

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Show of support for racial equality

By John Lawrence

People in East Finchley and Muswell Hill came out in their hundreds last month to show their support for the Black Lives Matter movement following the death of George Floyd while being arrested by police in the US.



'Strength of feeling: Residents in Bedford Road take the knee to back the Black Lives Matter movement. Photo Erini Rodis



Peaceful protest: Hundreds kneel in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement at Alexandra Palace. Photo Lloyd Winters

There was a powerful and peaceful demonstration at Alexandra Palace on Saturday 13 June when more than 500 knelt in silence for eight minutes and 46 seconds, the same amount of time a Minneapolis police officer knelt on Mr Floyd's neck.

The demonstration was organised by a group of Muswell Hill and East Finchley friends, and numbers swiftly grew when word got out on social media.

Earlier in the same week, residents in Bedford Road, N2, took the knee outside their own homes and held Black Lives Matter placards, calling for equality and an end to racial bias in society.

Chance for real anger

Angela Gokani Brasier, who lives in Muswell Hill, was one of the team who organised the Alexandra Palace event. She described it as a respectful and powerful demonstration of

solidarity. The organisers also included local residents Joy and Louise Nkosi, daughters of the late South African author and anti-apartheid campaigner Lewis Nkosi. Louise gave a powerful speech to the silent crowd.

Angela said: "Louise spoke to the crowd of the racism that happens daily not just in the US but in our own community, and to her own family and husband Akin Akinsiku. In speaking of her hope that people are now willing to take on the challenge she said: 'What we have is an opportunity and it's going to take hard work to turn that into real change'."

The Alexandra Palace demonstration came a week after thousands of people marched through the centre of London for the same cause.

See Soapbox, page 11.

Boy mugged by group of seven

By Janet Maitland

A 13-year-old boy was robbed while walking down Creighton Avenue near Coldfall Wood with a friend on the afternoon of Saturday 30 May. A group of seven other boys blocked his way with a bicycle by the junction with Ringwood Avenue, N2, and then surrounded him.

One boy grabbed him and put him in a headlock and demanded whatever he had on him. Another rifled through his pockets and found his phone. He gave them the passcode for this when they threatened to beat him up if he didn't. His house keys, an

Oyster card and some cash were also stolen.

If you witnessed the incident or have any information about it, please contact police on 101, quoting CAD 5141/30 May. If you want to remain anonymous, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

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The Archer team wishes to thank all the generous people who give up their spare time, in all weather, to deliver the paper for us.

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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Haringey Council 020 8489 0000	EF Advice Service 0300 4568365	
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Everyman, Muswell Hill 0872 436 9060	Relate Helpline 0300 100 1234	Hospitals
Garden Suburb Library 020 8458 3301	RSPCA 0300 1234 999	NHS 111
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Heathrow Airport 0844 3351801	Barnet MENCAP 020 8203 6688	OAPs' Advice
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Happy 80th Birthday to our grand old man!

By Diana Cormack

During the 1930s several new underground stations were constructed in London, all of which were expected to have a distinctive decoration pertinent to their particular position. However, with the country under war conditions, East Finchley was the only one where this was achieved.

On 22 July 1940, sculptor Eric Aumonier's archer was revealed. This three-dimensional statue, twice as big as a man, cost £245 to make and has been an emblem for East Finchley ever since.

The symbolism of an archer, launching his arrow with speed and precision, harked back to the days of hunters coming to the royal forest of Enfield which Finchley bordered.

It is said that a golden arrow from Archie's bow was placed in Morden station, 17 miles away at the other end of the



Icon: Archie in position at the station. Photo Mike Coles

Northern line. At that time the underground tunnel was the longest anywhere and Archie's bow pointed straight towards it, indicating a swift and safe journey. The arrow, if it ever existed, quickly disappeared, never to be seen again.

But Archie has definitely become the symbol of East Finchley and, in 2012, we were

proud when he was chosen by public vote to represent the borough of Barnet on its Olympic badge.

More significantly for us he is the icon from which this paper takes its name and after which our local secondary school the Archer Academy is also named. So, Happy 80th Birthday, Archie, from everyone in East Finchley.

Grants for essential services

Bread 'n Butter, the community group that ran cooking classes at St Mary's Church in East Finchley, is one of 14 organisations awarded grants for their essential work during the Covid-19 lockdown.

The group quickly switched its activity to focus on cooking and delivering hot meals to vulnerable and isolated people across Barnet. Grants of up to £5,000 were made by Barnet Council to support their work and that of other social enterprises.

Support in bereavement

A new bereavement support and counselling service has been launched for people in Barnet in the wake of the Covid-19 outbreak.

The service can offer immediate emotional support and counselling as well as practical and financial support advice that residents may seek while they are in bereavement. Delivered through Community Barnet and Mind in Barnet, it includes a helpline on 020 8016 0016 that will be answered five days a week and will take messages seven days a week. There is also email contact via: bereavement@communitybarnet.org.uk

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

Land opposite Chambers Gardens/Strawberry Vale, N2

20m Phase 7 Monopole C/W wraparound cabinet at base and associated ancillary works.

101 Abbots Gardens, N2

Conversion of garage into habitable room. Window to replace garage door.

101 Brim Hill, N2

Single-storey rear extension connecting house to garage. Conversion of garage into habitable room. Timber doors to replace garage door. New double-glazed rear door.

11 Deansway, N2

Replacing all windows on ground and first floor with double-glazed energy efficient bespoke option,

for like-for-like appearance

31 Deansway, N2

Raising roof height and parapet to side extension including one roof light. Enlarging ground floor rear door opening. New ground-floor double glazed side window. Replacing door sets with double glazed units. New hard landscaping to driveway and rear patio. Three CCTV cameras. Repairs to roof tiles.

2 Elmhurst Avenue, N2

Single-storey side/rear extension with green roof. 2m brick wall connecting outbuilding to extension.

139 Elmshurst Crescent, N2

Part single, part two-storey rear extension.

334A High Road, N2

Roof extension involving rear dormer window and one front/side roof light.

33 Leopold Road, N2

Roof extension involving hip to gable, rear dormer windows and two front roof lights.

32 Pulham Avenue, N2

New front porch.

47 Sylvester Road,

Single-storey rear extension. Roof extension involving rear dormer window with juliet balcony and three front roof lights.

Turquoise, 42 The Bishops Avenue, N2

Enlarging and replacing two front and four rear dormer windows with larger single-glazed timber casement windows to match original windows.

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Could this be the end of rough sleeping?

By Janet Maitland

Rough sleepers taken off the street during the pandemic have been promised long-term housing. The government announced at the end of May that it will fund 6,000 'new housing units' with 3,300 available over the next 12 months.

"We could be the generation that ends rough sleeping. We think we are on the cusp of something amazing. But it could go either way," said Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London.

Support for Barnet's homeless

At the start of the Covid-19 lockdown in March, Barnet Council took just a week to move 88 rough sleepers into private sector self-contained studio flats following a government request to house everyone sleeping rough or staying in hostels and night shelters.

Homeless numbers are continuing to rise as people lose their jobs and homes. At the time of writing 141 of Barnet's homeless have been housed, of whom 20 are in hotels. Hotels will want the rooms back when tourists return to London. Flats are let on short term contracts which can be ended at any time by the provider.

