which raised more than £2,000 for the church. Organisers thanked everyone who came along and all those who contributed a prize for their famous raffle.

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- **Pilates** Classes Tue 9.30, Fri 9.15 & Sun 11am. www.pilatesineastfinchley.co.uk. Michelle 07767 804 564
- **Tai Chi & Qigong** in N2, Weds 12pm, 1pm, 6pm & 7pm. James 8883 3308/07836 710281 or james@taiji.co.uk
- **Tennis club** with four clay courts off Southern Road. Call 8883 7723.
- **Tennis group lessons** for adult beginners and intermediates, weekends, Park Road, N8. Contact Maz on tennisgift@gmail.com.
- **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

- **The Archer Community Choir**, Tuesdays 7-9pm, The Archer Academy, Eagans Close, N2. Email: archercommunitychoir@gmail.com.
- **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
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- **Creative Writing** at Friern Barnet Community Library. Every Saturday, 12pm, 07488 230580.
- **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.
- **Rock 'n Roll dance lessons**, 8pm every Weds at the Constitutional Club, The Walks. Drop-in. Call Kav 07721 489489.
- **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 8415 to book.
- **Bridge Club**, Thursday & Saturday afternoons, Age UK, Oak Lane, N2 8LT. Contact Ray Tiano 07944 562180.

An unusual look at the underground



By Diana Cormack

Travelling in Australia contributed hugely to local artist Natasha Williams' particular style. During her three years there she found inspiration for her art work in the amazing scenery of the Australian Outback and was heavily influenced by the colours of landscapes in the Northern Territory, which were reflected in her pictures of Melbourne.

After her return to East Finchley two years ago she joined the masses on their way to and from work on the tube every day, hoping that some sort of inspiration might come along. Surprisingly, it was while observing the daily, mundane, repetitive scene underground that she suddenly saw it in a new light and is now observing everything from a different perspective.

"We're compressed by all this dullness," she told *The Archer*, "but at the same time

there is a positive and vibrant energy running through the tube." Look at the accompanying picture and you can see what she means.

People who saw Natalie's work at this summer's East Finchley Open Artists' exhibition could not believe it was collage. She has a very distinctive style and spends many months producing one piece as well as having a full time job. Visit natashakwilliams.com to see more of her work or pop in to the next EFOA event.

Tenth anniversary for Fortismere

By John Lawrence

The choir and orchestra of Fortismere Music Centre are celebrating their 10th anniversary in 2019 with a storming season of concerts, including their first-ever opera.

This month their Christmas concert at St Andrew's Church in Muswell Hill will be a programme of familiar carols alongside works composed by women and the world premiere of a new commission by Phoebe McFarlane. In June they will be performing a semi-staged version of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*.

There are around 80 singers in the choir and around 40 musicians in the orchestra, many of them current or former students, parents and teachers at Fortismere School, where the centre has premises and shares resources.

Joe Winters, who has been centre manager for two years and lives in Tetherdown, N10, said: "The majority of our members don't read music when they join but they have learned to read it by osmosis. They are learning pieces by heart and by experience. When you set exciting goals people bind together to achieve them."

The centre also provides affordable instrumental lessons for students and adults. Find out more about lessons and the concert season at www.fortismeremusiccentre.co.uk.



Massed voices: Musical director Marvin Perrott leads the Fortismere Music Centre Community Choir in a concert at St Andrew's Church, Muswell Hill.

Festival-goers raise thousands

A total of £4,000 was raised for charity at the East Finchley Arts Festival through the sale of pictures at the art exhibition, and bucket collections at the 11 days of events and concerts in October.

The money was divided between the Noah's Ark Children's Hospice and the Harington Scheme, a Highgate-based charity that provides skills and training to young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

This year's festival received support from Tatlers, Budgens, Meze & Shish, Sains-

bury's and the London Borough of Barnet, together with several local advertisers. Festival director Geoffrey Hanson said plans were already being laid for the 2019 Arts Festival and his team was looking for volunteers to help with the running of events during the festival week, particularly with welcoming audiences

each evening at the ticket desk and wine bar.

