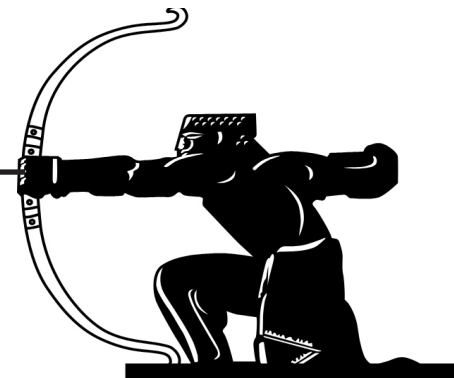


The Archer

Local News is our Aim



ISSN 1361-3952

July 2025 No. 375

Delivered free to 10,000 homes and businesses across East Finchley

Hello, East Finchley!



Music, dance and song: Liv and George from indie band 'Her name was?' greet the festival crowd from the main stage during their early-afternoon set. Inset, the Christ's College Finchley Dancers and the Martin Primary School Choir both performed on the community stage. Photos Mike Coles

By David Melsome

Exciting live performances on two stages by talented local bands, singers, dancers and choirs kept the crowds entertained when the annual East Finchley Festival rocked Cherry Tree Wood last month. At midday on Sunday 22 June, a smiling parade of families, friends and community groups, all walking down the High Road from Martin Primary School to the dynamic beat of the Fortismere Drummers, made an unmissable entrance into the park before main stage host Kate Galston officially declared the event open.

Thousands of visitors poured in over the course of the next six hours to enjoy the line-up of live music, fun activities and plenty of food and drink in what was the festival's 51st year.

Weather forecasts earlier in

the week had predicted temperatures as high as 31 degrees on the day of the festival but mercifully the hottest conditions passed over 24 hours earlier and the big day itself turned out to be a mix of cloud and sun,

with occasional gusts of wind causing just a few problems for any gazebos that weren't fixed down securely.

Thanks must go to all the volunteers who spent months planning the festival and to all

those who turned up on the day to act as stewards, raffle ticket sellers, litter pickers and general helpers. It was another fantastic day out and a much-needed chance for everyone in N2 to come together with friends

and visitors from near and far. Our photographers Mike Coles and Claire McHugh were there to capture the fun and the party atmosphere. Turn to pages 8 and 9 to enjoy their photos from the day.

STEWART DUNCAN

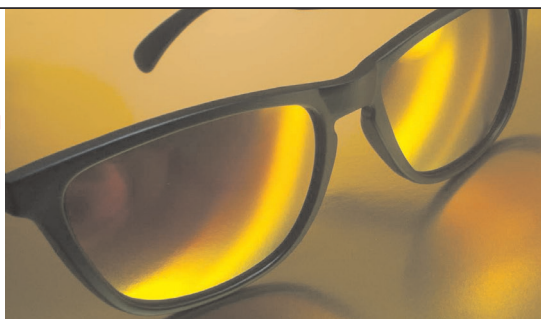
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In this issue

Homeless encampment... P2
Save our silver birches... P3
Complex needs support... P4
Poisoned streams... P5
Cherry Tree flooding... P6
Antiques Roadshow... P7
Your letters... P11



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Published by East Finchley Newspapers CIC

Registered in England & Wales company no 14524944

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Printed by Sharman & Co Ltd on 100% UK-sourced recycled newspaper

The Archer team wishes to thank all the generous volunteers who give up their spare time, in all weather, to deliver the paper for us.

Thank you to The East Finchley Constitutional Club for providing us with a meeting place.

Copy deadlines - August: 11 July, September: 15 August, October: 12 September

BE PART OF IT Volunteers wanted

Compiled by Lynn Winton

N2-based **Number Champions** is an award-winning charity that helps young state primary school children who are behind in maths. It trains volunteers to use games and other creative activities in one-to-one sessions. The charity is active across London and is especially looking for N2 volunteers. If you have enthusiasm to help children, confidence in basic numeracy, 1.5 hours/week available in term time, and can volunteer from September, see www.numberchampions.org.uk or contact volunteer@numberchampions.org.uk.