More government funding will become available but Barnet Council does not yet know how much it will get. Barnet Homes is using some of the £637,000 government funding for rough sleepers, given to them before the pandemic, to support those they've placed in temporary accommodation and to find them longer-term housing. The funding was ear-

marked for the refurbishment of a hostel in Friern Barnet, but this is now on hold.

Like all London boroughs, Barnet Council has signed up to the 'in-for-good-principle' which means no evictions "unless a support plan has been put in place and the rough sleeper is engaging with services".

Falling through the net

A support plan may be all that is possible for some homeless people. A council spokesperson told us the longer-term housing will be dependent on being eligible for benefits. This will exclude EU citizens who can't access benefits because they haven't been working here for long enough, anyone with limited leave to enter the country or to remain here, and asylum seekers.

"We're working together with Homeless Action in Barnet to support rough sleepers during the pandemic and into the future," said a spokesperson from Barnet Homes.

Self-Isolation Haiku

By Daphne Chamberlain
**Not isolated.
Can't get away from myself.
Discovering me.**



Have you put the cat out, dear?

By John Lawrence

There was a commotion at the end of May, which made the national press, when police helicopters and an armed response unit were called out to a sighting of a big cat, dubbed the 'Beast of Billionaire's Row', prowling through back gardens in East Finchley.

The exotic pet, thought to be a rare Savannah breed that had escaped from its owner, caused some alarm. And these photos of it, above, were sent to us by Archer reader Dana Staden, after it had casually wandered into the conservatory at the back of her home in Aylmer Road, N2, close to the junction with The Bishops Avenue.

Dana said it terrified a visiting friend, who screamed and scared it away but it later appeared again wandering over her lawn.

Dana judged the animal's size as half way between a domestic cat and a leopard, and told *The Archer*: "I had never seen such a strikingly beautiful cat before and suspected it

was a pet belonging to affluent neighbours.

"I was a bit apprehensive, but really more curious, and it didn't seem to be aggressive. When I approached, the cat stopped and just watched me, ignoring my calls to 'come here, puss'. Hopefully it's now safely home."

And so say all of us.

When wandering minstrels paid me a personal call

By Amanda Shribman

The highlight of my 12-week NHS shielding lockdown was when two musicians kindly came to the window of my flat off Oak Lane in East Finchley to play for me.

I had seen a post on social media way back in March from the World Harmony Orchestra offering to arrange to send musicians for free to support and entertain people shielding. At the time, I couldn't find anyone available local to me but then out of the blue he contacted me again and, although not part of the orchestra but from a musicians' network, Benjamin Yellowitz and Sian Herbert cycled over from Tottenham on one of the hottest days in May to sing and play for me and my neighbours.



Through the window: Musicians Sian Herbert and Benjamin Yellowitz play for Amanda Shribman

Watching them from the safety of my window, it really was a lovely treat and great fun when we all joined in with the singing and clapping. If you would like look up their

music, Benjamin and Sian have a band called Of Ghosts And Other Forms. Find them on Instagram @OfGhostsAndOtherForms ; @BenjaminYellowitz ; @SiansMusicBox

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So now you really can take The Archer with you wherever you go. Bookmark our website at www.the-archer.co.uk and if you have a QR reader on your phone use the code right to take you straight to our site.





Changes ahead for popular restaurant

By Joss Woolf

Nestled in the heart of East Finchley's 'old village' in Church Lane sits the ever-popular La Rugoletta restaurant which has been serving authentic Italian dishes for well over a decade. Some would say it is East Finchley's best kept secret!

Marina and David have worked tirelessly at the restaurant for the last ten years and, since they took it over four years ago, have succeeded not only in maintaining the original spirit of the restaurant but have also made it their own.

However, there will be one significant change; from early this month La Rugoletta will become Il Piccolo Villaggio (The Little Village). Marina and David say they chose the new name to reflect East Finchley's close family atmosphere, such as you would find in any small village.

Their popular menu will not change but there will be one or two additions in response to customer requests. A new website is also under way where

customers will be able to browse the menu, make reservations and subscribe to news.

In the meantime, if you want to order some food, con-

tact Il Piccolo Villaggio on 020 8815 1743 or by email, at marina@ilpiccolovillaggio.co.uk and ilpiccolovillaggiolondon@gmail.com.

Il Piccolo Villaggio



Little Village: David and Marina outside their newly named restaurant. Photo Joss Woolf

Hairdressers get their scissors ready again

By Diana Cormack

One of the most popular subjects in the media in recent months has been the state of our hair. With so many articles about how or if we should cut it, colour it or leave it, our lack of hairdressing seemed to rank with our lack of dentistry (unless of course you had problems with your teeth).

Dentists are now open for business, but the possible date for barbers and hairdressers to start snipping is Saturday 4 July. Before that they will have to prepare their premises in line with precautionary measures and strict hygiene rules which have to be adhered to.

The new salon style

At the time of writing, the shutters were still down on many of East Finchley's hairdressing businesses, but Yasmin Hussein of Hair 202 in the High Road was able to give *The Archer* some idea of what preparations were being made.

With social distance being of the essence, the number

of chairs in the salon has to be reduced, with screening where necessary. There will be fewer stylists per day, working along with a receptionist plus someone to continually do the required cleaning.

Staff will wear face visors and masks, with hand gel and wipes readily available. Face protection for clients, use of toilet facilities, and provision of beverages have to be taken into account but, until the necessary measures are put into action, it is all a learning curve.

One thing is for sure, once the salons open there will be a long wait for appointments and individual sessions will take longer too.

Travellers set up camp on Muswell Hill Playing Fields

By Janet Maitland

A group of travellers set up an encampment of about a dozen caravans on Muswell Hill Playing Fields behind Coldfall Wood towards the end of May and stayed for two weeks. Haringey Council, who own the land, did not begin proceedings to repossess it because of the Covid-19 outbreak. In the event, the travellers left unexpectedly of their own accord.

A spokesman for the council told *The Archer*: "The general approach was that we should not be moving travellers on during the outbreak, and any action would only have been taken after welfare

checks had been carried out to assess any vulnerabilities. "Most courts are closed so any hearing would have taken weeks to start. In line with government advice, we provided a portaloos and a water supply."

The council and local police informed us that there were some allegations from local residents of fly-tipping, bonfires, noise, a disbanded caravan and threatening behaviour from youths from the encampment towards other youths visiting the park.

A police officer from Fortis Green Safer Neighbourhood Team tweeted on the day the travellers left: "Maybe it was our visits over the last three days that made them decide to leave."

Sites and the law

In 1994 the government removed local councils' duty to create places for travellers to stay. Since then many council sites have closed and no new sites have been built for 20 years.

All land repossessions were suspended at the end of March because of the pandemic. A month later, the courts realised that an unintended consequence was that trespassers could not be evicted, so they clarified that the suspension didn't apply to them. However, any proceedings undertaken by Haringey Council would have had to be heard by Central London County court, where there is backlog of cases.

Neighbourly spirit fires up new magazine

By David Gritten

Growing up in East Finchley, Nicola Harrison loved the friendliness and neighbourly spirit in the area. Now, having moved north to Finchley Central, she has launched a new magazine there, partly inspired, as she says, "by the community buzz in N2".

The start-up issue of *Finchley Community Magazine* was published in mid-May and it will appear every other month. "At the moment, it's online only," Nicola explains. "Coronavirus forced that decision on us, but from September it'll be in print as well. We very much want both because that will attract a wider range of readers."

