

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

‘Sleeping Beauty’ wood wakes up

By John Lawrence

A badly overgrown pocket of green space is being reclaimed by people who live nearby and could soon be opened up as a venue for nature studies and community events.

Dozens of volunteers turned out for an Explorers’ Picnic on Sunday 7 August to help hack away at the brambles and thorns that have swamped the roughly 80m x 80m woodland between Tarling Road and Brownswell Road, N2, close to the Grange Estate.

Closed for 20 years

Once open land with a few trees, it was used for camps and summer play schemes by the Old Barn Youth and Community Association, which it borders. It was fenced and locked around 20 years ago and its native trees became

overrun by brambles and nettles which spilled out onto the pavement in Tarling Road. The clearance organisers compared it to Sleeping Beauty’s forest.

But many pairs of hands and just a few hours’ work made a huge difference. By the end of the day the whole front of the wood had been opened up to the light and a wide winding path had been forged deep into the undergrowth.

Usable but still wild

Co-ordinator Leo Smith, who has lived next door to the land for 40 years, says it will be returned for community

use after more work is done. “We’ll keep it as wild as possible to encourage wildlife but we want to make it accessible for forest school lessons and maybe a community orchard or beekeeping,” he said.

The woodland is owned by Barnet Council and at one time had planning permission for a floodlit basketball court, which many neighbours are now glad did not come to pass. There was added impetus to clean it up because the smart new Tarling Road Community Centre, next door on the former site of the Old Barn, is nearing completion.

Backing the explorers

The volunteers’ picnic included food and information on the nearby Brownswell Green. It was organised by



Wild wood: Volunteers help with clearing. Photo Mike Coles

local people with the backing of regeneration projects Grange Big Local, ICIC and COMMUNITY Barnet, along

with Barnet Council, the Faiths Forum for London and the Somali Bravanese Welfare Association.

Community centre opening soon

By Janet Maitland

The Mayor of Barnet has praised the “fantastic benefits” that the new Tarling Road Community Centre will bring to East Finchley. “It’s great to now be at a stage where we can fully see the outside of this building and appreciate its scale,” said Councillor Reuben Thompstone.

The inside of the centre is still to be kitted out and the outdoor space landscaped. It is due to open its doors later this year. It will include a large meeting hall, a cafe, an accessible lift and 980 square metres of functional space. Rooms will be available for hire on a per-hour or longer basis.

“It’s going to be a really positive addition to the community,” said East Finchley Councillor Alison Moore. “Now I’ve looked round it, I can see it’s going to be a fantastic facility.”

The council is in the process of finalising the terms of the lease they have offered to City YMCA under which they would manage the premises on a day-to-day basis, including the allocation of space and time to community groups and members of the



The Mayor, centre, joined ward councillors Alison Moore and Arjun Mittra at the topping out of Tarling Road Community Centre

public. An important issue for local people is that the centre will be open for low-cost and free activities.

If you would like to hear about how the building will operate and what it will cost to hire, or if you would like to contribute your

ideas of what other services need to be at the hub, you can attend an open meeting on Tuesday 11 September at 10.30am at Barnet House in Whetstone, N20. Spaces are limited. To book contact Octavia.findlay@cityymca.org by Friday 7 September.

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If you have a story for us, please contact us at the above address.

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

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Barnet

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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
Haringey Council 020 8489 0000

Leisure

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East Finchley Library 020 8359 3815
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Phoenix Cinema 020 8444 6789
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London Transport 020 7222 1234
National Express 0871 781 8181
Heathrow Airport 0870 000 0123

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Citizens Advice Barnet 0300 4568365
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Disability Info Service 020 8359 7637
EF Advice Service 0300 4568365
Lone Parent Centre 020 7021 4146
Missing Persons Helpline 0500 700700
National Debt Line 0808 808 4000
NSPCC 0800 800500
Rape & Sexual Abuse helpline 020 8683 3300
Relate 020 8447 8101
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Samaritans 08457 909090
Refuge National Crisis Line 0870 599 5443

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Alcoholics Anonymous 0845 7697555
Barnet MENCAP 020 8203 6688
Cancer Support 020 8202 2211
Carers' Line 0808 808 7777

Drinkline 0800 917 8282
Drugs Helpline 0800 776600
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MIND 020 8343 5700
National Blood Centre 0845 7711 7711

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Victim Support 0845 303 0900

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Edgware General 020 8952 2381
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Oak Lane Clinic 020 8346 9343
Royal Free 020 7794 0500
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OAP's Advice

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Independent Age 0800 319 6789
Age UK (general advice line) 0800 169 2081

Advertising sign will be 'dangerous eyesore'

Plans have been submitted to construct a large digital advertising sign on a green island alongside the High Road and the North Circular.

Roadside advertising company JCDecaux wants to erect the 6m x 3m LED display sign on land where the east-bound North Circular slip road curves round to meet the High Road at the junction with Squires Lane, N12, close to the leisure and cinema complex.

Objectors to the plan say the sign will be an eyesore and a dangerous distraction to drivers at a busy intersection.

Stewart Wild, of Cyprus Road, N3, said: "Apart from aesthetics and its hideous profile harming the urban

landscape, this sign would be a serious danger to road users. Drivers will by definition be distracted, for that is the obvious purpose of the sign."

In its application, JCDecaux argues that the advertising sign will not be out of place on such a busy commercial route and is unlikely to be a safety hazard. No trees will be affected.

You can view the planning application online and leave your own comments by going to the planning section of barnet.gov.uk and searching for application 18/3315/ADV.



Driven to distraction? How the High Road digital advert would look.

Planning Applications

Barnet Council

6 Bedford Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension. New patio area. Removal of side window. Increase in size to first-floor outrigger. Roof extension involving rear dormer window and two front rooflights.

39 Bedford Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

The Bobath Centre, 250 East End Road, N2

Partial demolition, including rear extensions and link building. Removal of external ramps and other additions. New extensions to rear and west of retained buildings. Creation of external playground. Internal repair, maintenance and restoration to listed buildings. Removal of existing hard standing. New access road, car parking and site wide landscaping.

103 Brim Hill, N2

Single-storey rear extension connecting house to garage. Conversion of garage into habitable room. Timber doors to replace garage door. Alterations to roof, including one rear and one side rooflight.

1 Church Lane, N2

Details of noise mitigation conditions to planning appeal.

40 Church Lane, N2

Details of refuse/recycling conditions to planning appeal.

Carmelite Friars, 63 East End

Road, N2

Demolition of two two-storey building wings. One new two-storey and one single-storey extension to sides. Conversion to provide five single family dwelling houses and two self-contained flats. New two-storey block comprising seven single family dwelling houses to west of grade II listed building, and one single storey family dwelling house to north east. Associated alterations to fenestration and to hard and soft landscaping. Amenity space, car parking, cycle storage and refuse and recycling storage.

2 Elmhurst Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension following demolition of two out-buildings.

42 Gurney Drive, N2

Replacement of timber windows and doors.

48 Hamilton Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Roof extension involving rear dormer window and one front rooflight.

2 Heath View Close, N2

Roof extension, including one rear dormer window and five front rooflights. Single-storey rear extension.

172 High Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

16 Huntingdon Road, N2

Roof extension, including one

L-shaped rear dormer, outrigger with Juliette balcony, and three front rooflights. Demolition of conservatory. Alterations to window and access openings to rear garden.

18 Ingram Road, N2

Roof extension involving rear dormer window and two rear rooflights.

21 Manor Park Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Depth 5.4 m, eaves height 2.8 m, maximum height 3 m.

39 Manor Park Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Depth 6 m, eaves height 3 m, maximum height 3.3 metres.

Old Barn Youth Club and Land Adjacent Corner Of Fallows Close And Tarling Road, N2

Details of conditions pursuant to planning permission.

21-25 Viceroy Parade, High Road, N2

Two storage containers and plant equipment to rear of store (part retrospective).

Haringey Council

26 Whittington Court, Aylmer Road, N2

Replacement of non-original timber windows with double glazed thin section aluminium, mimicking layout, opening style, colour and glazing bar layout of original.

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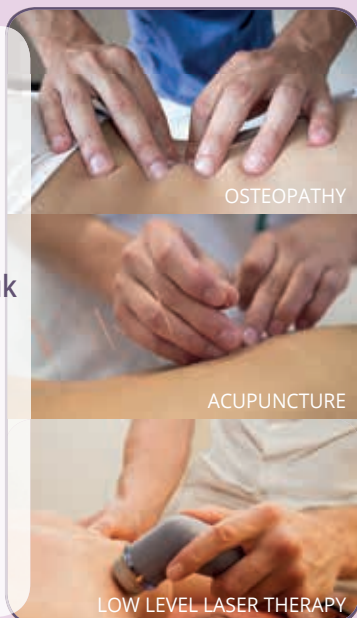
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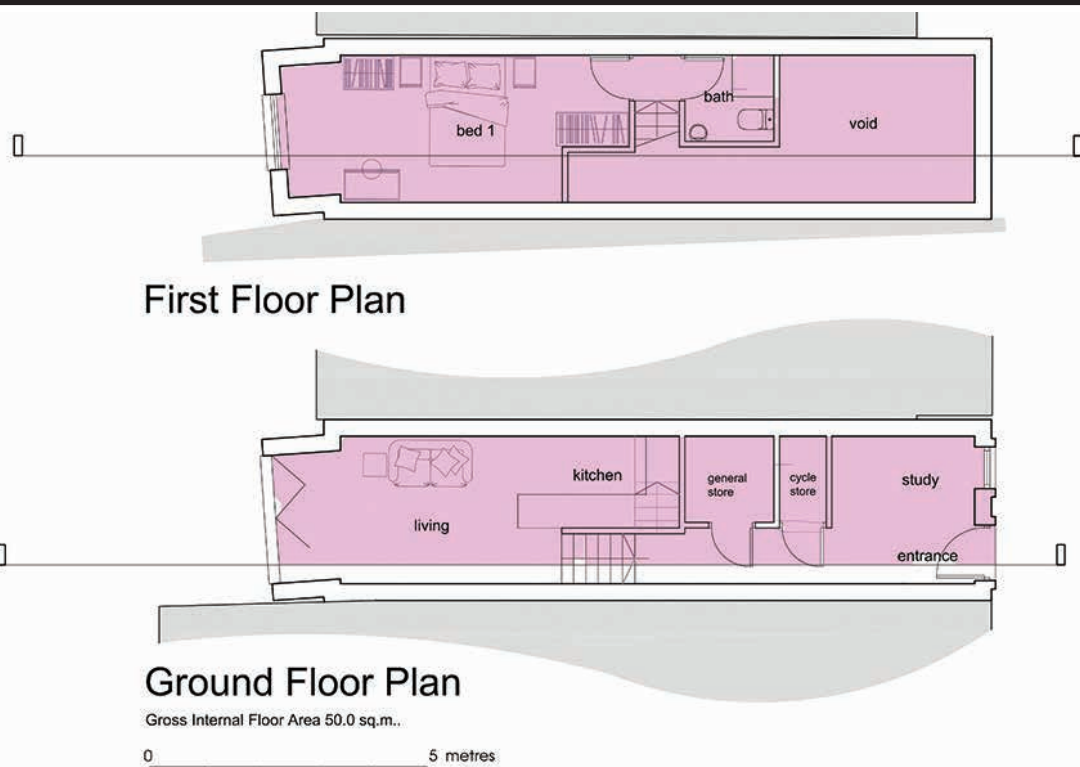


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Long and thin: Floor plans of the house, with Church Lane on the right.

No to plastics: in it for the long haul

By Ann Inglis

As consumers, we are unwittingly accelerating towards a future ruined by a man-induced eruption of plastics. We must slam on the brakes, and we must do it now.

A number of us have already joined together to start making East Finchley free from single-use plastics like food wrappings and plas-

tic bags. It will not be easy but we are here for the long haul.

Can you help?

Do you too want to make a difference? Small, targeted efforts will all add up and there is a role for everyone! We have had offers of help but we still need volunteer team builders ideally with experience in team building or 'playing'. If this is you, we would like to hear from you.

Further down the line, we will be asking people to take on the roles of treasurer and grant fundraisers.

We will also publish more

news about the title and look of the campaign alongside details of further roles for website designers, programmers, social media planners and other players.

Everyone with a voice, a pen or a computer will have a role so please tell us about yourself by emailing no2plastics@gmail.com or search "N2 United - No to plastics" on Facebook.

Library turns into a palace

The afternoon of Saturday 6 October will see East Finchley Library celebrating its 80th birthday with a free festival of arts, music, sports, science and dance as it hosts the Grange Big Local Fun Palace.

On display will be information from the archives of East Finchley Library, and organisers are hoping to collect stories about it from people who have used it over the years. The music will be MC'ed by Benteki, of Rezzent radio, with football run by the Monday Club, cheer-leading from Saracens, free manicures from Vales Nails, dance from SOTO CIC, art with East Finchley Open Artists, the chance to look for aliens with Mill Hill Observatory and much more. People will also have their chance to say how Grange Big Local's lottery funding ought to be spent. For more information check out the Fun Palace website www.funpalaces.co.uk

Could you live in a house less than 3 metres wide?

By Janet Maitland

One of London's slimmest homes could soon be built on Church Lane, N2, after a developer submitted plans for a house measuring just 2.9 metres (9ft 6ins) wide. The tiny two-storey home would be squeezed onto an access path, currently fronted by a high gate, between numbers 24 and 28.

Developers have already applied twice for permission to build on the site but were turned down by Barnet Council on the grounds that it would be too cramped. Planning officials also ruled it would be out of keeping with nearby houses such as numbers 28, 30 and 32 which are listed as being of local architectural and historic interest. Two appeals have been refused.



Tight fit: The development site, centre, currently fronted by gates, is in the gap between existing properties.

Slim but deep

However, the skinny house has since been redesigned and another application submitted. Under the new plans the house appears to be one-storey high from Church Lane but is set deeper into the ground at the rear. Behind the front door is a small study with two cupboards, one meant for cycle storage, off a narrow hall. You then step down into a sunken living room and kitchen area, above which would be a bedroom and shower room.

Hobbit homes

This is not the only pocket-sized home that could pop up in the area. The same developer was given planning permission last December to construct five studio-style residential units immediately behind the BCS Joinery building, close to Joyce's timber yard.

