



## Letters

## Traffic trials

Dear Editor

The situation on the road outside East Finchley Station, running all the way to the North Circular road, is a continuing source of jams due to halving the road space for the cycle lane. It is worst just outside the station where, on the three busy times of the day, there is a queue of cars crawling along, stopping and starting and emitting fumes.

Started in November 2020, the scheme is a disaster. Barnet Council's website said: "The road was identified as an important new cycling route introduced on the basis of an experiment with consultation to take place during the life of the scheme." There has been no consultation, and a review of the scheme was promised but has not happened.

I walk past the station each day and drive frequently. It is rare to see more than two cyclists, and the idea that people will stop using their cars and walk or cycle clearly is not happening.

In addition the 20mph speed limit is universally ignored by cars, buses and indeed police cars. Traffic adapts sensibly to conditions, and when not at a standstill drives generally at 25-30 mph, which is a reasonable speed for an open main road with good visibility. So far, little enforcement has taken place, unlike in the main Finchley Road where a colleague was fined for doing 24mph.

It is not difficult to understand the financial incentives for councils behind this limit, which may be reasonable in narrow side roads or where there is a school, but in an open large clear main road is entirely unnecessary.

**Barry H White**  
Fordington Road, N6.

## East Finchley a century ago at Christmas

By Frank Edwards

**Praise for voters, coal for the winter, a concert that never was and festive fun. This is just some of the news from East Finchley in December 1923, 100 years ago this month, taken from national newspaper archives.**

### Intelligent voters

In December 1923, there was a General Election. Holy Trinity School, then on East End Road, was a polling station, as were North Road schools, now known as Martin School. Here there were "streams of voters and queues of perambulators". A presiding officer, impressed by residents' knowledge of how to vote, commended East Finchley electors as "most intelligent".

It was also winter. To assist with the cost of heating, Finchley Charities invited East Finchley's "deserving poor" to apply for an allocation of coal. Preference went to widows, aged persons and those out of work.

### Imaginary concert

Cold or not, it was the season to be merry. To spread cheer, Douglas Gentle, a 15-year-old engineer's assistant from Elmfield Road, N2, had 100 tickets printed for an entertainment by the Long Lane Concert Party at Holy Trinity Hall in Church Lane. Proceeds were in aid of the Royal Northern Hospital and Douglas instructed that the printing bill be sent there. Douglas and Sydney Frater, a 15-year-old errand boy from Market Place, sold the tickets at 1s each.

All good so far, except this was a scam, 1920s style. There was no Long Lane Concert Party and no planned entertainment. The hospital was surprised by the arrival of the printing bill.

The East Finchley Tradesmen Cricket Club, who had booked the hall on the night in question, were surprised by the arrival of many eager concert-goers. Apprehended, Douglas and Sydney appeared before Highgate Police Court. Douglas accepted full responsibility for the fraud and said he got the idea "from reading a book". The court placed him on probation for three years and let Sydney off with a warning.

### Festive cheer

There were other entertainments in the festive season of 1923 to attract those disappointed by the Long Lane Concert Party non-event. A Grand Christmas Fair at North Road schools offered a ventriloquist and Punch and Judy. All Saints' Church in Durham Road hosted a lecture on Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operas. On Boxing Day, the Finchley Carnival Amateur Dramatic Society performed *Babes in the Wood* at Holy Trinity Hall.

For those who stayed at home, a local paper printed over 60 "Conundrums" to amuse and divert. One of the best (which says something about the rest) ran: "How did the householder know the burglar was a blacksmith? Because he made a bolt for the door."

And that's a Happy Christmas from East Finchley, a hundred years ago this month.



New business: Nadya Angelova at the Timberzone store in the High Road

## Flooring shop sets up base in High Road

By Ruth Anders

**Readers will have noticed a surprise replacement for the Martyn Gerrard office at 146 High Road, when wood flooring company Timberzone appeared a few weeks ago. Timberzone began activities 15 years ago and has relocated from Watford.**

"We wanted to move further into London", explained manager Nadya Angelova, "and East Finchley, with its friendly High Road and shopkeepers felt just right".