Highlights of the first issue included a feature on Stephens House and its gardens

in East End Road, N3, and a touching memoir of legendary *Goon Show* star Spike Milligan, who lived in the area, written by his daughter Jane.

With Nicola in charge, it's a handsome looking issue which has been designed by her husband Richard Cooke, who is art director of *Reader's Digest* magazine. Nicola herself has a design background, having worked for 17 years at Penguin Books. The editorial team is rounded out by sub-

editor Diane Langleben, who reads every word and makes cuts where necessary.

"It's a free magazine," Nicola, and all our space for articles is completely free. But we do rely on advertising to help cover the cost of print."

She is already planning for its November and January issues, and stresses the magazine will remain focussed on community issues: "We're based in N3 but we're open to stories in N2 as well."



Ready to read: Nicola's magazine

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Personal message: Lyn Brenner laughs as she opens her talking card.
Photo Neill Reed

Talking cards bring smiles to hundreds of faces

By David Melsome

A community project has been surprising volunteers and people living on their own by sending them greetings card that actually talk to them.

Messages to thank them for their hard work, to say 'thinking of you' and even to tell jokes are recorded into a tiny memory chip inside and can be heard every time the recipient opens the card.

The project has been set up by Co-op member pioneers in Barnet. They identified nearly 500 people they thought deserved a personal message and approached David Hyams, managing director at Talking

Print in Southgate, who donated the cards for free.

One was Lyn Brenner, who has Parkinson's and has been volunteering for the Barnet branch of Parkinson's UK, based at Avenue House in East End Road, N3, for more than 10 years. She fundraises and makes about 100 support calls every fortnight to fellow sufferers. Co-op member pioneer Neill Reed said: "Lynn is an inspiration to so many people. She was so thrilled with her card that she asked if she could have 20 to send to members of Parkinson's UK, which of course she did.

"The cards are plain white, ready to be decorated and personalised by the sender. Inside you write your own message and record a 30-second message. People say they have provided some memorable moments in the long and lonely lockdown.

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Twin sisters play their part in fight against the virus

By Vicki Bradley

In March I was unwell for 14 days with some of the Covid-19 symptoms, including a tight chest and difficulty breathing. Some days I couldn't get out of bed.

My identical twin sister, Alison, and I had agreed to be involved in TwinsUK research into developing a Covid-19 symptom tracker, and I tracked my symptoms on that. Although Alison was staying with me in East Finchley, she was unaffected.

Off go the samples

In April, we were asked if we would help further by taking part in a study to help develop an antibody test. Of course, we said yes; we've been taking part in their studies since 2012, as we believe their health research is valuable to all of us.

We were used to going to St. Thomas' Hospital to be tested, but this time two nurses, dressed in gowns, masks and gloves arrived at my house. They took saliva samples, nose swabs and three vials of blood from both of us. Surprisingly, the nose swab was the most uncomfortable.

The nurses were visiting two other sets of twins before taking our samples back to the labs. I was impressed with their bravery in going into people's homes, but they wanted to help discover a tracker app for this virus.



In it together: Vicki Bradley (right) and her twin sister Alison.

We got our results three weeks later, and were surprised to find that we had both tested negative. It was a relief knowing we hadn't infected others, but it also meant that we haven't faced the virus yet, and you can't help but wonder how your body would react.

The developed antibody test for Covid-19 seems to be working well, and I hope a vaccine isn't too far away. Lockdown

has been difficult, but the rate of infection is dropping, and we're all doing our part to save lives.

TwinsUK

Tracking your symptoms on the TwinsUK app each day, even if you're feeling fine, helps to identify areas where Covid-19 might be resurging. The app is available to download on any Android or Apple device, and you can learn more at <https://twinsuk.ac.uk>

Tree and fungus in perfect harmony

This exotic-looking fungus was spotted on a tree in Deansway, N2. We asked local naturalist Linda Dolata what it might be and here's what she told us:

It is a bracket fungus with the colloquial name Dryad's Saddle, aka *Polyporus squamosus*. It is the fruiting body of the fungus and its presence means that the tree is riddled with tiny white threads known as hyphae forming a network, or mycelium, throughout the tree.

If you look at the underside of the bracket then thousands of tiny white pores are visible (hence the genus name polypore), and it is through these that millions of minute spores will be released on a dry windy day to disperse the fungus. The spores have no food store as such so very few will find the



The tree fungus in Deansway. Photo Mike Coles

exact habitat that they require to begin the next generation.

Trees can exist quite happily for many years with fungi, which are an important part of their ecology. Oak trees, for example, will send new roots down their cores if they have been turned into decaying wood by, say, the beefsteak fungus (another bracket type). This

helps them recycle some of the nutrients from the no longer productive wood.

All trees have associations with many underground symbiotic fungi called mycorrhiza which hugely improve the tree's uptake of water and nutrients, whilst the fungi benefit from the products of photosynthesis. Nature is amazing.

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Stroll on: Mike Coles on his virtual walk to Marseilles

The miles mount up on my daily walk

By Mike Coles

TV presenter and activist Clare Balding said “The gym experience is not for everyone. Salvation comes in the form of a good old-fashioned walk.”

In the middle of March, the City Lit Adult College in central London shut down and along with it my Wednesday lip-reading class. A day later, the squash club closed too. There was one chink of light: an hour’s exercise allowed each day.

Brave new world

And so it began. Those first couple of weeks of walking were quite spooky. I was often the only person around. However, over time a favourite route evolved via Cherry Tree Wood through to Highgate Wood, around its extremities then back through Muswell Hill, Creighton Avenue, Prospect Ring and East End Road.

One of the first things I noticed was quite loud birdsong, no longer competing with traffic. Then dogs caught my attention. During all my walks I have not seen a badly behaved dog, let alone a dog fight. I started seeing the same people more or less daily. Some smiled, some

marched resolutely on.

Marchons, marchons ...

To make things more interesting I decided to keep track of my distance covered and ‘virtually’ walk the 732 miles to Marseilles in the south of France. My fitness band and phone keeps track of the distance. The 15th June, the 91st day, found me in Civrieux, just outside Lyon, with a restaurant that’s actually famous for its frogs’ legs!

My daily average has now crept up to 9.3km per day. At this rate I should be in Marseilles on 17 July, when I hope to get a ‘virtual’ flight home. Has it done me any good? Well, a study by Harvard University reckons an hour of walking a day extends your life by four and a half years. Other interesting facts are that to ‘use up’ a pint of lager takes 43 minutes, a hot dog in a white roll takes 56 minutes but a steak pie will fuel your walking for 2 hours and 9 minutes!

There’s a bunker in my garden... or is there?

By Roz Davy

My very own crop mark! Oh joy! As an avid fan of the archaeology programme *Time Team* I know what this constantly yellowing area halfway down the lawn of my house just off Fortis Green could be: a roman mosaic floor, a villa, maybe a bath house, but definitely something exciting.

I’ve been ignoring it for years but, now, this is the time I’m going to investigate. So, up comes the turf and the earth underneath. Mmm, doesn’t need an archaeologist to tell me that the great chunk of concrete showing isn’t that old. But... it might be covering something old. So I get in a builder and Kango hammer and the concrete gets broken up. Then we find... corrugated iron.

An air raid shelter, I hear you say. Well, maybe, but in

the wrong place and it seems like the wrong shape too. A small ‘room’ with pink plastered walls and beyond it another area filled with rubble. No entrance as far as I can see but that could be under what is now a raised flower bed.