Reengage host monthly Sunday tea parties in and around Finchley for people aged 75 and over who are lonely, isolated or in need of companionship. Volunteer drivers are needed to collect older guests from their homes and take them to and from the tea party where between 10 and 15 older guests and volunteers share tea, cake, and companionship, and enjoy a change of scenery for an afternoon. If you would like to get involved please contact ruth.carter@reengage.org.uk

Finchley Foodbank is on the lookout for volunteers. Roles range from receiving deliveries to sorting food donations to restocking shelves and staffing Tuesday and Saturday sessions at St Mary's Church on the High Road, N2. We are always looking for people who want to contribute to the local community and provide a warm welcome to people in need. Find out more at finchleyfoodbank.org.uk

Driving Aid to Ukraine is a non-profit organisation based in N2 delivering humanitarian aid to the Ukrainian conflict zones, via border transfer points. They require all kinds of volunteers: to help scale up in building and sustaining a social media campaign, fund raising and grant writing and to organise collections of vital humanitarian and medical aid items. Find out more at Drivingaidtoukraine.org or ring Michael Byrne on 07791 912389.

The Archer offers this space free to local organisations that need volunteers. Please submit your listing of max 80 words to news@the-archer.co.uk

Homeless set up camp alongside North Circular



Roadside: A small group of tents has been set up on the North Circular bridge

By Janet Maitland

A group of homeless people have set up camp alongside the A1000 bridge as it crosses the North Circular. Half a dozen tiny tents are jammed together on a patch no bigger than the average living room.

"The camp is clean and tidy, tucked away from housing, and there's been no complaints," said Jan Lovell, from East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team. "We'll assist them by liaising with Outreach groups and Barnet Council and deal with any crime or anti-social behaviour if it arises."

Nowhere to go

Barnet has roughly 16 rough sleepers, including those in tents, according to a count taken one night at the end of May. Westminster has the most in London, with around 400 a night.

There are also 2,886 households living in emergency accommodation in Barnet, up from 2,520 a year ago. This B&B and nightly-let accommodation can often lack basic facilities such as a kitchen, which is why food banks find

packet soup and noodles are in high demand from those with only a kettle.

Despite the huge need for shelter, only 51% of Barnet's government Homeless Prevention Grant of just over £10 million for 2025/26 can be spent on temporary accommodation. Meanwhile, the cost of such accommodation continues to skyrocket.

Options for those facing homelessness are limited. Cheap bedsits, flat shares and lodgings are in extremely short supply or non-existent in London's expensive rental market.

For anyone becoming homeless through the ending of a tenancy, domestic abuse, family breakdown, the death of a parent or spouse, addiction, mental health problems, or leaving a care institute or the army or prison, there are hostels but

nowhere near enough.

One of these, Arlington House in Camden, opened in 1905 and used to take 1,200 people a night, but now it's just 95. Squatting in a disused building is also not possible as that's been illegal since 2012.

Just before going to press, the Government's Spending Review announced an injection of almost £1 billion into council budgets over the next 10 years to "break the cycle of spiraling homelessness".

How you can help

In the meantime, you can help a rough sleeper by calling StreetLink on 0300 500 0914 or go to thestreetlink.org.uk/start. They will send the details to a local outreach team who will locate the individual, assess their needs and offer support services with the aim of ending their homelessness.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council 430 Long Lane, N2

Internal alterations including splitting of the living room into a bedroom and dining room. The study room to be converted into a laundry & WC room

21 Church Lane, N2

Erection of new two-storey dwelling following demolition of the existing dwelling. New front hardstanding to provide off-street parking. Associated landscaping and patio area

Land At Central Avenue (adjacent to Willow House), the Grange Estate, High Road, N2

Submission of details of condition 22 (PV panels) pursuant to planning permission 22/3539/FUL dated 03/01/2023

95 Huntingdon Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension following demolition of the existing extension

150 High Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension to existing rear outrigger and creation of roof terrace at first floor. Roof extension including new pitched roof with three roof lights and one rear gable window. Conversion of upper floors into two self-contained flats with associated refuse storage