The smallest of these units has an internal area of 42.5 square metres, including a 'hammock

area' for a bed reached by step-ladder. Its width at the front is 2.9 metres, the same as the Church Lane house, though it widens to 3.1 metres at the back. Even the biggest unit is just 46 square metres. The plans do not include outdoor space and light is from skylights and windows at the back of the building.

Lordly prices

The London Plan specifies that a one-storey, one-bedroom dwelling for two people shouldn't be less than 50 square metres. However these units may be intended for one person, which is required to have only 39 square metres of space.

But whether it would be feasible for one person to buy or rent a unit - or the Church Lane house - depends on the cost, which in turn is dependent on location. A house only 3.04 metres wide was sold for £800,000 in East Dulwich in 2016 and East Finchley is at least as desirable a place to live.

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Loud and clear: The Hope North London team

Thanks for a grand night out

The *Archer* tea towels that we sold for children's charities a few years ago are now collectors' items... but they are still helping good causes. With the last remaining cash raised from the sales, we recently made a donation to Hope North London, which provides activities for young people and their families.

Hope North London's Jamie Fletcher told us: "Thanks to the donation from *The Archer*, we were able to take our Thursday night youth group bowling. Fourteen young people attended and enjoyed a game of bowling along with a platter of food. It was great for the young people on the estate to get out of the area, enjoy a fun activity, and finish off with a nice meal."

Motorcyclist dies in collision

By Janet Maitland

A 25-year-old man has died after his motorbike collided with a van on A1 Falloden Way, just past the traffic lights at Brookland Rise, NW11. Emergency services rushed to the scene at about 4pm on Wednesday 8 August.

The victim has been named as David Szadowki who was originally from Poland but was living in Hendon. His next of kin have been informed.

The 27-year-old driver of the van was arrested at the scene on suspicion of death by careless driving and also failing to appear in court for an unrelated matter. He has been released under investigation in relation to the collision.

Local resident Brian Ingram arrived at the scene shortly after the accident happened. He said: "The motorbike had hit the side of the van which was turned sideways to the road. The rider had also been hit by his own bike which had fallen on top of him. When I arrived the van driver and his passenger were just standing by the van. They did not run."

Anyone with any informa-

tion is asked to call the Serious Collision Incident Unit on 020 8991 9555. You can also contact police via Twitter @MetCC, quoting CAD 5084/8AUG.



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What's being done to tackle thieves on mopeds?

Moped-enabled crime has been a significant problem in Muswell Hill and East Finchley in the last 12 months and the police have had to devise new ways to combat the scourge. Here, PC Matt Fletcher of Haringey Proactive Investigation Unit describes a typical shift.

The first thing we do when we begin a shift is to review the latest intelligence update on moped crime across the borough. This is key because it is how we work out what to do with the rest of our time.

Searches

We might start by executing a search warrant at a suspected moped thief's address based on information we've received over the past few days. Phones are one

of the primary targets for moped enabled theft so if we can recover these at an address and they are traceable back to a crime then it is a great result for us.

If this throws up some further leads we could then launch an investigation into a new series of mobile phone snatches. This can be painstaking work but these are rarely one-off incidents, so the important thing is to try to link these events as we can then

piece together evidence from different incidents.

Spraying

Maybe we will next do some covert patrols around traffic pinch points. We always have forensic tagging spray at the ready. It can be sprayed on riders that are suspected of being involved with crime as they go past and it remains on their clothes and skin for weeks. If we later catch up with the rider, the unique formula of each spray can allow us to link them to the offence.

Updating

Afterwards perhaps we will pause to check in with the central team that oversees moped crime. This helps us to get an idea of trends across London and how this crime type is developing. This allows us to continually improve our approach.

Recovering mopeds

As we draw towards the end of the shift, we could find ourselves responding to members of the public to recover any dumped mopeds. If we can get these seized and off the streets then they can't be used to commit crime.

For all that hard work it's good to see some results. On one of the warrants we recently conducted in Haringey we recovered 30 phones with an estimated retail value of £20,000 along with £2,000 cash. The male at the address was arrested and later deported as a result.



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.

Cash machine scam

Do look carefully at the slot area on cash machines before you put your card in. If it doesn't look right don't use it and call police on 101. We've been getting reports from folk being approached at cash points that have been tampered with. Criminals offer to help you retrieve your card from the machine. But the 'help' is usually asking you to enter your PIN again, which means that the slot on the machine now has both the card and a record of your PIN, which the criminals retrieve once you have left the scene.

We no longer have banks with internal cash points on the High Road, but you can withdraw cash from your bank account at the Post Office counter. Another safe way is to ask for cash back when you do your supermarket shop or buy petrol.

Number plate theft

Criminals use number plates to swap between vehicles of the same make, to try and prevent detection should a witness get

a registration number. If you own a BMW, Audi or Mercedes, especially a black/dark one, you are more likely to be targeted for number plate theft. Halfords sell anti-theft bolts for number plates for about £6. You can also get them online.

Phone scam

A local resident recently received a phone call from a man with a South African accent who said he was from ACC (or a similar sounding name) asking if they had 'received a refund' regarding their bank charges. "Apart from never incurring bank charges and requesting the caller to delete my number from their records and hanging up on him, I decided to inform you in case there have been other incidents," he told us.

Please be aware of this ruse and do not give out any personal information or engage with the caller in any way. Just hang up.

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Manisha brings mental health front of mind

By Diana Cormack

A former teacher whose twin brother needed one-to-one care due to depression has created a way to raise awareness about mental health among primary school students.

Manisha Tailor has used her own experience as a sports coach, teacher and carer to publish *Child in Mind*, a teaching resource for schools, parents and guardians.

It encourages open discussion and collaboration regarding mental health and wellbeing which can be done through classroom workshops, training for adults/teachers or taking home a work-book to be used with parents or guardians.

Child in Mind includes lesson plans and ideas plus resources which can be photocopied. It covers topics such as coping with loss, being a young carer, disability, life as a refugee, bullying and much more. It is available on Amazon.



Twin's words inspire career move

Manisha was awarded the MBE for 'services to football and diversity in sport' (*The Archer*, page 12, April 2017). During her former teaching career Manisha had pioneered football amongst primary children of mixed ethnicity, encouraging girls particularly to participate.

Sadly her brother came to need one-to-one care due to mental health issues thought to have been brought about by bullying at school, which caused him to stop speaking. They shared a love of football and, recognising her football kit, he said his first words in 15 years: 'Football ... Manisha'.

This prompted Manisha to make a career change and become a football coach, which she hoped would aid his recovery as well as help others in a similar situation. She set up weekly sessions at the Wingate and Finchley Football Club, Summers Lane, N12, for those with a mental health condition and established a Disabled Fans Forum there. She also founded a football and mental health project www.swaggarlicious.com, following her belief that football has the power to change lives.

Manisha Tailor. Photo by Radhika Tailor

Memory walk

All over the country people are preparing to take part in the annual Memory Walk organised by the Alzheimer's Society. Among them once again is Archer deliverer John Michaeloudis, of Lynmouth Road, N2, who will be walking in memory of his mother and close friends.

He will be at the Honourable Artillery Grounds, City Road, EC1, on Sunday 13 October ready for an 11am start. In advance of the event, John will be seeking sponsorship locally by knocking on doors to ask for your support in the form of a cheque made out to the Alzheimer's Society. For more information visit www.memorywalk.org.uk.

Be our eyes and ears

The Archer has been going strong for 25 years thanks to the loyalty and support of its readers and advertisers, and the volunteers who deliver it to nearly 10,000 premises each month.

Remember, it's your newspaper, and we rely on you to tell us what's going on in and around East Finchley. So if you have a story that you'd like others to know about, please get in touch with us. You can send your stories, letters, and photos by email to the-archer@lineone.net or by post to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE.

Find us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram @TheArcherN2. You can also find out more about contributing and advertising at www.the-archer.co.uk.



Time of knead: Bakers making bread by hand at Margot Bakery. Photo Mike Coles.

Bakery is dough-ing something right

By Nick Allan

It's over two years since local resident Michelle Eshkeri opened Margot Bakery on East End Road. In that time, the bakery and café has become a staple for an ever-growing number of customers.

They drop in for her popular sourdough breads, challah and bagels, vegetarian savouries, sweet pastries, biscuits and cake, all made on site, and the baking team is developing recipes all the time, often in response to customer requests.

Michelle said: "We have learned so much in the last two years and there is more I want to do with the business and the products. The response from

East Finchley residents has been amazing, it is a very special place to live and work."

Margot Bakery was featured as 'one of the best-patisseries-in-the-world' by Condé Nast Traveller last October and won two Time Out Love London awards in May this year.

Condé Nast remarked not only on the quality of the breads and cakes but also the interior of the bakery, formerly the derelict

Post Office, with its hand-made cement tiles which they said were reminiscent of 1920s' Parisian patisseries. Michelle said: "I wanted the interior to be relatively bare in order to focus customers' attention on the baked goods."

Now with a staff of 11, Michelle is still in most days mixing and shaping and covering baking shifts as well as creating and testing new recipes. For more information, pictures or comments contact her at michelle@margotbakery.co.uk.

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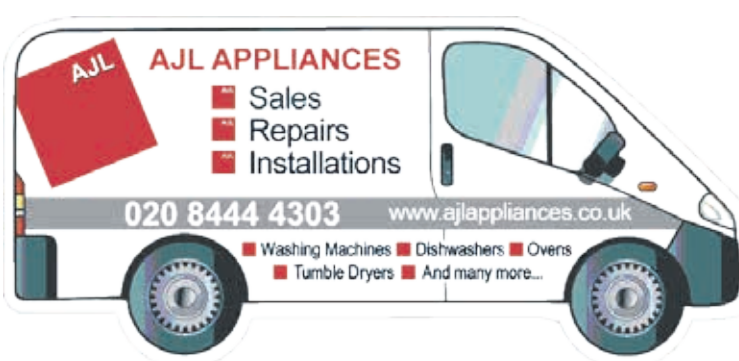
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New surprises and old favourites at Arts Festival

By David Melsome

The East Finchley Arts Festival runs for an extra day this year at All Saints' Church in Durham Road, N2, with a film screening as usual at the Phoenix Cinema.

The festival opens on Thursday 27 September with the London Mozart Players and London Ripieno Singers performing works by Debussy and Mozart and the debut of a new work by festival director Geoffrey Hanson.

New this year is a Last Night of the Festival with the London Metropolitan Brass, which will have some of the favourite music and all the verve of the Last Night of the Proms. Returning artists include Tim Arnold, Paprika and the Finchley Music Children's Group.

Here is the full line-up for this year's festival with times and ticket details:

Thursday 27 Sept

London Mozart Players and **London Ripieno Singers** perform *Trois Chansons* by Claude Debussy, *Piano Concerto no 23 in A major K488* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and *Death, Be Not Proud* by Geoffrey Hanson; All Saints' Church, Durham Road, N2, 7.30pm. Tickets: £25 / £20 / £12.

Friday 28 September

Festival Art Exhibition runs every evening from 6pm during the Festival and at weekends from 12 noon until 10pm. Art of every kind is for sale and 40% of the price of each work sold will be donated to the two festival charities.

Saturday 29 September

Wind ensemble **Harmoniemusik** play Ibert, Bach, Rossini, Barber, Sammartini & Jim Parker; All Saints' Church, 7.30pm. Tickets: £20 / £15 / £10.

Sunday 30 September

Screening of *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* starring Maggie Smith, in celebration of author Muriel Spark's centenary; Phoenix Cinema, High Road, N2, 2pm at Phoenix Cinema, High Road, N2; tickets: £12.50 / concs £8.50, direct from Phoenix Box Office on 020 8444 6789.

Pop-Up Opera perform Peter Brook's *La Tragedie de Carmen*, a reimagining of Bizet's famous masterpiece; All Saints' Church, 6pm. Tickets: £25 / £20 / £12.

Monday 1 October

The Max Bruch Trio plays works by Max Bruch, Anthony Bailey, W.A. Mozart, Darius Milhaud, Geoffrey Hanson & Gordon Jacob; All Saints' Church, 7.30pm. Tickets: £20 / £15 / £10.

Tuesday 2 October

North London choral group **Voxcetera** perform music from their varied repertoire, including Tallis, Biebl, Haydn, Sondheim and Rutter; All Saints' Church, 7.30pm. Tickets: £20 / £15 / £10.

Wednesday 3 October

Tomorrow's Warriors StringTing blaze a trail for women and strings in jazz with performances of classics such as Thelonius Monk's *Brilliant Corners*, and Ornette Coleman's *Lonely Woman*; guest

Right: Some of the performers at the Arts Festival.

Top, Tomorrows Warriors, left centre Ignas Maknickas, right centre Finchley Childrens Music Group, below left, London Metropolitan Brass, below right, Harmoniemusik.

appearance by saxophonist Aleksandra Topczewska; All Saints' Church, 7.30pm. Tickets: £20 / £15 / £10.

Thursday 4 October

Finchley Children's Music Group, currently celebrating its 60th year, presents a programme of works ranging from Bach to Bernstein; All Saints' Church, 7.30pm. Tickets: £10 (unreserved).

Friday 5 October

Singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist and Muswell Hill lad **Tim Arnold** performs music from his 17 solo albums; All Saints' Church, 7.30pm. Tickets: £20 / £15 / £10.

Saturday 6 October

Paprika, the UK's leading Balkan band, are festival favourites and return this year with their fusion of Eastern European, Balkan, Gypsy and classical music; All Saints' Church, 7.30pm. Tickets: £20 / £15 / £10.

Sunday 7 October

Last Night of the Festival: London Metropolitan Brass lead a programme including Elgar's *Imperial March*, *Nimrod* and *Chanson de Matin*. In the second half Elgar's *Pomp & Circumstance March* and Parry's *Jerusalem* allow for plenty of audience participation; All Saints' Church, 7.30pm. Tickets: £10 unreserved.

Tickets

Tickets are available online at www.ticketsource.co.uk/efinchleyarts and from *Black Gull Books*, 121 High Road, N2, (tel: 020 8444 4717). A season ticket at £60 entitles the holder to one ticket for each event at All Saints'.

Tickets may also be purchased at the door according to availability (credit cards not accepted at the door). Under-18s can buy tickets at half price. All Saints' Church and the Phoenix Cinema are both fully accessible.



Generations of youngsters on the right path

By John Lawrence

Mike Herring started helping out at Finchley Sea Cadets in 1980 because his 10-year-old daughter Sharon had just joined the unit. Sharon left seven years later but Mike stayed on and he's still there in 2018.