So, no Roman villa or floor, not even an Anderson shelter, just a couple of pink plastered ‘rooms’ in the wrong place for an air raid shelter and no use as storage. Such disappointment! Does anyone have any idea what I might have uncovered?

Ten woods within walking distance of East Finchley

By Ivor Gaber

One of the unexpected gains of lockdown has been discovering the joys on our doorstep. We’ve been walking ten woods, all within easy walking distance from East Finchley.

Most of our walks start in Cherry Tree Wood, small but perfectly formed and currently home to a veritable chorus of birds. Nearby is Coldfall, a dense and wonderful wood with a patch of water that sometimes appears to be little more than a mud pool but, after a little rain, swells to an almost mighty lake.

Across the North Circular from Coldfall is the hidden gem of Coppetts Wood, just above the Tesco superstore but a world away in terms of its dense undergrowth and surprise glades.



Time to reflect: The pond in Coldfall Wood. Photo Ivor Gaber



Open land: Coppetts Wood has a wild appeal. Photo Ivor Gaber

Bluebells galore

But when it comes to glades few can beat the eight that Big Wood, in the middle of Hampstead Garden Suburb, boasts (at least according to the noticeboard at the entrance); though if truth be told not all are that obvious to the strolling passer-by.

But both Big Wood and the nearby Little Wood have had wonderful displays of bluebells this year. And did you know there’s an open-air theatre hidden in the middle of Little Wood?

Even littler than Little Wood is Bluebell Wood, at the

far end of walking distance from East Finchley, nestling next to Muswell Hill Golf Club and, as its name suggests, this year at least, overflowing with bluebells.

Final four

At the opposite end of the scale from Little Wood is Highgate Wood, one of the two biggest woods on our walk, and the adjacent Queens Wood which has some wonderful woodland views (and birdsongs galore). Kenwood, the other large wood, is also one of our ten. Because of the pandemic, it was temporarily closed but is now open.

Alas, our final wood, Turner’s Wood, is permanently closed to the public. Close by Hampstead Heath extension off Wildwood Road, this private natural woodland is teeming with flora and fauna and a lake, at least it is according to Wikipedia. Now wouldn’t it be a grand way to celebrate the end of lock-down by giving us hoi polloi a chance to wander round this local jewel? I wonder who we should ask?



Private entrance: The gate to Turner’s Wood. Photo Ivor Gaber

Top ups for thirsty trees

By Diana Cormack

Many of the trees newly planted on our pavements are protected by wire surrounds which have a notice attached. On this Barnet Council asks residents to water the saplings in dry weather, this being in addition to the borough watering them, so helping to keep our neighbourhood green.

Another group of trees benefiting from the attention of locals are those planted in the park by the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood (*The Archer*, March 2020). Three apple, one pear and a plumcot are

now growing on the area between the tennis courts and the kiosk.

With the first two years of growth being vitally important towards future development and fruit production, each tree needs

at least 20 litres of water per week until the end of September. A group of volunteers are following a rota whereby they take carry water to the park every day to supply a designated tree.



Bags of food for youth club members

By Diana Cormack

Maureen Clemetson runs two youth clubs on Strawberry Vale, N2. The Monday Club is primarily football for boys aged 11 and upwards while the Friday Club caters for a mixed group of seven to 13-year-olds, offering a variety of activities. Since lockdown began both have had to close, leaving Maureen concerned about what is happening to club members.

But being the person she is, Maureen has ensured that not all contact has been broken. She phoned around from her flat on the estate, telling parents what she intended to do, starting with the Friday Club.

Now, thanks to the generosity of a very supportive benefactor, on what would have been their club night Maureen supplies those youngsters with food bags left outside her door. These usually contain biscuits, crisps, cupcakes, juice or canned drinks with separately packaged jerk chicken and rice.

She prepares up to 20 bags on a Friday and a few less on a Monday. On Fridays Maureen is assisted by two friends: Cherry Binnie, who used to run an eatery back in Jamaica, takes over to prepare particularly tasty jerk chicken (she also makes delicious cakes) and Emma Morris cooks trays of her speciality, macaroni cheese.

Whilst intending to continue

with this for the foreseeable future, Maureen is hoping all the present restrictions will be well and truly over by the end of October when the Monday Club celebrates its 15th birthday.



Maureen Clemetson with her bags of food ready to go



Well oiled: Pub handyman Dan Storey with his eye-catching painting of roses. Photo John Lawrence

A passion for painting that couldn't stay hidden

By John Lawrence

Dan Storey is a pub handyman who lives above the Bald Faced Stag in the High Road and is an accomplished oil painter in his spare time.

He has been kept busy constructing 40 screens to go between tables ready for when the Stag and other Greene King pubs in the area re-open to customers this month. But on weekends and evenings his woodworking gives way to subtler skills at the easel.

Returning to painting

Dan, 45, did art at GCSE level when he was 16 but left

his A-level course to find work. It took him 27 years to pick up his brushes again, and since then he hasn't stopped.

"I was interested in art galleries when I was young and always thought I would paint again," he says. "I started about five years ago after being out of work. I was back in a job and that helped. I need a clear head to paint, with no worries."

Just one year into restarting, Dan had assembled enough work for a successful exhibition at Lauderdale House in Highgate. He hopes to exhibit again this year with some spectacular pieces he has committed to canvas during the lockdown.

One brushstroke more

Among them are a striking image of roses and a soothing seascape of a scene in Thailand. "The roses came from all the ones I saw in front gardens in May when I went out on lockdown walks, and the Thailand scene is from a friend's photo."

The roses took three hours to paint, but Dan says they may

not be finished yet. "I've always worked quickly. I can see the finished painting before I start so it's just about getting it on the canvas. I work in oils because they can take weeks to dry. So I might stop work on a piece and three weeks later see something I want to change and I can do that because the paint isn't fully dry. When it's definitely finished, I varnish over the top."

Dan was living as a household with other staff above the Stag during the lockdown and is glad that the pub is coming back to life. Should you pop in for a drink, you'll be able to enjoy one of his other seascapes on show in the bar.



Much appreciated: Matt the postie and three of the bin men on their Bedford Road round. Photos Erini Rodis

We couldn't do without you!


By Erini Rodis

A few weeks into clapping for our NHS workers, residents in Bedford Road, N2, decided to show some appreciation for some of our other key workers too, who

continued to work throughout lockdown despite the obvious risks, such as our reliable postie Matt, and our hardworking bin men. A total of £1,000 was collected up and down the road and distributed among them all. Well deserved, we think.

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Life on the open road... those were the days!

By David Melsome

With nowhere to go over the last few months in her beloved 15-year-old Suzuki car, Tess Hadik has at least had the memories of how the faithful four-wheeler took her and her mum on a 17,000-mile round trip through some of the world's harshest terrain.



Off road: Tess Hadik gives her beloved Suzuki a wash at home in East Finchley

Tess and Astrid, of Beech Drive, N2, were the first mother-and-daughter team to complete the Mongol Rally through Europe, Turkey, Georgia, Arme-

nia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan to the finishing line in Ulan-Ude, Siberia. And back!

Car with character

All competing cars have to be under 1200cc. Tess bought her third-hand Suzuki over the phone from an unknown dealer just a few weeks before the rally and it turned out to be a mini-marvel.

Tess, 20, said: "My mother and I have zero mechanical knowledge but this was no problem thanks to our incredibly reliable yet tiny car. It has become our pride and joy. I graffiti painted him and named him Isibindi, which means brave warrior in Zulu."

