



For the future: Children and staff at Martin Primary sow poppy seeds by the playground

Remembrance poppies

By Ruth Anders

Monday 11 November provided a sunny morning for Remembrance Day events at Martin Primary School in East Finchley.

The children were divided into two thoughtful and well-behaved assemblies, and reminded about the reasons for the special day. The more senior group sang a very moving version of In Flanders Field, accompanied on the piano by music teacher Gabi Brais.

After the minute's silence, children of all ages who were members of the School Council went out to a corner of the playing field where they were given poppy seeds to sow. In previous years the children have made craft wreaths to mark Remembrance Day but, with a focus on environment and sustainability, the school adopted a greener approach this year.

From The Archer archives ...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago:
December 2014

Christmas 2014 saw the start of the long struggle to keep East Finchley Library open, after Barnet Council published plans to cut the libraries budget by £2.8million over the following five years. The East Finchley Library Users Group objected to all the options for the library suggested in the Council's proposals and, eventually, their hard work plus many protests by local residents saved the library for our local community.

15 years ago:
December 2009

Archie, the impressive statue on top of East Finchley station, was chosen as a London Landmark for the 2012 Olympic Games, after winning a public vote in Barnet. His image was then included in a set of London Landmark badges, along with other icons from the capital, to go on sale in advance of the Olympics.

23 years ago:
December 2001

This month saw the loss of one of East Finchley's most distinctive shops, with the closure of Valantique, the antique shop situated at 9 Fortis Green for nearly 20 years. The owner, Valerie Steel, attributed the closure to antiques falling out of fashion, as a more minimalist look had become popular, particularly amongst the younger generation.

Farewell to Daphne Chamberlain, writer and friend

We are very sad to report that Daphne Chamberlain, our long-term colleague and friend on The Archer team, died last month at the age of 84.

Born in Kentish Town in a house that was destroyed by a bomb not long afterwards, the young Daphne and her mother moved around Britain for the next four years, following her father's postings. After their return to Kentish Town, she went to school in Camden and continued to travel there every day when the family moved to St Pancras Court, East Finchley in 1952.

together in talking about them.

We shared the same initials and, somehow, people often confused our first names. In fact, my husband and I once received a card with Christmas greetings to Ian and Daphne!

Once, during a phase when the paper was very short of writers, Daphne and I ended up writing most of it using family members' names as pseudonyms. We also collaborated on giving joint talks about The Archer to various groups, sometimes bringing them to an end in the style of The Two Ronnies. Sadly, this time it really is goodbye from me, Daphne. I will miss you.



Archer colleague: Daphne Chamberlain

She trained as a specialist children's librarian, which led to a long and satisfying career in Islington libraries where she helped to create two publications, one of reminiscences of senior citizens and one of creative writing by library users.

Daphne's own creative writing came more to the fore after she joined the amateur drama company Escape Route, primarily for her love of acting, but which branched out into writing and directing. Through joining reading groups and poetry workshop, she came to realise that poetry was what interested her most of all.

After her beloved mother's death in 2010, Daphne moved into Stokes Court, N2. She loved East Finchley and she loved The Archer, which she joined in 1996. Her funeral will take place at Marylebone Crematorium, East End Road, at 12 noon on Saturday 7 December.

Diana Cormack, long-time colleague on The Archer, writes: Daphne and I met when we volunteered for The Archer at the same time in 1996. In those days we were not au fait with computers or smartphones, so suffered together what for us was a huge learning curve over the years. We also both suffered from having a mother with Alzheimer's and spent a lot of time comparing their behaviour, finding comfort

David Hobbs, former editor of The Archer, remembers: Back in the mid-1960s, The National Film Theatre on the South Bank used to hold all-nighters on Fridays. As this was one of the few places to see art house films that had not had a general release, it was a magnet for film buffs, and Daphne was one of them.

The films started at about 11pm and ended at about 6am, just in time to catch the first trains home.

As she was working in Church End library at that time, she would dash home, grab a couple of hours sleep and then head into work. Normally this worked out fine and she managed to yawn her way through the day. On one occasion it didn't and she overslept, not getting into work until lunchtime. Her manager was not amused and she had to be a bit more careful after that.

John Lawrence, editor of The Archer, writes: When I joined The Archer team in 2005, Daphne was one of a handful of volunteer writers whose hard work in finding and writing articles filled the pages of the newspaper every month. Without her we would have had a lot of white space.

Daphne was always forthright and energetic, and determined to report on the issues that affect people in East Finchley, such as local transport and housing. She turned up unfailingly at our weekly meetings, bursting with ideas and sometimes with a word of frustration for the 263 bus that had made her late. On behalf of the whole team, thank you, Daphne, for your years of dedication.

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