Mike, of Richmond Road, N2, has received a special certificate from Ken Olisa, the Lord Lieutenant of London, for his 38 years of service to the youth organisation, based in Long Lane, N3. He still goes every week, teaching marine engineering, rope work and first aid, and helping out when the cadets sail on the lake at Welsh Harp, near Brent Cross.

"I've seen a lot of good cadets pass through the unit in my time," said Mike, 71. "One boy went on to study avionics at university and he now works for a private airline. Another girl became a Chief Petty Officer in the Royal Navy."

Worthwhile

The unit, which currently has about 20 members, is an excellent way for young people to learn how to



Long service: Ken Olisa, Lord Lieutenant of London, left, presents Mike with his certificate. work in a team, with practical skills like navigation, catering and communication.

"We had a reunion a few years ago," said Mike, "and one lad came up to me and said: 'Don't ever close this place down; without it I could have gone in totally the wrong direction in life.' That kind of thing makes it all worthwhile."

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Speed guns being placed in hands of worried residents

By John Lawrence

Residents concerned about motorists speeding down their streets are being urged to set up their own road watch schemes using speed guns supplied by the police.

Barnet's Roads and Transport Policing Team admits it doesn't have the resources to monitor every problem area but says volunteers can help themselves via Transport for London's Community Road Watch (CRW).

PCSO Nicola Pettitt says residents can provide the initial

stood if people didn't want to launch a road watch in their own street where it might bring them into dispute with neighbours. She suggested: "If you think your own road would benefit, however, you could try to persuade a friend or relative to help out."

To take part or to suggest



Speed watcher: Volunteer Brian Ingram monitors vehicles on the A1 in Hampstead Garden Suburb. Photo Peter McCluskie.

assessment of motorists' speeds that informs police where to follow up with an official speeding operation.

"A lot of speeding complaints are down to people's perception of speed and quite often cars that you might think are speeding are under the limit. This is why we like to get the public involved so that they can monitor it and have a better idea of how fast vehicles are actually travelling," she said.

Training

Being a volunteer for a CRW takes approximately one hour per session time and can be done at most times of the day (light and weather permitting). Community police officers will provide a hi-vis vest for volunteers to wear and train them on how to use the speed guns.

Details of speeding vehicles will be passed on to Transport for London who send out a warning notification in the first instance to the owner. A high percentage of speeding vehicles could trigger a fuller police check.

Nicola said her team under-

Thirsty trees saved by the cavalry

By Ann Bronkhorst

The prolonged heat wave through July and into August affected trees as well as plants. When Good Gym asked the Friends of Coldfall Wood and Muswell Hill Playing Fields if there was a practical task they could help with, rescuing the thirsty young trees on the fields was the priority.

Good Gym is a national movement for combining fitness, especially through running, with socially beneficial projects. Members of our local group meet regularly at the Phoenix Cinema, then set off together at a run to tackle a useful physical task.

One Friend of Coldfall Wood said it was like the cavalry arriving! The ten runners did a grand job, using jerry cans of water supplied by Haringey Council. Since their visit on 31 July there's been some rain but Good Gym definitely saved those trees. More information from www.goodgym.org.



Lift off: Emma in competition in Malta

Personal best for powerlifter Emma

By David Melsome

Powerlifter Emma Whiteman put in a personal best lift of 170kg to take second place in her weight category at the World Drug Free Powerlifting Association Deadlift Championships in Malta.

Ex-police officer Emma, of Chandos Road, N2, was up against the best in the world and was just beaten to the title by a competitor from the Republic of Ireland who managed a lift of 175kg.

As we reported in April, Emma only entered the sport three years ago and trains at 5am each morning before taking her daughter Eliza,

five, to school. She also has a three-year-old son, Noah.

She told us: "Team GB as a group won the 'best overall lifters' for our performances over all weight categories in Malta. The next world championships will take place in Orlando, Florida, so my kids are pushing me to train extra hard in order to get to Disneyland."

Academy open days

Prospective parents and students are invited to an open evening at the Archer Academy, Lower School, Eagans Close, N2, between 6pm and 9pm on Thursday 20 September. Guided tours led by Year 7 and Year 8 students will take place throughout the evening, and there will be the opportunity to speak to members of staff and governors. In addition, the school will be holding open mornings in the week beginning Monday 24 September.

The school advises that there is no parking available on site; if travelling by car, park a little distance away and approach on foot, and avoid parking on Stanley Road. For further information, visit the Admissions pages at www.thearcheracademy.org.uk, email office@thearcheracademy.org.uk or telephone admissions officer Ms. Walsh on 020 8365 4110.



Big money walk

This year's Big Fun Walk from East Finchley to Westminster raised £147,310 to support patient care at the North London Hospice. Hundreds of walkers covered the nine-mile route in hot and sunny conditions on May 6.

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Fond farewell: Coldfall Primary's Evelyn Davies, centre, and Emma Coleman, right, in Sierra Leone.

Living and learning in Sierra Leone

Late last term, a team of six from Coldfall Primary School in Muswell Hill travelled to Sierra Leone for two weeks working with the EducAid schools and teacher training project. Here, headteacher Evelyn Davies shares her impressions from the trip.

The Coldfall Six, as we became known, taught business administration lessons to degree students. We also ran a sports day in the primary school and a maths fair in the secondary school.

We met so many students and children with the most distressing stories to tell: being recruited as child soldiers in the civil war, losing members of their family in a landslide or to disease through lack of medical facilities.

We are so rich in comparison to these lovely people, who have so little and yet share everything they do have. For them having an education, which we often take for granted, is the most important thing and they are so eager to learn and take some control of their futures.

School life

The children share their living quarters with up to 40 others in a dormitory with bunk beds and small wooden boxes where they store their

few clothes and belongings. They are put into mixed age and gender 'family groups' with a learning leader who ensures they live and work together happily, reading them a bedtime story at night time, and leading a daily discussion session with them after the morning assembly at 9.30am.

The teaching conditions are so different to ours, with no resources apart from the blackboard and chalk. Students sit on wooden benches around wooden tables and electricity is only on for a few hours in the evening so the rooms are dark most of the time.

The rains when they come are torrential and, with the tin roofs, create amazing thunderous sounds completely drowning out any teaching, often for up to an hour or more... yet the students take it all in their stride!

Coldfall children make a difference

Before we left the UK, we

asked the children at Coldfall to donate packets of pants for the children and their families in Sierra Leone. As a result of their generosity, we were able to distribute two pairs to each of the children in the primary school. The smiles and cries of excitement brought tears to our eyes... such a small gift making such a big difference.

So now back at Coldfall we are very keen to share all that we have learnt with our children here and continue our work with EducAid. We are also planning a joint project for the next academic year.

A new venture for an old hand

By Carmen Stevens

Perhaps some *Archer* readers are unaware that the Meze and Shish restaurant in the High Road is the newest venture of Aziz Ahsac, for the last 13 years the owner of popular café Casa Pepe just a few doors away.

Although Aziz purchased the restaurant site on the corner of Lincoln Road two years ago, it took a year to repair and refurbish, and get a licence in place, before opening. His large friendly team includes his nephew Dysie as manager.

They now have a flourishing restaurant specialising in Turkish and traditional charcoal grills where they make their own breads and pastries and their food is freshly prepared. Offering a special two course lunch at £6.95 (Monday to Friday) plus an a la carte menu, it attracts local tradespeople as well as evening diners.