Warm welcomes

Highlights of their immense journey through 26 countries were watching horseback archery and bone throwing in the World Nomad Games in Kyrgyzstan, and experiencing the generosity of people through the whole of Iran, where they were showered with friendly waves and offers of accommodation.

"It was an unforgettable journey, exploring countries I



Change of transport: Astrid, left, and Tess on horseback in Kyrgyzstan, central Asia

did not know existed, discovering their culture and music and savouring different foods," says Tess. "It was also amazing because my mother and I got on so well and had so much fun!"

More travels to come

The pair took part in the challenge two years ago, raising £3,600 for The Macular Society and its research into eyesight

and macular degeneration. Donations to the society are still welcome.

And as for Isibindi, despite a few squeaks and rumbles, he is still going strong. Tess says: "Since the rally he has taken us on road trips across Europe. He has just passed his MOT for another year of life and many more adventures."

Where there's hope...

By Julie Taylor

In anticipation of the wider opening of the school and in order to provide a break from everyone's new routine of home learning, Martin School in Plane Tree Walk, N2, decided to dedicate the first week of June to wellbeing and creativity.

The week was called 'Hope Week'. This was a whole school project, designed to bring the school community together, providing activities that siblings could complete together and parents and carers could enjoy too.

The children designed symbols representing hope, completed activities based on stories about hope, watched videos, engaged with philosophy activities, used nature to create images of hope, wrote poetry and immersed themselves in art activities.

One Martin School pupil described the week as: "The best week I have ever celebrated," and another said: "I found it fun and exciting. I loved painting and drawing about hope because it made me feel that there is hope everywhere."

School appeals for cash support

Martin School in East Finchley is appealing for donations after the cancellation of its popular summer fair last month left it short of funds for essentials like classroom resources, online projects and outdoor equipment.

Miriam Divwalla and Erini Rodis, parents and co-chairs of the primary school's MHSA charity, say: "We understand that this is a very difficult time financially for many of our school's families, so we are extending our request for donations outside the immediate school community. Any donations made into our MHSA PayPal account will enable us to help the school." Donations can be made to: <https://paypal.me/pools/c/8qaRxv5ia2>



Wheely inventive: Bike ball in Cherry Tree Wood Photo Diana Cormack

Bike ball... a whole new sport?

An unusual sight in Cherry Tree Wood last month was the innovative way a group of young men used their bicycles by turning them upside down and lining them up to play what looked like a version of volleyball crossed with football.

Elsewhere in the wood, one family had put up a form of tightrope between two trees to practise their balancing skills. Cherry Tree Wood has been well used as the lockdown has loosened slightly, with dogs being exercised, families picnicking and children playing.



Speak for Yourself, by Else B

From Academy to Academy

Two Year 9 students from the Archer Academy in East Finchley have had their work selected for the Royal Academy's Young Artists' Summer Show. Elsie B and Amelie C's pieces were chosen from 17,000 entries to be shown online from 12 July at youngartists.royalacademy.org.uk.



Dad, by Amelie C

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Festival, we missed you... come back soon!



In any normal year, our July edition is the newspaper that carries two pages of photos capturing the atmosphere of fun and togetherness at the East Finchley Community Festival in Cherry Tree Wood. This hasn't been a normal year, as we all

know, and it was at the height of the lockdown in April that the volunteer team behind the festival reluctantly took the decision to cancel the event. So this image by our photographer Mike Coles taken in June 2014 is our way of marking what we've

missed this year and a reminder that the festival will be back when it's safe for everyone to get together again.

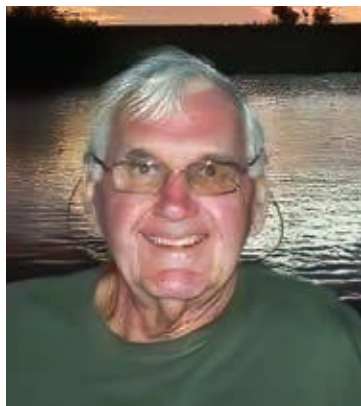
You can see more photos of past festivals, taken from The Archer archive, at: www.facebook.com/eastfinchleyfestival.

A strong light in East Finchley Stan Spinks, 1937 – 2020

By Roger Chapman

Stan Spinks, well-known and highly active in the East Finchley community for the past 20 years, died in Barnet General Hospital on Wednesday 10 June.

Stan was an imposing figure. Born in Bermondsey in 1937 he was evacuated during the Blitz in 1940 to Hertford Lodge in East End Road. He remained in Finchley for many years, marrying Robina and living in Hertford Road, N2. From there he went off to work in Zimbabwe and South Africa which he loved but it was a pleasure to come back to East Finchley in 2001.



Community life: Stan Spinks

Since returning, he was continually active in local community life. He was central in establishing the East Finchley Community Trust and a key organiser for 15 years of the East Finchley Community Festival held annually in Cherry Tree Wood as well as the short-lived but entertaining Christmas

festival held on the High Road around 2012-2015.

By early January each year Stan would have ordered all the equipment, stalls, stages, rides, owls, bins and the paraphernalia needed for the summer festival, taking a massive strain off the

shoulders of other organisers. He would check all equipment was delivered, sort out monies on the day and generally make sure everything was running smoothly.

He was the Chair of the Trust until last year and passionate about all things East Finchley, raising money for local causes, supporting the community on the Servite estate and raising funds for Martin Primary School's orchard, outdoor space and many other aspects of school life. He was also an active member of the Finchley Society.

He leaves his wife Robina, a son and a daughter, four grandchildren and two great grandchildren. A strong light in local East Finchley life has dimmed.

Travel in the pandemic

By Iqbal Ahmed

I phoned my mother in Srinagar to tell her about the threat of an epidemic in the UK. She suggested that I return to Kashmir as soon as possible so that if all the family have to die, we would at least die together.

She told me that they had been advised to wash their hands throughout the day. The valley had been in a state of lockdown for many months for political reasons. Lockdowns have been a frequent occurrence in Kashmir for the last 30 years. They take a mental toll on the population, something that is evident in every town in Kashmir.

A few days later, I have to travel to Paris. The concourse of St Pancras International train station is eerily quiet at mid-morning. Today, no one can be seen or heard tapping the keys of the public piano. The man checking passports is wearing clinical gloves made of latex.

Two American women on the train talk about a hand-

wash reputedly good for killing germs. A sharp-suited banker is making a frantic phone call, letting someone know about the perilous effects of coronavirus on his business. I think of the legendary American traveller in Africa who didn't learn until three months after the event that President Kennedy had been assassinated.

Green shoots of early spring are visible on both sides of the tunnel, but overcast skies make the landscape look cheerless. Electronic boards that usually display train times flash messages advising people to wash their hands regularly. Yet some soap dispensers in the Gents at St Pancras station are out of service, broken due to constant use.

In Paris, I board a Metro train. As it jolts, a lady hesitates to grab the vertical handrail, then takes a tissue from her pocket to wrap around the steel bar.

On alighting, I walk past a few porters standing at a street corner with their trolleys, waiting to be hired by shopkeepers. They look like broken men.

It is evening when Eurostar brings me back to St Pancras. A large pink neon sign, an artwork by Tracey Emin, reads: "I want my time with you." Such intimate words strike me as very poignant in this time of epidemic and self-isolation.

Taken from local writer Iqbal Ahmed's latest book, *An Ode to Europe*, out next year.

