



Slippery slope: Youngsters enjoying the new nursery play equipment.

New play area for pre-schoolers

Construction of a new play area in the front garden of Monkey Puzzle Nursery, opposite East Finchley station, is now complete and the equipment is in use following thorough risk assessments. At the official opening the honour of cutting the ribbon was given to pre-schooler Jenson who had been especially keen to start using it, asking anyone and everyone daily when it would be ready.

The children were spoken to about the safety rules, such as only going up the climbing wall and down the slide and how many of them could use the play area at once for it to be safe. They understood brilliantly and then finally got to enjoy the new activities, climbing, sliding and exploring with great delight. With thanks to Jenny Eracleous.



Did you guess the gadgets?

Here are the answers to our Guess the Gadgets quiz we printed in our June edition. All the Victoria gadgets come from the collection of local resident and author Maurice Collins, who is also the co-founder of children's charity Kith and Kids.

- 1. Harmonious times in the classroom:** Each prong of this tool held a stick of chalk to enable Victorian music teachers to draw evenly spaced lines on their blackboards
- 2. Up with the larks:** The bell on this sprung alarm clock would certainly have woken you up if you put it next to your bed.
- 3. Used on the farm:** This beautifully made wooden instrument is a butter churn, with a crank handle making it easy to keep your butter moving.
- 4. Basic pain stopper:** Fill this wooden instrument with ointment and you have a convenient and hygienic way to apply pain relief to your piles.
- 5. Ladies may figure this out:** In a time when bell-shaped figures were all the rage, this device was worn by ladies to shape and push out their undergarments.

One man and his menagerie

Tony Roberts tells the story of Sam Woodiwiss, a world-famous animal breeder, who once kept monkeys, exotic birds and rare breeds in kennels where Sedgemere Avenue now stands.

Sam Woodiwiss lived at Sedgemere House, East Finchley, where Sedgemere Avenue now meets East End Road, from around 1888 to 1901. At Sedgemere Kennels there was room for at least 50 dogs but also an extensive menagerie with monkeys, exotic birds and a piggery for rare breeds.

During this time, Woodiwiss introduced Dogues de Bordeaux bulldogs to Britain; his most famous dog was Baron Sedgemere, a bulldog who won Crufts in 1898 and sold for 350 guineas in 1899.

He also co-founded the Abyssinian Cat Club and the National Mouse Society. He was also a founding member and made a life member of the Essex Pig Society when it was formed in 1918.



Animal-lover: Sam Woodiwiss

Woodiwiss's work on breeding Abyssinian cats was world-famed. The first Abyssinians to appear in the National Cat Club Stud-book and Register were 'Queen Jumbo', followed by 'Sedgemere Bottle' and 'Sedgemere Peaty'. He was an experienced judge of cats, and could be counted among those cat fanciers who were also considered to be recognised authorities on dogs.

One of his cats, and another Crufts winner, Xenophon, was valued at £2,000 and was probably the most decorated English Short-hair in feline show history. He won eight

championships, more than 20 first prizes, besides cups and specials. A most homely cat of immense size, and with exceptionally fine sable markings, his pet name was 'The Man'.

Woodiwiss also showed prize goats at the Dairy Show from 1894. Besides an interest in the Toggenburg goat he was instrumental in firmly establishing the Anglo Nubian breed as well as being the owner of the famed goat Sedgemere Faith, believed to be the foundation female of the British Alpine breed. Find this and similar stories on Tony's website at www.tonero.me.uk/histnuggets.htm

Live music for the summer

A new chamber music festival has been launched in High Barnet to celebrate the start of summer and the gradual lifting of Covid restrictions. Located at St John the Baptist Church, High Barnet, the festival is promoting three concerts during mid-July.

Artistic Director Joshua Balance said: "It's an honour to be welcoming such fantastic musicians to our local community, and after the cultural deprivation of the last year it is abundantly clear how important live music is to our mental, spiritual, and social wellbeing."

The church is a five-minute walk from High Barnet tube station, so will be easily accessible for East Finchley residents. Concerts will start at 7.30pm on Saturday 17 and 24 and on Thursday 22 July. For more information, visit www.hbcmf.co.uk

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