The main restaurant is open plan with eclectic decorations and there is an airy wooden framed conservatory with open veranda.

Aziz came to England in 1994 from Gaziantep, southern Turkey. Initially he ran a clothing business, but after training at a restaurant in Edgware and elsewhere and opening two Mediterranean vegetable shops, he alighted on Casa Pepe, which was somewhat rundown at the time, and took it over.



The Meze and Shish restaurant Photo Mike Coles

Take tea on Silver Sunday

Senior citizens from across Barnet are invited to take their family or go along and make new friends at the fourth annual Silver Sunday afternoon tea party.

The free event takes place at Woodhouse College, Woodhouse Road, North Finchley, from 12.30pm to 3.30pm on Sunday 7 October and everyone is welcome.

There will be a variety of entertainment to join in or sit back and

enjoy, as well as lots of information on things to do and services for senior citizens. It is organised by Barnet Seniors' Association in tandem with Barnet Council.

It is not necessary to book but organisers say it would be helpful for catering purposes to let them know if you plan to go along. Email distribution@barnetseniors.org.uk or leave a message on 020 3778 0151.

Headscratcher

By Oliver Skanberg-Tippen

Word ladder

Find a way to change 'Paper' to 'Bills' in five steps, changing just one letter and making a new word each time. Turn to page 11 for the solution.



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Same owners, new ideas at Fortis Green restaurant

By Ruth Anders

Big changes are afoot at Knidos, the restaurant in Fortis Green that we last featured in our October 2017 edition. Gonçalo Felix, better known simply as Felix, has arrived with Portuguese flair and a mass of ideas that owners Ina and Nick Kolev are bringing in from this month.



From the left, Ina, Felix and Nick at Knidos Restaurant.
Photo Ruth Anders

They are sourcing food from local suppliers such as Midhurst Butchers and also forging links with Les Aldrich, London's oldest music shop. The musical connection began in late July with an acoustic guitar player delivering a romantic accompaniment to a packed dining room. Gentle live instrumental music will continue each Friday evening.

Further plans include special national cuisine nights, and special Sunday roast lunches. A comedy night with talented local stand-up comedian Mark Maier is promised for 16 September, the first of a planned series of similar monthly events.

Those looking to meet new friends will be delighted

to hear about a singles date night. Knidos is working with the Restaurant Club to develop a series of these beginning on 27 September.

Knidos's owners are Bulgarian, the menu is Mediterranean and the chefs are Algerian, an eclectic blend that offers a fascinating menu.

Felix has worked in a variety of hospitality roles including a period as General Manager of Devon's iconic Burgh Island Hotel, famous for its illustrious 1930s patrons such as Noel Coward and Agatha Christie. Closer to home, he was manager of the Clissold Arms, also in Fortis Green, for a time. For further information see www.knidosrestaurant.co.uk or call 020 8245 2165.



Obedient and well-mannered: all praise to the dogs of N2

By Marian Bunzl

Manning a stall for the North London Chorus at the East Finchley Festival back at the start of the summer, I noticed how many dogs were part of the crowd. A few of them are pictured above. Cherry Tree Wood is usually their domain, where they can run freely and socialise, sometimes very vocally, with other dogs.

At the festival I was most impressed by their impeccable behaviour. Walking sedately on the lead by their owner's side, from Doberman to Chihuahua there was never a bark or a growl from any of them. However, this doesn't mean they weren't still communicating. Scientific studies of canine body language have revealed their silent messages.

For example, the pricked ears and quivering tail of a male miniature schnauzer, looking up at a tall blonde female labradoodle, said: "I love you - be mine!" Her tilted nose and curled lip replied: "You haven't got the legs!"

The same schnauzer, gently sniffing the ear of a small fluffy bichon fries, murmured: "You're more my kind of gal - may I have this dance?" A tiny Pomeranian carried in her owner's shoulder bag had teeth bared in a canine smile conveying her delight in looking down on other dogs for a change. Meanwhile, a whippet lying elegantly in the shade behind the food stalls held his head and nose at an alert angle as if to say: "I smell kebabs!"

One thing we can be sure of: at one of the hottest festivals in recent memory the dogs of East Finchley, with tongues hanging out, were probably speaking with one voice and saying: "What do we want? A drink. When do we want it? Now!"

RICKY SAVAGE ... "The voice of social irresponsibility"

Aretha the icon

They say the way to become an icon is to live fast, die young and leave a good-looking corpse. From Buddy Holly to Amy Winehouse via Otis Redding, Jimi Hendrix and Kurt Cobain, rock'n'roll has been littered with them. But there is another way.

The other kind of icon doesn't die young, doesn't leave unanswered questions about what might have been because what they leave is greater than all that. And few have left as much as Aretha Franklin.

A whole forest of trees has been sacrificed in telling the details of her life, so I'm not going to bother, I'm going to write about the music, because in the end that is what really matters.

She came from that same gospel tradition that gave us Gladys Knight, Tina Turner and Mavis Staples, recorded a first album of gospel songs at 14 and, after a demo she made in New York came into the hands of John Hammond of Columbia Records, she got a record deal. It didn't really work out for her at Columbia, but in 1967 Jerry Wexler signed her for Atlantic and things started to happen.

For the next decade Aretha was the Queen of Soul. The power of her voice, her commitment and the songs she chose created music no one else came close to. When Otis Redding heard her version of his song *Respect* he said that she had taken it from him and made it hers. No more was it a song about a man asking for some respect from his wife; in Aretha's hands it was an anthem, not just for women, but also for the whole civil rights movement.

If that was all she had done she would have been something special, but there was far, far more. Her recordings of *Say a Little Prayer*, *Natural Woman* and *Amazing Grace* just added to her.

So, when I heard that she had died I didn't turn to a record, I dug out my DVD of *The Blues Brothers* to watch Aretha belting out *Think* in a soul food café. After all, more than the car chases, it was that performance that made the film for me. Like I said, there is more than one way to become an icon.

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- **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.
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- **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 1415 to book.
- **Bridge Club**, Thursday & Saturday afternoons, Age UK, Oak Lane, N2 8LT. Contact Ray Tiano 07944 562180.



Honey, I shrunk the workers!

Find your way to the foyer of the Phoenix Cinema any time in October and you'll be able to enter a fascinating miniature world created by photographer Niki Bruckner.

Her Tiny People Project uses miniature figurines from railway modelling, often workers along with some Lego characters, to give us a new perspective on some everyday objects like a camera and a tooth.

Niki, who has lived in East Finchley for five years, says: "The whole project started with

a series of four pictures as a present for my favourite dentists in Budapest to whom I will always be grateful. But then I had these three sets of 'tiny people' that I had grown to like but did not know what else to use them for.

"Luckily some birthdays were coming up so I made some personalised birthday cards for

people who have become a part of my life in various ways in the last five years or so."

Preparing her intricate scenes can take Niki several hours with the photo shoot taking another few hours to

get just right. The figurines she uses come from all walks of life. She describes them as "tiny and annoyingly unstable". See her work for free at the Phoenix in October and visit her website at www.nikibruckner.com.

Roots Sisters got rhythm

By A.S. Khan

East Finchley Constitutional Club was the setting for the opening night of exciting new live music club Roots Sisters Reunion in July. Local music lovers were delighted to have this new event on their doorstep with band Sister Suzie & the Right Band opening the first night.

