



Round of applause: James Patterson entertains drinkers at the Bald Faced Stag. Photo Mike Coles

Mic opens for big birthday bash

There was a party atmosphere for the first birthday celebrations of the open mic music sessions that take place on Thursday evenings at the Bald Faced Stag pub in the High Road. Favourites Michelle O'Grady, Jimmy Johnson, Steven Suppe, Amy Taylor and James Patterson took their turn to entertain the pub's customers, and there was cake!

The Stag Sessions are run by local singer and performer Shereen Roushbaiani who says they are a perfect platform for people to showcase their talents. Shereen's next projects include a BBC appearance later this month and a theatre project over the summer. Find out more @ Stag_Sessions and www.sherenroushbaiani.co.uk.

Young film-makers make their mark at Cannes

By Ruth Anders

The Cannes Film Festival is beckoning 25 year-old Jacob Scipio, and not for the first time. Jacob is a writer, film-maker, voice-over artist and actor (making his debut at nine months old in the Screen One series *Bambino Mio*). His lively enthusiasm is infectious. This charismatic young East Finchley resident is without doubt someone to watch.

Jacob and his brother Taylor made *Cowboys & Angels*, which they successfully entered for Cannes in 2016, making Jacob no stranger to France's Côte d'Azur.

Surprise, rebellion and humour

The brothers continue to be passionate film-makers and their latest offering, a 'short' made through their company CPO Productions, will be shown at Cannes in mid-May. *The Writers Group* features eight professional actors, and focuses on "a group of tortured souls refusing to toe the line".

Jacob himself plays a skinhead, which is testament to his acting skills. Chatting to him over coffee it's hard to believe he's anything other than a well-centred and overwhelmingly cheerful young man. The film is "funny and surprising", says Jacob, and was entirely funded by Jacob and Taylor themselves.

Youth theatre is vital

Its location was the Finchley Youth Theatre in the High Road. "FYT couldn't have been more helpful," Jacob tells me. "We shot the film over a weekend; they opened early for us and stayed open late."

When I press him further about Finchley Youth Theatre and its uncertain future (*The Archer*, March 2018), his enthusiasm turns to fervour. His experience of FYT has

Filming *The Writers Group* at Finchley Youth Theatre

been tremendously positive and he thinks it would be shameful for the community to lose it.

From his own experience, he knows the importance of such facilities for young people. He cited the amount of knife crime reported recently, and is convinced that services like FYT play a critical role in tackling youth problems at their root, providing a lifeline for young people.

"They help to change youth culture and guide the young

towards an alternative lifestyle," says Jacob. "Stop and Search is too late. We must tackle the problems before they arise."

Jacob is a great role model for the young. And we look forward to catching up with him again after Cannes.

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