28 Lincoln Road, N2

Single-storey side/rear extension with three roof lights

Outside 54-64 High Road, N2

Installation of one double-sided internally illuminated LCD screen with integral electrical vehicle

charging point

8 Manor Park Road, N2

Single-storey side lean-to and rear extension following demolition of the existing extension. Reduction of size of existing window on side of rear outrigger and increasing of the size of window on rear of outrigger. Replacement windows to match existing and addition of one skylight to roof of outrigger

66 Park Hall Road, N2

Side dormer extension of rear addition dormer over roof terrace

220 High Road, N2

Change of use of part of the ground floor commercial (Class E) to one self-contained flat (Class C3) Changes to fenestration

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Bid to save silver birches from the axe

By John Lawrence

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood have launched a campaign to save five long-standing silver birch trees which will be chopped down to make way for the new Cherry Tree Quarter housing development opposite East Finchley tube station.

The trees have stood on their prominent corner site close to the entrance of the wood in front of what is now the Monkey Puzzle Nursery for an estimated 60-70 years. They are not protected by tree preservation orders, although the mature yew tree alongside them is.

Developers Places for Barnet have said the silver birches will have to go as part of their plans to build 75 new homes on the land.

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood group says their requests to protect the trees with preservation orders have been ignored.

Petition

Roger Chapman, chair of the Friends, said their first requests were lodged 20 years ago, and in recent months they have written formally to Barnet Council but received no response. Last month they launched a petition online and gathered signatures at East Finchley Festival.

The petition has now closed. Roger said: "A petition seemed the only way to get ourselves heard. We needed 25 signatures to guarantee a response from the council but we are aiming for 500, which would entitle us to three minutes in front of Barnet Council Cabinet to make our case.



Under threat: The silver birches on the right with the darker protected yew on the left

"These five trees are a gateway into the park and have been for many years. They are the lungs of the Earth and a part of the local landscape for all of us. We have spent years working with the council on the Barnet Local Plan in such a way that we thought this site would be

protected. It turns out that is not the case."

The Friends say the Cherry Tree Quarter development could be modified to incorporate the silver birches, as it is already safeguarding the protected yew. Places for Barnet spokesman Marcello Burbante told *The*

Archer in our June edition that a full landscape design is being developed to include the planting of two new silver birches in the heart of the site, along with a number of additional trees on the edges of the site.

Your letters, pg 11



Arriving now: One of the new electric buses on the 143 route. Photo Stan Harrington

First electric buses for East Finchley

By Stan Harrington

The 143 is one of six daytime bus routes to serve East Finchley, operating between Brent Cross and Archway. Over the past month, a fleet of brand new, fully electric buses have been rolled out on the route, replacing the 14-year-old buses used previously.

The new fleet of 16 vehicles feature updated information screens, USB charging ports and more spacious interiors, as well as being quieter and more environmentally friendly.

It marks the first electric bus route for East Finchley and the surrounding area, with the 263 set to follow, receiving its own fleet of 19 new, double decker electric buses at some point soon too.

Masters in harmony

Finchley Symphony Orchestra and Choir come together with conductor David Lardi on Saturday 12 July to round off their seasons in a concert of two masterpieces by composers at the height of their powers.

Finchley Symphony Orchestra and Choir unite for a powerful season finale for a powerful season finale for a powerful season finale. Beethoven's Seventh Symphony pulsates with energy, while Haydn's Harmoniemesse showcases the 70-year-old composer's musical mastery through vibrant styles and rich textures. Together, these two masterpieces form a rousing conclusion to the Finchley Symphony Orchestra and Choir's season under the baton of conductor David Lardi.

This celebratory concert takes place on Saturday 12 July at Trinity Church, Nether Street, N12 in North Finchley, starting at 7.30pm..