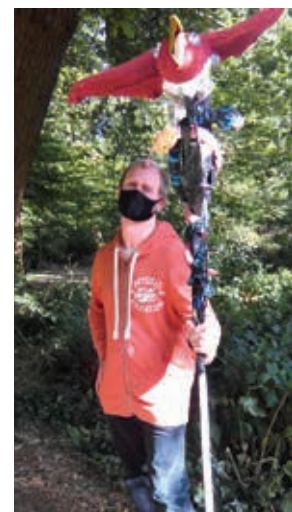
Flight of the nightingale

Many readers may recognise the name Jake Eiseman-Renyard from the chalk drawings which have been appearing regularly on the footpath in Cherry Tree Wood. Whether Jake's messages throughout the lockdown have been serious or amusing, they are invariably thought provoking.

Using another of his artistic talents, Jake has created something new to carry on the support for NHS staff evidenced by the Clap for Carers evenings. He says: "I love making and operating puppets in shows, but with all the theatres closed and festivals cancelled, I decided to use puppets to help this cause."

Created as an unofficial figurehead for the Nightingale hospitals, his puppet nightingale is carried on a former squeegee-mop stick, the mechanism for which now makes her wings flap. Two soft toy snakes decorate the pole and the ancient symbol of a doctor's winged staff effectively comes to life.

Jake hopes to use the puppet to help raise funds for the Whittington Hospital in Archway through street collections.



Jake and his puppet

RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

A master storyteller

In our isolated world, the only thing to do after you have watched every box set and downloaded everything else is to read a book. And where to start? Maybe turn to the one British author everyone has probably heard of. I don't mean JK Rowling. I mean Charles Dickens, and not just because this year is the 150th anniversary of his death.

Everyone knows the basics: that his father was a navy pay clerk who spent some time in a debtors' prison and that 12-year-old Charles had to work in a blacking factory to help support the family. He worked as a journalist, wrote *The Pickwick Papers*, was famous by the age of 30 and became the man who created Victorian Britain, at least the way we like to remember it.

Except it was never as simple as that. Dickens didn't write novels; he wrote serials that appeared in weekly or monthly instalments in popular magazines. Each one ended with a suitable cliffhanger to make sure that people paid to read the next, a bit like a Victorian *Coronation Street*. Then the trick was that he could then put them together and publish them as a standalone novel, like downloading a box set.

All his great novels were done like that, from *Oliver Twist* via *A Tale of Two Cities* to *David Copperfield* and all the rest. It's probably why his last book, *Edwin Drood*, is unfinished.

And how does Dickens represent Victorian Britain? Well, Victoria came to the throne in 1837 halfway through *The Pickwick Papers* and just as *Oliver Twist* was getting going, so there's no way that these could be about her Britain. A lot of Dickens is set earlier than you might think and his world is always part what was current when he wrote them and part what he remembered it being.

Read his great works now and you probably won't notice that Jane Austen is more historically accurate. But maybe that's the art of memorable storytelling. So make use of the closed cinemas and pick up some Dickens. Trust me, he writes a good yarn.



Immerse yourself in a virtual art exhibition

By Ruth Anders

You may remember the special cinema glasses that were essential for enjoying 3D films in the 1950s and more recently in the 2010s. Something similar has emerged now with the use of Google cardboard headsets that enable viewers to enjoy a virtual visit to a fascinating new exhibition.

A collaboration between OmVed Gardens, Thrown and Metafleure, *Gatherers* opened digitally last month in a huge contemporary glass house in Townsend Yard, Highgate, N6. Focusing on the materials around us, international potters and ceramicists from London to Tambourine Mountain in Australia have come together to celebrate their surroundings through the medium of clay.

Zooming in to art with cocktails

The virtual private view was hosted on Zoom, with 100 participants tuning in including many of the artists and, acting as our guide, organiser Claire Pearce invited each of them to talk about their work. Among the participants, we heard from Bisila Noha about the clay her parents had brought her from Equatorial Guinea, from Rhannon Gwyn from Wales who

incorporates slate and gorse ash into her work, and from Kat Evans whose smoke fired sculptures beg to be handled.

To add to the fun, virtual visitors had received advance notice of the ingredients needed to make delicious cocktails based on a tonic water mixer. Ahead of the exhibition tour, a cocktail making demonstration was led remotely by Vicky Chown and Kim Walker, authors of a book about the history of tonic water.

Still connected

Afterwards Claire told *The Archer*: "It was an exciting event for me. The moment everyone flooded into the grid at the start triggered the same anticipation as when we open our doors to a show for the first time and in this case people were able to do so from all over the world. It amazed me how connected it all still felt. It's unsurprising perhaps that we've already had



Online only: *The Gatherers* exhibition at OmVed Gardens in Highgate.

people contacting us to request more events like this in future."

When health rules allow, visitors should be able to enjoy this very tactile exhibition in person. For now, guests can

experience the displays through virtual reality, online workshops, film and photography. For more information visit www.gatherers.co and www.omvedgardens.com.

We took to the land to help the harvest

Following the Government announcement that furloughed workers may be urged to help pick fruit and vegetables this summer, Dennis Evans, the founder of N2 Poetry, recalls his own experience doing this in the 1940s.

Harvest time

"Fit boys of 13 years of age can help with the harvest." His Majesty's Government 1946.

"Men's work for boys' wages," said my father. Farm labourers were not yet demobilised from the Forces. We went with the school, slept under canvas. Good teachers cooked, and cared for us.

Potato lifting

Up and down the rows, Bent over, lifting potatoes. At the end of each row we straighten, rub aching backs. Then on to the next row, and the next – across the field. The sun is high.

School children, we work with gypsy mothers. The men still at war. "Men's work for boys' wages," my father says. We finish the field, have lunch. Feel pleased with our work, but complain about backs. Back to the field, sun and bending combine. Grip our backs with hot iron. A gypsy mother sees my pain, says, "This is how we work", shows me their technique. I crouch, put my forearm on my thigh, scabble with my free hand. I sail up the row.

Stooking

Stooking in the tumble-down field. The warm roughness of sisal used to be sheaves, on my hands. Working in pairs, a sheaf in each hand, we kick stubble and dust under a sweltering afternoon sun. We set the sheaves down, put the heads touching, form small wigwams to dry in the sun.

Rick making

Standing in a diamond, the old men teach as we weave in sheaves. The hayrick grows. We avoid making holes in the centre. Lifted skywards, We are supported on our tapestry.

More reading: www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2/peopleswar contains an archive of memories from that time.

Summer shows return to the great outdoors

By Daphne Chamberlain

Good news for fans of open air theatre, which is particularly enjoyable at the beautiful venue of Stephens House and Gardens in East End Road, N3.



Detective work: *Pantaloons Theatre Company* bring their hilarious version of *Sherlock Holmes* to Stephens House and Gardens

Two shows from *Pantaloons Theatre Company* are scheduled for this summer: "The most fiendish case yet" for *Sherlock Holmes* on Wednesday 29 July, and *Twelfth Night* on Wednesday 12 August, both at 7.30pm.

Both are billed as family-friendly fun, with live music and audience interaction. *Sherlock Holmes* has "more mystery than you can shake a magnifying glass at", while the *Twelfth Night* crew seem to be playing up the yellow stockings.

To comply with social distancing, the productions will be

on the conveniently large main lawn, and the audience are asked to bring along blankets for seat-

ing. The café is operating as a takeaway with socially distanced outdoor seating. As Stephens House and Gardens is licenced to sell alcohol, you are asked not to bring any of your own.