The shop was much in need of attention when she first took it over, admits Nadya, but after a radical refurbishment one would never guess. The rich scent of timber greets visitors at the door, as do the racks of standard and custom-built samples of wooden flooring.

Nadya, who is Bulgarian and runs her own wellness business in Edgware in the evenings and at weekends, has worked for Albanian-owned Timberzone for over three years. Arriving in

the UK nine years ago she spent five years as a property lettings manager in Watford and Hemel Hempstead.

She explained that the company imports their timber from the Ukraine and Lithuania. Timberzone can provide every step of the process from initial consultation, survey and design through to installation, warranty and maintenance.

Nadya added that "Clients are like our family: they let us into their house where we discuss everything from infrastructure and underfloor heating issues to the look and feel they are after. It's very personal." For further information visit [www.timberzone.co.uk](http://www.timberzone.co.uk)

## REVIEW: *Oh, What a Lovely War*

Artsdepot, North Finchley

By Jessica Holt

**As I write this review of *Oh, What a Lovely War*, I have just participated in the two minutes' silence on Remembrance Sunday. Conceived and developed by Joan Littlewood this musical play first performed at Stratford East in 1963 focuses on the First World War. However, its themes of inadequate and corrupt leadership, widespread profiteering, the use of propaganda and the slaughter of innocents are familiar to all of us even when we are not at war ourselves.**

The Artsdepot production performed by Blackeyed Theatre Company is thoroughly entertaining, employing satire, farce and slapstick with considerable skill. Each actor plays multiple instruments and characters. One of them is Harry Curley who grew up in Barnet and attended Compton School in North Finchley.

### Moving and humorous

The actors sing the songs without mics, which makes a change in today's musical theatre. It adds to the intimacy and enhances audience involvement. Some of these songs are familiar; *Keep the Home Fires Burning*, incredibly moving. Other songs are humorous such as *Hush Here Comes a Whizzbang* or satirical such as *Oh,*

### *What a Lovely War.*

The actors energetically move around the small stage with a variety of props and costumes establishing different places and characters. Visually stunning, the short scenes are played within the framework of a Pierrot show and offer the audience a way out, an opportunity to remain at a distance.

But then we are presented with slides projected high on the back wall so there is no escape from the death toll. The statistics are stark and astonishing as the slides guide us through the events of 1914-18. There is a perfect balance in Joan Littlewood's work, enabling us to watch the tragedy of war, helping our understanding of how it comes about, and leading us to recognise who is responsible.

## Award-winning pasture open in winter months

**The volunteers who run Long Lane Pasture, the nature reserve situated opposite the fire station on Long Lane, are continuing to keep it open to visitors from 10am to 12 noon on Saturday mornings through the winter months. This is the time when many of them are there keeping it well maintained and new volunteers are always welcome to join the working party.**

It has been an excellent year for the pasture team, who have won their 12<sup>th</sup> Green Flag Award in a row from the environment charity Keep Britain Tidy.

Long Lane Pasture Trust Chair Donald Lyven and Harriet Duffield, Barnet Council's Biodiversity & Conservation Officer, travelled to Southampton to collect the award.

### All Saints' East Finchley

Living the Catholic faith in the Church of England



All Saints' Church, Durham Road,  
East Finchley  
Church of England

You are welcome to join us for:

Sunday mass at 10.00 a.m. and  
Weekday masses as advertised on the website.

Or join our live-streamed services on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/allsaintsef/>

Prayer requests are gladly accepted.

For more information,  
contact the Vicar, Fr Ian Chandler, on  
020 8883 9315

Email: [vicar.saintsabounding@gmail.com](mailto:vicar.saintsabounding@gmail.com)  
or check out our website:  
[allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk](http://allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk)