



Letters

Literary lunacy

Dear Editor,

I have not seen a sillier display of shortsightedness than closing the book shelf at the tube station. It's been my and, I suppose, others' favourite bit of our journey to find a literary gem there.

How does something become a fire contravention overnight? I suppose piles of Metro or Evening Standard are made of non-flammable paper. Or rather they have adverts in them. Who needs books anyway...?

Marcin Notecki,
Address supplied

Fire-resistant papers?

Dear Editor

I was sorry to see the notice at East Finchley station that the book exchange shelves were being removed. As many charity shops are inundated with books and don't always want more this is a great way to pass on, and acquire, books. TFL cited fire regulations for the reason, so it would be logical to remove all the free newspapers from their stations too. Or are they going to tell us that the Metro is printed on some form of miracle, fire-resistant paper?

Name and address supplied

Send your letters to:

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.

Books are important

Dear Editor

The popular free book exchange bookshelf at East Finchley station has been removed by TfL following a ruling, apparently, from London Fire Brigade. This is absurd. East Finchley is not a sub-surface station, the bookshelf is (was) a mere 15 feet from the exit and car park and posed no risk whatsoever. Books are even more important these days in our screen-obsessed age.

Surgery decay

Dear Editor

I was pleased to see the article and photograph showing the shocking neglect of the East Finchley Medical Practice Building (The Archer, March 2025). The exterior has steadily fallen into decay over the 25 years that I have lived here.

It is absurd to suggest that somehow this is due to an unco-operative landlord... and the suggestion that the users of the practice who have had to put up with these disgusting conditions should somehow fundraise for this practice is obscene.

As a patient of the practice I do not want my name mentioned but I feel very strongly that the practice partners should finally take some accountability for repairing the building.

Name and address supplied

Underpass work to start transformation of path

By David Melsome

Work will start this month on the transformation of the pedestrian underpass beneath the Northern line between Trinity Road and Manor Park Road. The walkway will be closed for two weeks from Monday 14 to Monday 28 April.

As reported in previous editions, reflective panels, lighting and artwork will be installed to improve vision and the feel of the underpass in a project being led by the Grange Big Local regeneration team.

Local artist Paul Stephenson is working with students in local secondary schools Bishop Douglass, Archer Academy and Christ's College to create a mural that will celebrate community, people and place. The mural will be painted in June.

The reflectors will be overlaid with poetry created by local people and pupils at Martin Primary School. Thanks to reader Naomi Burgess who sent us this acrostic poem she submitted to be considered by the underpass team:

E is for East Finchley, the place we all know,

A is for the Archer, who draws back his bow,

S for a Spice Girl, who sang to our beat,

T is for Tony's, local honey so sweet.

F is for Films at our Phoenix so old,

I is for I LOVE N2, our home of pure gold.

N is for Northern Line, where the tunnel begins.

C is for Cherry Tree with our kids on the swings.

H is for happiness, found everywhere.

L is for Library and Lido and books and wet hair.

E is for East Finchley Festival's cheer.

Y is for Yes, we LOVE living here!



Recreate a moment in history

Eighty years ago, more than 10,000 people are said to have come together in the grounds of Avenue House, now known as Stephens House & Gardens, in East End Road, N3, to celebrate victory in Europe towards the end of the Second World War.

The photograph here was taken on that day in 1945 and on Sunday 4 May this year, the House & Gardens are asking visitors to come along and be in the picture and to recreate the joyous moment.

The recreation will be photographed at 6pm as the finale

to a day looking back at the war time heritage of the community of Barnet. The Gardens will be open until 8pm and 1940s music will be provided by vocal harmony trio Fox, Wiggle & Sass. The Finchley Society & Barnet Museum will have their

wartime treasures on display, and there will be screening of a specially commissioned film of local people's memories. Visit www.stephenshouseandgardens.com. And if you recognise anyone in the photo, get in touch with the team via the website.

Storage is the next challenge for Ukraine

By Lynn Winton

It is now three tumultuous years since Michael Byrne was so affected by watching the Russian invasion of Ukraine unfold on the news that he vowed to himself there and then that he wouldn't sit idly by.

Originally using his contacts as a former director of NHS services, within days he had amassed a truckload of vital humanitarian aid, which he drove himself to hand over to aid organisations on the Polish border, who safely delivered to the bombed-out cities and towns that were in dire need of medicine, and other essential items.

That was how Driving Aid to Ukraine came into being, and that mercy dash was the first of what have now been 28 articulated truck journeys transporting 300 tons of goods, all organised by Michael and a few volunteers from his home in Lynmouth Road, N2.

Readers of The Archer, by offering goods and donations,



Work goes on: A Driving Aid to Ukraine transport group on the way to distribute much-needed items

have been a part of the mission from the outset, and it has become part of an international network of aid organisations and charities.

Biggest challenge

I asked Michael for an update. He said: "As the Russian attacks continue, people who remain in Ukraine are enduring the dangers of life under siege.

"My biggest challenge now is an overwhelming demand for a minimum 800 square foot storage space, with access for an articulated lorry, for the ever-growing need of large mobility aids, such as wheelchairs, hospital beds and mobility scooters for the 42,000 horrifically maimed people, including 15,000 amputees.

"From the beginning, the only limiting factor has been storage and funding. There is not and never has been a shortage of

supplies needing transport. We urgently need both to continue delivering support."

How you can help

If you are inspired to offer Michael an accessible storage space or can offer any guidance to help him find one, his number is 07791 912389. You would, literally, be the answer to his prayers and directly helping those unfortunate victims of this terrible war. Monetary donations can be made by visiting drivingaidtoukraine.org.



"HOLY WEEK"

at ST MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

279 HIGH ROAD N2 8HG

17th April—Maundy Thursday

Mass of the Lord's Supper

8:00pm

Followed by Vigil at the Chapel of Repose until 11pm

18th April—Good Friday

Family Stations of the Cross in Church

11:00am

Solemn Liturgy of the Lord's Passion

3:00pm

Stations of the Cross

7:00pm

19th April—Holy Saturday

Confessions

10:30 am to 11am

Easter Vigil

8:00pm

Sunday 20th April—Easter Day

Sunday Masses

8:30am, 10am and 12noon