They would also welcome someone who could help with spreading word about the festival through social media and hopefully bring in even bigger audiences. Anyone who can help can contact eastfinarts@btinternet.com.

What's On...

Friday 7 December

- **Christmas Concert: Ding Dong Merrily**, with Voxcetera chamber choir at St Joseph's RC Church, Highgate Hill, London N19 5NE (Archway Tube) 7.30pm. Tickets available from voxcetera.co.uk. Refreshments available.

Saturday 8 December

- **Nazareth House Winter Bazaar**, 2pm-5pm at Nazareth House, East End Road, N2, fun for all the family with music, teas and cakes, tombola and raffle; stalls selling Christmas decorations at bargain prices, bric-a-brac, good quality clothes, books. Entry £1 for adults. Children free.
- **Martin School Christmas Fair**, 12-3pm, Plane Tree Walk, N2. Games and treats, crafts, snowboard simulator, face-painting

and more. Entry £1.

- **Highgate Primary School Winter Fair**, 1-4pm, Storey Rd, N6 4ED. Enjoy home-made crafts, cakes, mulled wine, storytelling, Santa and lots more.
- **Fortismere Community Choir's Christmas concert** celebrates music composed by women with exciting new and old music and well-loved carols; St Andrew's Church, Alexandra Park Road, N10 2DD, 7.30pm. Buy tickets online (£10) at www.fortismeremusiccentre.co.uk or on the door (£12). Under 12s free.
- **Wednesday 12 Dec - Sunday 27 Jan**
- **Nice Work If You Can Get It**, a screwball musical comedy by George and Ira Gershwin; Upstairs at the Gatehouse, Highgate; details and box office at upstairsatthegatehouse.com or 020 8340 3488.

com or 020 8340 3488.

Saturday 15 December

- **Muswell Hill indoor car boot sale**: 10am-1pm at Hornsey Parish Church Hall, Cranley Gardens, N10 3AH; info: 020 8368 8180 or 07708152354; admission 50p; refreshments available.
- **Finchley Chamber Choir and Finchley Symphony Orchestra** present The Glory of Christmas, music for all the family, including Handel, Vivaldi, J.S. Bach, Tchaikovsky and Lehar, and favourite carols for all to sing; Trinity Church, North Finchley, N12 7NN at 7.30pm. Tickets: £15, £13 concessions, £6 under-18s available on the door, or in advance at www.fcchoir.co.uk.
- **Sunday 16 December**
- **Carols by Candlelight**; enjoy carols and

readings about the Christmas story; East Finchley Methodist Church, High Road, N2, opposite Creighton Avenue, 5pm; free admission with mince pies and refreshments afterwards. Fully accessible venue.

• **Carols by Candlelight** at East Finchley Baptist Church, Creighton Avenue, N2, at 6.30pm. Everyone welcome.

Saturday 22 December

• **Roots Sisters Reunion Christmas Special**; live music with Aisha Khan, the Bluemoon Two and special guest DJ Miss Aloha; East Finchley Constitutional Club, The Walks, N2, doors open 8.30pm; admission £15, advance tickets £12; buy from www.skiddle.com (search roots sisters reunion Christmas special). More information at www.facebook.com/rootssistersrule.

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



At the bar: Enda Murray

Madden's lives on in new hands

By John Lawrence

Many will know that there is a new man behind the bar at Madden's on the High Road after Enda Murray took on the running of the pub from previous owners Kieran and Margaret Madden. The name stays the same and Enda is promising to preserve the character of the tavern while at the same time bringing in more live music acts and planning a small refurbishment next year.

Madden's was for sale on the open market earlier this year after Kieran and Margaret decided to retire but in the end the couple retained ownership and sold the lease to Enda. At the time, many feared that the premises might have been bought and swallowed up by the new neighbouring Sainsbury's Local store.

Enda said: "When we came in people were concerned what was going to happen to the pub. The first reaction we got was relief that it wasn't going to be an extension of Sainsbury's. We want to continue the good work started by Kieran with a community pub open to everyone."

Keeping that 'good feeling'

Enda, who has been in the

pub trade for 10 years in Dublin and London, has started a pub pool team at Madden's, a poker league every Thursday and kept the popular Thai Kitchen food service. There is live music every Saturday evening and, on alternate Sundays, a live house band with a guest vocalist. Keep up with the latest acts by following Madden's on Facebook. So as a newcomer, how does East Finchley compare to his previous pubs? Enda says: "It's got a good feeling to it. Everyone has been really supportive. A lot of people grow up in East Finchley and still live here so they bring their sons and daughters in. That kind of thing makes a big difference to the atmosphere of a pub."

St Mary's Catholic Church

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CHRISTMAS SERVICES

www.stmaryseastfinchley.org



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Children's Mass with Nativity Play 6 pm
Mass for Midnight: 10 pm

Christmas Day

Family Mass 10 am
Sung Mass partly in Latin 12 noon

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Letters

Phoenix must face commercial reality

Dear Editor,

Like many East Finchley residents I value the Phoenix as a cinema, as a piece of London history and as part of the fabric of life in N2. It is however also a business. Based on the financial details printed in November's Archer I do not see how a £20,000 one-off funding campaign can safeguard the future of an enterprise that is losing £60,000 in a half year.

Rather than fighting against the Curzon group's rescue plan, I believe it would be much better to spend time working with them and the trustees to make sure that the unique character of the Phoenix is properly understood and reflected in the terms of the proposed relationship.

Yours faithfully,
Colin Turner,
Huntingdon Road, N2.

Difficult decisions for Phoenix

Dear Editor,

Despite being a much-loved part of the East Finchley community, The Phoenix cinema is clearly facing significant financial difficulties which could put its future at risk.

I completely understand the strength of feeling about keeping the cinema independent and now see that the partnership with the Curzon cinema has been put on hold.

I am concerned that the amount of fundraising needed to keep the cinema afloat year after year will be extremely difficult to achieve and sustain. The worst possible outcome would be that the cinema closes.

The trustees are community-minded volunteers who want The Phoenix to have a future. Inevitably, there are difficult decisions to be made ahead. We need to give them our support as they try to negotiate these uncertain times.

Yours faithfully,
Rachel Ellis,
Address supplied.

Parking will get worse

Dear Editor,

I do hope you'll give some space to allow responses to Mr Myerson's letter on the East Finchley Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) in the November issue.

Barnet Council has accepted that parking within the all-day CPZ in East Finchley remains extremely difficult and that the zone, as originally devised, was too large to work efficiently.

The various educational institutions in Park House seem to

be thriving but they generate significant extra traffic and parking demand in Baronsmere, Park Hall and Ingram Roads.

In addition, around 15-20 commuters from Hampstead Garden Suburb, who must live within the CPZ, drive across East Finchley every morning to park legally in the all-day zone, avoiding a walk to the station.

This has serious consequences for East Finchley and the residents of the all-day CPZ, in addition to finding a parking space. Air pollution is increased, with up to an extra 10,000 trips a year across the area, dumping 1,500 kilos of carbon dioxide on our streets. Visitors can't park close to our homes even though we have to pay the council £1.

The lives of neighbours with mobility problems or young children are made more difficult and homebuyers or tenants are put off because of the chaotic parking. Double parking often blocks our roads, as there is simply nowhere to pull in. Care workers and health visitors find it difficult to park.

This situation can only get worse due to the development of 21 flats with one parking space on the old GLH site.

Yours faithfully,
Michael McGrath
Ingram Road, N2.

Parking is too restrictive

Dear Editor

I could not agree more with the letter in last month's issue regarding the onerous parking restrictions operating in the roads south of the junction of East End Road and Fortis Green Road – 10am to 6.30pm six days a week.

I lived in Baronsmere Road for nearly 30 years until March last year with, as your reader said, these completely unnecessary parking restrictions applying for most of the time. In 2017 there was a questionnaire issued to residents to consider various ways in which the parking restrictions could be altered and although I am sure most people would have asked for the restriction to be amended to just one hour a day, nothing more was heard about it.

In March of last year I moved to a flat in a small block on the Great North Road just round the corner from The Bishops Avenue, which is in the same CPZ area as Baronsmere Road so has the same totally restrictive parking problem six days a week.

