



Residents drum up a special day

Barnet Mayor Councillor Nagus Narenthira was guest of honour as The Finchley Charities marked Black History month in October with a lunch and a session of African drumming at its residential site in Wilmot Close, N2.



Numbers up: Some of Celia Rufey's French-inspired signs

Celia's signs make the French connection in Fortis Green

By Diana Cormack

If you've ever travelled through France, you may well have noticed the blue or green house numbers and signs typical of that country. These enamelled signs were once the rule for every house and they became popular with tourists who wanted to buy them for their own homes. However, many were disappointed as the signs were not easily found in shops.

Step in East Finchley resident Celia Rufey. Nearly 20 years ago she was working on the readers' queries page of *Homes and Gardens* magazine when a letter arrived enquiring about how to get one of these signs.

Celia searched for someone who could make them and, after help from the French Embassy's Trade Department, she used a series of factories over the years. Eventually circumstances made it necessary to make them nearer home.

It was hard to find an expert vitreous enameller in Britain to work on the delicate glass-based

signs and produce different graphics or fonts, not to mention slogans. Visit www.franco-file.co.uk for full details. Clients from around the world contact Celia at her Fortis Green home with their specific requirements. Being bespoke, the signs make a unique and unusual present.

The Archer came across Celia at The Muswell Hill Club's November Art and Craft's fair in aid of the North London Hospice. Looking at the variety on display (pictured) it was amazing to think that these typically French plaques originated here in East Finchley.

REVIEW: *Treason The Musical*

Alexandra Palace Theatre
By Jessica Holt

The story of the Gunpowder Plot is a historic tale of division, religious persecution, and brutality, ending in an ambitious yet failed plot to bring down both the monarchy and the government. Now *Treason the Musical* is set to blow audiences away with stunning original folk and pop songs. This one-of-a-kind show tells one of the most intriguing tales in Britain's history as it's never been seen before.

It creates a tense and fearful atmosphere with the opening scene of a Catholic marriage held in secret. The groom Thomas Percy falls under the influence of Guy Fawkes as he strives for justice in a divided England now ruled by James I of Scotland.

The songs are simply exquisite and sung so beautifully and, in my view, on a par with musicals such as *Les Misérables*. The narrative may not be as strong as that West End blockbuster focussed mainly as it is on the Catholic couple who eventually drift apart as a result of Percy's treason.

The set is impressive; soft browns matching the soft browns of the costumes, and very few other colours, successfully creating a sense of time and the gloomy atmosphere of the period. The lighting effects are sensational, contributing to mood and more importantly directing the action.

This production is well worth seeing, hugely enjoyable shedding light on a troubled time.

Talented cellist earns place in national orchestra

By Rachel Rubinsohn

At just 15 years old, Kalli Ziegler is among the youngest musicians to have been inducted into the National Youth Orchestra (NYO) of Great Britain. For this academic year, Kalli will be representing East Finchley as one of 18 cellists in the 158-strong ensemble of the nation's finest teenage musicians.

The year ahead is set to be a busy one, with a tour schedule that will take the orchestra to iconic venues across the country, from London's Barbican to the Royal Concert Hall in Nottingham. The NYO usually performs at the BBC Proms, although the official line-up is yet to be published.

The young, savvy musicians of the NYO are in a unique position to make classical music relevant to their generation, a responsibility they do not take lightly.

Reflecting on a recent collaboration between the NYO and its partner programme NYO Inspire, which serves



Strings to her bow: Kalli Ziegler

Kalli first picked up the cello at the age of six, enchanted by its warm, resonant sound. She has since been an active participant of chamber and symphony orchestras, balancing a full school timetable with Saturday classes at the Royal College of Music. Admission to the NYO represents yet another triumph in this decorated musical journey, having sailed through a gruelling series of auditions and assessments.

underprivileged communities, Kalli was adamant in her faith in the power of music to bring people together, and bridge divides: "These events open classical music up to everyone, encouraging people from different backgrounds to play music together, share ideas and attend concerts."

Those wishing to see what the NYO has to offer can visit www.nyo.org.uk for a full list of upcoming performances.

Christmas singalong

Age UK is opening its doors for a festive celebration of music and song where guests can enjoy a singalong and mince pies, plus a raffle and tombola, and a chance to buy cards designed by its art group. The event takes place on Monday 11 December from 3pm to 5pm at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2 8LT. To register, email teresa.gallagher@ageukbarnet.org.uk or call Teresa on 07502 989 403.