They played an entertaining and lively one-hour set to an enthralled crowd. Sister Suzie stepped onto the stage glittering from head to toe in emerald green and had the audience in the palm of her hand from the first song with a mix of Blues and Rhythm & Blues.

The live event was launched by performers Aisha Khan and Rossella Scarlet following the Roots Sisters Facebook group, which supports and promotes women working in many different areas of American Roots music from all over the world.

Resident DJ Rossella Scar-

let kept the crowd dancing long after the band's final song and said: "The first Roots Sisters Reunion was full of good vibes and happy faces as well as great music; there was incredible local support."

The next Reunion is on Saturday 15 September, again at the East Finchley Constitutional Club in The Walks, N2, and will feature Lynette Morgan & The Blackwater Valley Boys, who play Western Swing and Hillbilly. Follow Roots Sisters events at: www.facebook.com/roots-sistersrule.

Puppet show needs a hand

The Red Hedgehog Theatre in Highgate reopens this month and a local director is looking for a cast and volunteers to help with his first show there in April next year.

Jake Eiseman-Renyard will be directing a puppet adaptation of environmental musical One Planet Future by Debbie Campbell, which is set in an abandoned allotment with urban foxes, creepy crawlies and discarded household items coming to life as characters. Quirky, witty and with a serious ecological undertone, it features catchy songs and can motivate audiences of any age to take action on environmental issues such as dumping and the loss of green spaces.

Jake is making many of his



Some of the puppets in Jake's show

puppets from recycled materials and is looking for volunteers interested in working as puppeteers, voice artists, musicians and lighting and sound operators. After its run at the Red Hedgehog from 8-22 April, Jake hopes it will be picked up for a run at the Battersea Arts Centre.

He said: "If anyone reading this is interested in being part of the show and is free to rehearse over the coming months, please email jakeeisemanrenyard@gmail.com."

What's On...

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

Saturday 8 September

- Come and sing **Faure's Requiem** with Fortismere Community Choir and friends at St Andrew's Church, Alexandra Park Road, N10. Rehearsal 2-5pm, informal performance at 5.30pm. Singers and audience all welcome.

Sunday 9 September

- **Free concert**, 7.30pm at East Finchley Methodist Church, High Road, N2, opposite Creighton Avenue. Sanae Honda, violin, Maryan Balkwill, cello and Saoko Blendis, piano; programme includes Bach, Beethoven, Bartok, Mozart, Clara Schumann. Entry free; collection for Age UK. Fully accessible venue.

Saturday 15 September

- **Spiders and Bugs Hunt** at Long Lane Pasture, opposite fire station, Long Lane, N3, 10am to 12 noon. The Pasture should be alive with grasshoppers, spiders and other creatures. Discover more about insects and observe the wasp spider (which doesn't sting).

- **Roots Sisters Reunion** with live music from Lynette Morgan and the Blackwater Valley Boys; East Finchley Constitutional Club,

The Walks, N2, from 8.30pm. Admission £9. More information at www.facebook.com/rootsistersrule.

Sunday 16 September

- **Fabulous Finchley**: guided walk with City of London guide Paul Baker. Meet 2.30pm outside Finchley Central tube station (Ballards Lane exit). Explore 1,000 years of the history of Church End (Finchley Central) and East End (East Finchley), including a beautiful green space. More information from Paul on 020 8440 6805 or visit www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net.

Thursday 20 September

- Open evening for prospective students and parents at **Archer Academy**, Eagans Close, N2, 6pm to 9pm, with guided tours and talks. Open mornings also in week beginning Monday 24 September. To book, contact admissions officer on 020 8365 4110.

Saturday 22 September

- **Family bats walk** at 19.00 in Coldfall Wood, led by Cindy Blaney. Details and booking at www.coldfallwoods.co.uk

Sunday 23 September

- **Things That Go Bump in High Barnet**, an autumn equinox walk with City of London guide Paul Baker. Meet at High Barnet tube station, 7.30pm. Ghost walk through High Barnet and Monken Hadley, second most haunted village in England. More information from Paul on 020 8440 6805 or visit www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net.

Saturday 29 September

- **Fungi walk** at 2.30pm in Coldfall Wood, led by Andy Overall. Details and booking at www.coldfallwoods.co.uk

Sunday 30 September

- **A&B Drama Club** presents *An Evening of Conceptual Absurdity*, an evening of 10 short plays (running time 90 minutes plus an interval); Finchley Youth Theatre, High Road, N2, at 7pm, and at the same venue and time on Sunday 7 October and Sunday 14 October. Tickets on the door, from www.abdrama.com and from Black Gull Books, 121 High Road, N2.

Sunday 30 September

- **Battle of Barnet**: guided walk with City of London guide Paul Baker. Meet at junction

of Great North Road and Hadley Green Road, EN5 5PP, 2.30pm. Explore the famous Wars of the Roses battlefield of 1471. More information from Paul on 020 8440 6805 or visit www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net.

Saturday 6 October

• **East Finchley Library celebrates its 80th birthday** with a free festival of arts, music, sports, science and dance as it hosts the Grange Big Local Fun Palace. Music will be MC'ed by Benteki, of Repräsent radio, with football run by the Monday Club, cheerleading from Saracens, free manicures from Vales Nails, dance from SOTO CIC, art with East Finchley Open Artists, the chance to look for aliens with Mill Hill Observatory and much more. For more information check out the FunPalace website www.funpalaces.co.uk

Sunday 7 October

• Senior citizens in Barnet are invited to take family or make new friends at the fourth annual **Silver Service afternoon tea party** drop-in event, with entertainment and advice on services for seniors; Woodhouse College, Woodhouse Road, N12, 12.30pm to 3.30pm.



Josie Peterson at the Pure Nest Cafe in Fortis Green Road.
Photo Mike Coles

Cake and a cuppa... with a difference

By Thalia Pellegrini

If you suffer from a food intolerance or allergy, or if you're vegan, your choice of where to indulge in a cup of tea and a slice of cake in and around N2 can be limited.

For those yet to discover it, Pure Nest was opened in Muswell Hill in September 2016 by Josie Peterson and this year was shortlisted in the Allergy and Free-From Awards.

"It's a place for people to eat without worrying about gluten or dairy," Josie told me. Or eggs or sugar, or wheat or grains, if you so choose.

Josie's creations were born out of frustration. When her own food intolerances made eating out impossible, she began to create her own recipes. She began by selling her cakes on a stall in what was Tufnell Park Farmers' Market.

She focussed on gluten-free baked goods and was delighted by the response. Lots of experi-

menting led to what she felt was the perfect gluten-free taste. Buckwheat, coconut and gram flour are all used, with refined sugars given the heave-ho.

Cakes plus

Pure Nest was opened initially as a cake shop. It now offers far more than allergen-free goodies to indulge in with a cuppa. Josie offers bespoke cake orders and catering for all occasions and is keen to stress that she can assure nut-free environments for those customers who require it.

Whether you eat dairy or gluten or not, Pure Nest is open to all and now also offers a breakfast and lunch menu, plus refreshing sorbets. Find out more at www.purenestcafe.com.

Make sure you get your jab

With the annual influenza vaccination period rapidly approaching, Paresh Shah, pharmacist at CW Andrew, contacted *The Archer* to advise readers of the 2018/19 programme.