Stephens House and Gardens and *Pantaloons* are both hoping that circumstances will be kind to them, as Covid-19 has hit finances badly. The gardens and café reopened on 1 June, thanks to an online fundraising campaign to help finance staff and resources. So, fingers crossed for them all.

Tickets will be £16 each, £12 for children under 16, available online through www.tickettailor.com/events/stephenshouseandgardens/379009.

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Keep in touch... but who said it first?

By Daphne Chamberlain

"Keep in touch". We've all said it. We hear it all the time. But who said it first? I looked up the origin the other day.

Apparently, the answer is an 18th century soldier. Military drills of that time required every soldier to be within touching distance of the men on either side. They had to be close enough to brush arms when marching. If they didn't, they were obviously "out of touch".

This made me think. Keeping in touch was much more than a Christmas card with an update message, or the occasional phone call or email, much more than becoming someone's 450th Facebook friend or Twitter follower.

You kept in touch with your comrades to support and defend them. You had a common purpose and fought for it together. No need to wonder whatever was happening to so-and-so. You would know very well. Perhaps we are falling into line again with this one.



Why the problem of single-use plastics won't go away

By Maxine Klein, of No2PlasticsN2

This Covid-19 pandemic has forced on me the realisation that I am officially old and vulnerable. It hadn't occurred to me as an active 71-year-old. My sons and the government put down their collective feet, forbidding me to go out shopping or for any other reason. I have had to rely on my lovely neighbour who is in the privileged position of having a Tesco delivery slot and has included my order with hers.

Plastic wrapping shock

I am used to shopping locally, daily, with my own shopping bags so I was astounded at the amount of plastic considered essential for my delivered order. Everything wrapped in plastic film or plastic tubs and so, so many plastic bags. My house is now full of them.

It is like the bad old days before I realised the harm single-use plastics do to the environment. I now use plastic tubs to cover seedlings and I stuff waste plastics into plastic bottles to make edging for my allotment beds. But the bags... what do I do with them?

In the light of the need for personal protective equipment in hospitals and care homes, single-use plastics are doing a sterling job preventing the spread of infection. This legitimate use makes my supermarket order look like a very, very small drop in a vast ocean.

Look to the future

What happened to sterilisation and reuse? The knowledge that old plastics never die, they just build up year on year, looms large particularly because we know that only about 15% of plastic waste in the UK ever gets recycled.

Over the past year our group No2Plastics has made great strides: our local MP Mike Freer has undertaken to influence legislation, we have encouraged our local shops and we've informed residents how they can operate and live with fewer single use plastics.

It's difficult to carry on at a time when much bigger issues prevail but the pandemic will pass. It is only by vigilance and eschewing single-use plastics now that the door will be able to swing open on a world unpolluted by single-use plastics.

Monopoly wasn't just a game in World War Two

By Diana Cormack

Have you been playing any board games during the coronavirus lockdown? If so, one of them might be Monopoly, a time consuming activity which can so attract the avarice in us. Yet that was not the aim of its American inventor Lizzie Magie.

She introduced The Landlord's Game in the early 1900s intending it to underline the economic ill effects of land monopolism and show that land value tax was a remedy for them. Unfortunately it was taken over by others and subjected to many alterations, making today's version the very opposite of her intentions.

Signs, silk and secrets

However, she might have been heartened by stories from World War Two which reveal that the game was responsible for saving the lives of many prisoners of war (POWs).

Charity groups were allowed to give them care packages which included pastimes and games. It must have been an earlier version of James Bond's Q who thought of fitting tiny hidden 'escape kits' within the Monopoly sets, which were then sent under 'fake' charity names. Compasses and files

were disguised as playing pieces; money of the relevant country was hidden below the game's notes; tiny maps were concealed in the playing board.

This was possible because maps could be printed on silk, a technology mastered by Waddington, a British company holding the licence for Monopoly in the UK. In pre-mission talks airmen were told to look out for Monopoly games with special signs on them such as a red dot on the Free Parking section. Hopefully these signs on various parts of the board would be taken as printing errors by those not in the know.

To keep everything secret, servicemen, who had a duty to escape, were instructed to destroy the games. The number of POWs helped by the Monopoly escape kit is not known and details of it did not appear until many years after the war ended.

Letters



Glorious: Lucy's mum's tree in Leicester Road

Blossom dearie

Dear Editor,

Following the article in your May edition, I think my mum's tree in her front garden in Leicester Road is the most beautiful in East Finchley. It was in fact the one that sparked the original post by Lotte Har in March on the East Finchley Community Facebook page and several other people agreed that it was their favourite.

It is difficult to really get a sense of how incredible it is when it flowers in April unless you see it in person. The bees love it too; on a sunny spring morning there is a loud humming as they graze on the blossom.

It was originally planted in the back garden as a sapling, but about 20 years ago transplanted to the front and has flourished ever since. It is my mum's pride and joy and she refuses to cut branches off even though it now makes the sitting room quite dark!

Lucy Chamberlin,
Address supplied.

Reason for running

Dear Editor,

It saddened me to read your reader's letter (*The Archer*, June 2020) which suggested all joggers were egotistic and unaware of social distancing rules. She doesn't ask herself WHY people run. I run because it helps me keep my depression and the loneliness caused by the lockdown under control. It reminds me of my mum, who introduced me to running and whom I miss dearly every day. It helps me get through this difficult time.

Christine Hoenigs,
Address supplied.

Walk aware

Dear Editor,

I read many complaints about joggers on the pavements, but little is said about others behaving inconsiderately when outside on the pavements. There are numerous dog walkers leaving bags of dog mess or having their dogs on extended leads such that no one can pass at a 2m distance.

The same can be said about others walking and talking whilst ignoring other types of pedestrians. Instead of singling out joggers, why not recognise that there are all sorts of people outside these days and we all need to be considerate to each other? Please don't litter, keep your pooch close to your pouch, run/walk aware and take care.

Name and address supplied.

Borrow this book idea

Dear Editor,

Whilst visiting Wollongong Botanical Gardens in New South Wales, Australia, I noticed various areas offering books which could be borrowed to read whilst relaxing in the gardens so I was most interested to read your article about a front garden library in Creighton Avenue ('Bring a book, take a book', *The Archer*, June 2020). Perhaps this book borrowing could be introduced in local parks.

Betti Blatman,
Address supplied.

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page" The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE or e-mail news@the-archer.co.uk

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.

Save our universities

Dear Editor,

My colleague at SOAS [The School of Oriental and African Studies] University and I have been working on this Save Our Universities campaign. The situation with higher education is dire. If you studied at university, have a child at university, have ever thought about going to university, or simply believe in the need for research to better our society's knowledge, please write to your MP by filling in your postcode at this link: <https://saveourunis.eaction.org.uk/letter> Even before coronavirus, many universities were facing financial difficulties. Now, without government support we are potentially looking at the demise of many higher education institutes. Please share the link.

Emma, student support officer,
Huntingdon Road, N2.

Any reader who feels strongly about any matter is invited to use this "Soapbox" column. Please note that opinions expressed are those of the writer alone.



Open your eyes

By Hamish Hallett

The majority of us have been affected by this pandemic in all sorts of ways. Some of us were able to learn a new hobby, spend more time with loved ones, or were able to appreciate the great outdoors and the community around us.