The resident parking bays here on the Great North Road are empty virtually all day every day except

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page"
The Archer, PO Box 3699,
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the-archer@lineone.net.

on Sundays, and to add insult to injury Barnet Council have been refusing to allow us in this block to purchase Visitor Parking Vouchers for the last 18 months, giving us various somewhat ridiculous excuses, despite the fact that their website quite clearly states that if you live in a CPZ area you can purchase vouchers.

Barnet Council really do have to have a re-think a) about reducing the hours of operation of this CPZ area and b) about allowing everyone who is entitled to purchase visitor vouchers to do so. This would generate more income from the sale of vouchers which would mean that the Council would have more money to spend on much more needy causes.

Yours faithfully
Kate Barnett,
Great North Road, N2.

Don't change parking rules

Dear Editor,

Eugene Myerson's letter in November's *The Archer* takes no account of the needs of the residents of the southern part of the East Finchley CPZ, known as the 'Cherry Tree Wood Area'. We badly need to keep the restriction from 10.30am to 6.30pm and responded strongly to Barnet's Parking Review in 2016 in favour of this. Our small parking area is already open to residents of the more northerly part of the zone who drive from their houses a few streets down to be nearer to the tube station, and take up the places in our streets, rather than walk the short distance.

We have our share of elderly residents and those with young children, who need to be able to park in the streets they live in, but are often displaced. All other areas in London close to tube stations have an all-day zone, and there is no reason why East Finchley should be any different.

Yours faithfully,
Claire Pozner,
Fairlawn Avenue, N2.

Budgens not bad

Dear Editor

I write in response to Norman Kessel's strident views on the recent Budgens takeover (Letters to the Editor, *The Archer*, November 2018). Whilst I can empathise with the principal point raised, I would ask Mr Kessel to show a similar understanding. Some people in East Finchley would like a higher quality of food options and it's great to see Budgens improving their offering. I'm a big fan of the makeover and look forward to what else they'll be doing.

Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied.

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Tel: 8883 1544 (Minister: John Lowrie)

www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk

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The Archer

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Can you spot the signs in our Christmas card competition?

Season's greetings to all our readers, deliverers and advertisers from everyone on *The Archer* team. Thank you for all your support this year and here's wishing everyone a happy and prosperous 2019. And especially for the Christmas season, here's your chance to win one of our much sought-after

Archer 25th anniversary medallions by taking part in our fiendish festive competition.

To enter, take a look at our team Christmas card, above, created by our brilliant photographer Mike Coles. Every letter on the card has been taken from a shop sign on East Finchley High Road. All you have to do is tell us which. Send your answers by email

to the-archer@lineone.net or by post to *The Archer*, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE to arrive by **Wednesday 9 January**. Remember to include your contact details, please.

All those with the correct answers will be placed in a hat and a winner chosen at random. If no one gets them all, we'll choose from those who identified the most.

So while you are out doing Christmas or New Year shopping in East Finchley keep your eyes on the signs above the stores and don't miss your

chance to become a proud owner of one of the few remaining Archer medallions.



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The story of the Odeon

Cinema historian Jeremy Buck visited members of the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association to tell them the secret history of the Muswell Hill Odeon. He covered everything from the Pathe newsreel of the opening night on 9 September 1936 right through to the present day rebirth as the Everyman.

Along the way some highlights were the photographs of the old Athenaeum cinema (now Sainsburys on the opposite side of the road) and a detailed analysis of how the interior of the Odeon building has changed over time. The association itself also got a mention, having successfully led the campaign for the cinema building to be given Listed status when it was under threat of closure in the 1980s.

Jeremy pointed out that although many current and former cinemas in London are listed buildings, the Muswell Hill Everyman is one of just two Grade II* Listed buildings still operating as cinemas, and therefore is of particular significance. The Phoenix in East Finchley, of course, is also Grade II Listed (but with no 'star').



Hands of time: Cinema historian Jeremy Buck

To join the association and be kept up to date on local issues and planned activities, visit www.mhfga.org/membership or email the Membership Secretary at membership@mhfga.org.

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