



It's a snip: Lucy Harrison opens the new library. Photo Mike Coles

School library opens its doors to readers within a year

By Diana Cormack

Only a year after the official launch of its £250,000 fund raising campaign (*The Archer*, December 2018) the new library at the Archer Academy's Upper School is ready to welcome readers and borrowers.

At the opening ceremony a group of five students impressed the audience with their musical contribution, as did others with their reading of suitable pieces to accompany headteacher Lucy Harrison's speech.

Passionate about libraries

Ms Harrison thanked all those who had contributed towards such a speedy and highly successful outcome. She said that without the support and commitment of students, staff, parents, community members and anonymous donations it would not have been possible, not forgetting all those involved in design, planning, and construction.

Although the pre-sixth formers were happy in their building in Beaumont Close, N2, which had been specifically designed for former occupants the Hampstead Garden Suburb

Institute, the lack of a library was not something Ms Harrison could easily bear, for she is passionate about the value of libraries.

This was evident when she described the benefits students would gain from the school's new library and resource centre, linked to the IT suite, where they could come to read, to revise for exams or to study independently.

Book donations

Some of the large crowd attending the opening event had brought books to be added to the library shelves. If you would like to make a donation, perhaps a book which inspired you to read as a young person, take it along to the Upper School just behind East Finchley tube station, where you can fill in a bookplate with your name and message.

New evidence snares killer 22 years after he murdered twice

By David Melsome

A man has been jailed for murdering two pensioners in separate attacks 22 years ago, one of them in East Finchley, after new hand print evidence emerged.

Michael Weir, 53, of no fixed address, was found guilty at the Old Bailey of murdering 79-year-old Leonard Harris and 83-year-old Rose Seferian in 1998. Last month he was handed two life sentences and told he must serve a minimum of 30 years in jail.

Aylmer Road attacks

Mr Harris and his wife Trudie were both assaulted by Weir after he broke into their flat on Aylmer Road in East Finchley in January 1998, before fleeing the scene with a number of items of jewellery, including an 18-carat gold watch.

Mr Harris was discovered with serious head injuries and died in hospital almost five months later. He was a carer for his wife, who had dementia. Following the attack, her health rapidly deteriorated and she died around two years later.

Weir was originally con-

victed of Leonard's murder in July 1999 after DNA evidence from a glove found at the scene linked him to the attack but he was acquitted the following year when the Court of Appeal ruled that evidence provided by the prosecution was inadmissible.

Second murder finally solved

In 2017, a review of their system was carried out by the Met's Fingerprint Bureau and a palm print also found at the scene of the murder, unidentified at the time, was linked to a print taken from Weir in 2016.

The same print had been found at the home of Rose Seferian, who died from head injuries after a break-in at her home in Pembroke Road, W8, in March 1998, five weeks after Mr Harris had been murdered.

No remorse shown

Weir was re-arrested in



Jailed: Michael Weir

March 2018 for both murders and tried last November. Detective Inspector Shaun Fitzgerald, from Specialist Crime, said: "Weir has never owned up to his actions or shown any remorse for what he did. Nothing can ever change what the families of the victims have been through but we hope that knowing justice has been done brings them some kind of closure."

Malcolm is on the road again

By Ruth Anders

Eighteen months ago, *The Archer* reported on Malcolm Dunkeld's journey around the world on his 2015 Triumph Tiger XCX motorcycle, which ended painfully in the Outback of Australia after a crash on a remote road.

Malcolm was rescued by the Royal Flying Doctor Service and after surgery returned home to Leslie Road, N2. Following a long recovery he is now fit enough to complete the next leg of his journey – to travel through the Americas.

From south to north

Malcolm, 69, will begin his solo journey in Argentina visiting Patagonia (of which Charles Darwin wrote in his diaries "There is not a tree ... scarcely an animal or bird"), then on to Chile, Peru, the Pacific coastline and into



Man and machine: Malcolm Dunkeld gets ready to set off.

Mexico. From Central America he will continue into the United States, crossing the centre and following the eastern seaboard up to New York.

Malcolm is due to ship his bike to Buenos Aires later this month to take advantage of midsummer in the southern hemisphere. He thinks the entire trip will take approximately five months.

Sharing an experience

Long distance solo motorcycling is tough, dangerous,

exhilarating and full of the unexpected, both in terms of the outside world and how the rider makes sense of the whole thing.

Malcolm's journey will offer huge variety, from crumbling shanty towns to monolithic skyscrapers, towering glaciers to steamy tropical rain forest, race track tarmac to snaking dirt roads. It will include the Andes, the longest mountain range in the world, Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake, Atacama, the driest desert, and an abundance of UNESCO World Heritage sites.

He has agreed to send updates on the trip which we look forward to publishing at regular intervals. We wish him good luck and bon voyage.



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