Others do not have that luxury. We can see a rise in domestic violence within households, a rise in mental health issues, loss of loved ones, essential workers who go in every single day risking their lives and mass unemployment.

The idea that "we are all in this together" needs to be rethought. We need to be grateful. We need to be open-minded about other people's circumstances. A difficult task, maybe, but we need to be more aware of other people's situations. While we are in our houses sleeping well at night, other people in the United Kingdom and across the world do not enjoy this luxury.

The Black Lives Matter movement is attempting to bring that to the fore, by highlighting the injustices that some members of our society experience daily and disproportionately. They want an institutional rethink of how our society operates.

You may ask why. Our society benefits us over others, and this society does not treat all lives equally. It favours those who have power and luxury and neglects those who don't. If we lived in a society that treated everyone equally, why are people risking their lives to protest?

We cannot live aimlessly and forget that these issues exist. We should be grateful for what we have but use our positions for the better. Change is needed so that we can live in the same boat. Open your eyes.

East Finchley Baptist Church

Due to the Covid-19 virus our face to face services and meetings have been suspended until further notice but please go to our website for details of online services and meetings.

For more information please contact the Church Office
Email: office@eastfinchleybc.org.uk
www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk



Corner where a row of cottages once stood

By Janet Maitland

It's hard to believe that six cottages used to perch on the tiny triangle of land on the corner of East End Road and Church Lane in East Finchley. They were demolished in 1962 to make room for a road widening scheme that never happened.

It's not known when Causeway Cottages were built, but 29 people lived there by 1861, including eight dressmakers (three retired), two gardeners, two house painters, a milliner, a coachman, and nine children.

The old photograph we are printing was taken sometime between 1905, when the houses in the distance towards the Five Bells pub were built, and 1913, when the postcard it is on was posted.

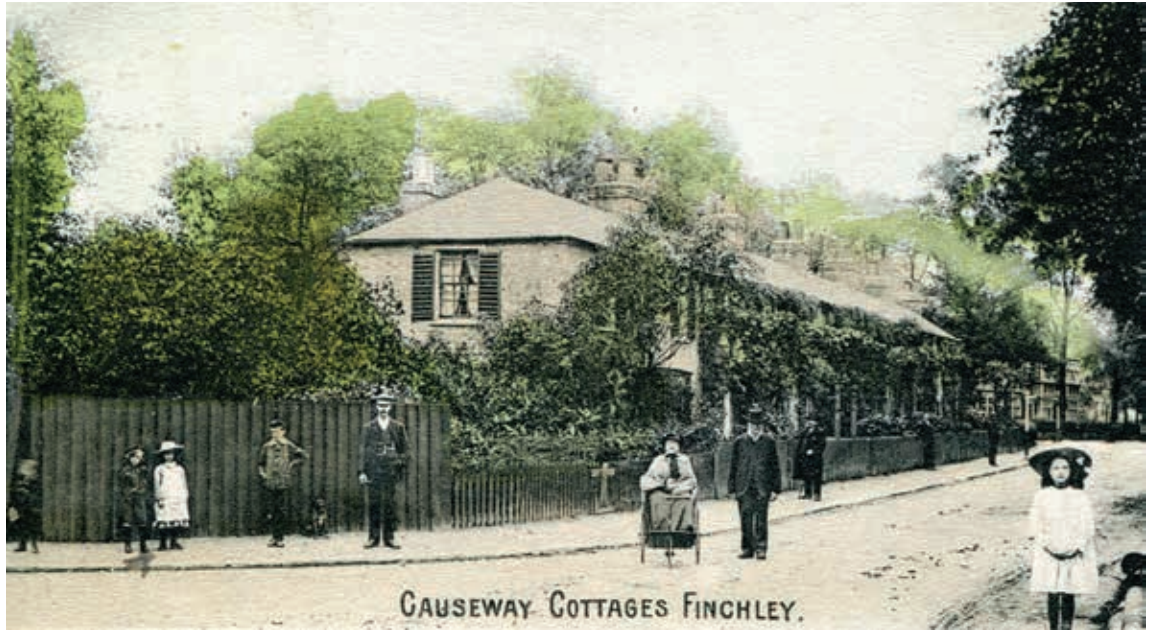
At the 1911 census the number of tenants had dropped

to 18, some of whom may be in the picture. Tenants included two gardeners, a cowman, a servant and seven children. The elderly lady in the wheelchair is probably 80-year-old Jane Crooks who lived at number 4.

One of the cottages, advertised as 'a valuable building site' and 'let @ £140 p.a.', was sold at auction at the Five Bells on 12 November 1924.

Road schemes and demolition

Finchley Council was thinking of widening East End Road as far back as the 1920s. The owner of the cottages, J H Lermite, refused to sell them for less than £1,750 in 1929 and his executors objected to the Finchley Planning Scheme in 1930.



CAUSEWAY COTTAGES FINCHLEY.

Then: Causeway Cottages and some local residents on a postcard from between 1905 and 1913

The plan to widen East End Road in the early 1960s, driven by the Department of Transport, intended to straighten it out as well by constructing a new section of road that would bypass the swooping curve that dips down to Deansway.

In preparation for this, the five remaining cottages were recommended for site clearance in 1961 and demolished the following year. The council

did consider buying the site for a 'wayside garden' but nothing came of it. The site suffered from fly tipping, which may explain the hummock in the middle, and travellers sometimes parked their caravans

on it. The land eventually passed into the hands of the London Borough of Barnet, who planted a few nondescript shrubs and two beautiful white cherry trees.



Now: Green space on the corner

Who lived in the county roads?

By Peter Cox

On 29 September 1939, less than a month after the Second World War began, the government ran a total census of the country, two years early, to gain information for the introduction of identity and ration cards.

That data became unexpectedly available online five years ago, and when we had a street party soon afterwards I listed the inhabitants of my road, Hertford Road. With East Finchley in lockdown, and street WhatsApp groups springing up, it seemed a good moment to revive it, and a friend in Huntingdon Road asked me to do it for them too.

Henry and Mabel

The data is handwritten and a typical household looks like this:

Address: No 91. Name: Bent, Henry. Date of birth: 11-03-82. Age: 57. Occupation: Professional fireman (cinema). Name: Bent, Mabel. Date of birth: 25-03-83. Age: 56. Occupation: UDD.

This is my house, and it's unusual because only a single couple were living in it. His occupation is an odd one, suggesting that cinemas, and possibly The Rex as it was, now the Phoenix, employed their own firemen. Many more of the county road houses were split then than now: roughly half of them contained two households.

Her occupation, like two-thirds of the women, was given as UDD or Unpaid Domestic Duties, in other words a stay-at-home housewife. Few married women went out to work, and hardly any did once they'd had children. In the Hertford and Huntingdon Roads combined, 198 women stayed at home and only 111 worked, and of those 80% were single. The school leaving age for most was still 14, and many teenage girls were sent out to work to augment the family income.

Social class

In contrast to today, the streets were overwhelmingly working class. Fewer than 5%

of the men were managerial or professional, and 4% were foremen. I doubt if any had been to university. The highest classification was the 25% for skilled labour. The GPO employed 16 men (and no women). 14% of men were clerks, 12% in the building trade, and 10% in transport. Of the employed women, 40% were clerical, 30% in retail, often in dress shops, or in food production.

The population make-up of the county roads was clearly very different then, and it would be fascinating to see what the profile of the typical county roader is now. Watch this space...

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