It differs somewhat from previous years because there will be two vaccines available, one for the over-65 age group and the other for those below 65. This is because the previous one-fits-all vaccine has proved to be less beneficial for those in the older age group.

There will be phased deliveries of the vaccines to local pharmacies and general practices in September, October and November. It is possible that delays in this delivery system

could lead to people having to wait for their flu jab.

With the campaign starting in the latter part of this month, the objective is for everyone to be offered it by their doctor or pharmacist by the end of November, although it will still be available after this.

Headscratcher

Solution from page 8: Paper, Paler, Pales, Bales, Balls, Bills. *Please note there may be more than one solution.*

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Letters

How can we recycle now?

Dear Editor,

I am most disappointed by Barnet Council's decision to remove the recycling bank from outside East Finchley station, as described in your article on page 5 of last month's *Archer*. I live in a block of flats that was built decades ago and there is no possibility of finding a suitable place on the site for a recycling collection point.

The only practical way for my neighbours and me to recycle our collected paper, glass and cans has been to take them down to the bank at the station, which we did regularly. I believe that there are large numbers of East Finchley residents in the same position as us, living in flat blocks with no provision for recycling.

The only problem was that the bins by the station were often full; they were simply not emptied often enough. Clearly this is why the council could say "the service only generated low levels of recycling tonnage" and it was necessary to "deploy resources on a regular basis to clear fly-tipped materials around the banks". If you turned up at the recycling bank and it was full, most people would just leave their waste by the side of the bins. It is not realistic to expect people to take it back home with them.

Now if we wish to recycle, we have to go to Summers Lane. For me, it is either a 30-minute walk

or two bus rides there and back. The only practical way to take a worthwhile volume of recycling there is to drive, so now there are frequent, massive queues on the approach road.

In any case it makes no environmental sense at all to use 50 car journeys to deliver what one recycling lorry journey could do. As far as I am concerned, materials that I formerly recycled will now go in the general waste and the blame for this lies with Barnet Council.

**Yours faithfully,
Laurence Robinson,
Address supplied.**

Precious sightings

Dear Editor,

I am lucky enough to have a back bedroom facing north-west onto clear open skies, so see some amazing sunsets throughout the year.

Every late spring I am also treated to an aerial display surpassing anything RAF Duxford's Spitfires can offer, as four swifts arrive. Every morning they can be seen (albeit at 5am) wheeling, diving, turning, playing follow-the-leader, sometimes impossibly high, the next moment inches above the rooftops and between the buildings.

I think they must nest somewhere among the older buildings on Church Lane as this is where they seem to dive down, but I have never seen their nests.

One day there were only three swifts playing in the celestial blue. I

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Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be printed. Contact details can be withheld on request at publication. We reserve the right to abridge letters for reasons of space.

hoped that the absentee was sitting on a nest rather than having met its fate at the talons of some raptor. Oh joy! Two days later I counted seven swifts and eventually eight were showing off their fantastically co-ordinated skills.

These same birds can be seen in the evening from the garden of the Windsor Castle public house. They have moved on now but it is something to look for and look forward to next summer. They give me such pleasure.

**Yours faithfully,
Linda A. Dolata
Leopold Road, N2.**

Friends reunited

Dear Editor,

Just to let you know that I have had a response from my letter about Strawberry Vale Stables that you kindly published in *The Archer* in August. I have been in email contact with one of the 'girls' there I haven't seen for about 53 years! Thank you!

**Yours faithfully,
Jill Gilbert,
Address supplied.**

Long-lost craftsmanship in our humble garden walls

By Ruth Brown

Yorkshire might have dry-stone walls, but we have something just as good. As you wander down to Cherry Tree Wood, look out for a remnant of East Finchley's Georgian industrial heritage.

In the Georgian era, Nevil Smart owned a big brickfield along the stretch of High Road where the Phoenix Cinema now stands. He built brick houses on his plot, literally made of the clay on which they stood.

By 1809, he had also built four Georgian villas on Fortis Green, which had lovely views over to Highgate, and around the 1820s he built two more villas near the working toll gate at the Old White Lion.

Nevil Smart made fine London bricks in a pure yellow, which you can admire on Valona House opposite the tube station, his last villa standing, though perhaps not for long, now there's permission to demolish it to make way for flats.

The charm of clinkers

A by-product of all this brick making were blackened, fused-together bricks called clinkers. Newly-shaped bricks were piled up into a 'clamp' and a fire was made underneath. The bricks that were too close to the fire came out blackened and vitrified, each one a unique shape.

When the brickfield itself was eventually turned into Victorian streets - Park Hall,



A clinker wall near Cherry Tree Wood. Photo Emily Casimir-Brown

Baronsmere and Ingram Roads - their garden walls were made of clinkers. Victorian architects influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement of the time valued the use of local materials that were rough and irregular to give a rustic look.

So these walls were skilfully built up out of these misshapen pieces, and many of them are still standing over a century later. They can also be found in the County Roads, in some

roads in the Long Lane area, and in Muswell Hill.

Clinkers are not made in modern brick making, so they are now more rare. On our next trip out, perhaps we should stop a while to value our humble garden walls?

Ruth has dedicated this article to the late Len Willcocks, a former Archer contributor who she describes as "a lovely neighbour and true gentleman".



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True north: Edwin and Paulina in the Svalbard Islands

A trip to the top of the world

Paulina Spencer-Lugtenberg, born in East Finchley, and her husband Edwin, who is originally from the Netherlands and moved here 10 years ago, live in New Trinity Road and love travelling. Paulina tells us about their latest adventure:

We are avid readers of *The Archer*. We thought we would amuse you with some pictures from our recent trip to Svalbard to celebrate my 40th birthday. The Svalbard Islands are located in the Arctic Ocean, halfway between Norway and the North Pole. It is from here that the North Pole expeditions depart.

The main city where the airport is located is called Longyearbyen. It is home to the Global Seed Vault which is critical as a fail-safe seed storage facility so that humankind

has the ability to grow from seed in the event of natural or man-made disasters.

Polar bears and dinosaur bones

There are more polar bears than humans on Svalbard so you are required to carry a rifle and be on the look-out at all times. About 2,600 people live in the whole archipelago whereas there are an estimated 3,000 polar bears.

There are two Russian settlements: one is a ghost town mining village called Pyra-

miden, which was formerly a model Soviet town. It is slowly dilapidating but must have once been an impressive place with a school, cultural centre (with the world's northernmost piano), sports hall, hotel and restaurant. Currently, at peak season, just 12 Ukrainians live there.

The other town, Barentsburg, was bought from the Dutch in 1932 and still has an active mine but is also focused on tourism and crafts. To get to these places takes a snow scooter. The trip to Pyramiden and back takes an entire day.

Some people may recognise Svalbard from the TV series *Fortitude*. Like in the show, it is true that sick or injured people are immediately deported to the mainland and no-one can be buried here. The permafrost is slowly melting, throwing up various things from the earth, including dinosaur remains! It is a fascinating place.

Talbot Designs

On last month's back page the RAF Museum's new donation units designed by Talbot Designs, of Long Lane, N3, were described with a link to a YouTube video which didn't work because of a production error. To see the video, go to YouTube and search for 'RAF donation boxes'.



Cold storage: Paulina outside the Global Seed Vault.

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