Tickets: £18 general, £15 for under-26s and over-60s, and just £2 for under-18s. Save £1 per ticket by booking online at www.finchleysymphony.org £18, £15 for those under 26 and over 60, £2 for those under 18 and you can save £1 per ticket by booking online at www.finchleysymphony.org

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The Archer's website is now easier to use on your mobile phone. Our online pages have been redesigned to make it quicker to find important information like contact details and deadlines, and simpler to read our latest edition or search and browse past editions of the newspaper in our archive stretching back to 1993. So now you really can take *The Archer* with you wherever you go. Bookmark our website at www.the-archer.co.uk

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Message of support: Jennifer Pearl

Complex needs should be no barrier to a fulfilling life

By Lynn Winton

Jennifer Pearl absolutely loathes bin days, abandoned Lime bikes and the people who steal blue disability badges. She hugely appreciates pit stops like Caffè Nero in the High Road with its wide doors, the Phoenix Cinema with its full-access premises, and every piece of technological kit that can help to keep her daily life as autonomous as possible.

If you haven't worked it out already, Jennifer is fully reliant on wheelchair access to get on with her purposeful life, along with daily visits from dedicated carers who understand her complex needs.

Add to that a futuristic car that she can drive with her wheelchair as the driver's seat, and all this combined with a passion to use her lived experience to inform and help others.

Jennifer, now 61, was 47 and already living in East Finchley with husband Alex and children aged 14 and 17 when she spent six months in hospital after an inoperable neck lipoma was discovered.

"The next three to four years are a blur," she explained. "I can't even remember how many times or in what order I was in and out of hospital, how often I deteriorated, then soon

lost my mobility, at one point contracted septicaemia, and always had and still have a bag packed ready to be readmitted. In one particularly awful year I had more than 100 hospital appointments."

Complex web

It is estimated that 25% of people in the UK will become disabled and have to navigate a complex web of service providers. Jennifer is keen to promote the services of Inclusion Barnet, where she has just completed a six-year tenure as co-chair of the Trustees. If you live, work or study in Barnet, this would be the first port of call for practical guidance in all matters of disability and they can be reached via their advice line Touchpoint.

Jennifer is an "expert by experience" who advises, speaks, conducts research and

lobbies for change to a vast list of organisations, including the Care Quality Commission. It was serendipity that her career before her illness was already as an advocate for disabled people.

"My son says no one else in our family has got as many jobs as me. Not surprisingly, the more I do, the more experience I get, the more noise I make, the more I'm in demand."

Find out more at www.inclusionbarnet.org.uk and Touchpoint can be contacted on 020 3475 1314.

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago: July 2015

Esso announced the closure of its garage at the junction of the High Road with Church Lane, opposite Martin School's field. Rumours had circulated that Tesco were planning to open a supermarket on the site but this was denied by the company. Ten years on, after various development plans have failed to materialise, the site remains derelict.

15 years ago: July 2010

After lying empty for eight years since the block was built, the ground floor of Stag Court in the High Road between Leslie and Leopold Roads was remarketed by estate agents Martyn Gerrard. Four planning applications to open a supermarket on the site had previously been turned down. The site had planning permission for use as office space and, later in the year, it was occupied by local business Hallett Retail.

25 years ago: July 2000

The controversial traffic scheme to ban vehicles turning right into or out of Baronsmere Road into the High Road was finally implemented, despite local opposition. Traffic islands were built in the middle of the High Road and at the entrance to Baronsmere Road, but were designed to allow cyclists full access to the junction.

Welcome wildlife into your world

Shoppers and passers-by were able to learn about the best ways to create habitats that are friendly to insects at a special event in the High Road, N2.

The Finchley Pollinator Project thanked East Finchley Town Team for enabling their workshop held outside Iceland on Saturday 7 June.

The group said: "We felt the event went really well and was

very busy and well attended. We enjoyed interacting with the public and showing them the immense potential their private spaces such as balconies, driveways and gardens hold for wildlife."



Bee kind: Visitors learn about insect life at the pollinators event. Photo Mike Coles

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Raw sewage and chemicals poison allotment streams



Discoloured: One of the polluted allotment streams

By Margaret Crockett

“Raw sewage, ammonia, methane, hydrogen sulphide. It is wrong, it is unhealthy for people and wildlife, it is dangerous,” laments Dr Mary Poulter, Chair of the East Finchley Allotment Holders Association, on reading the findings of water quality investigations undertaken in May.

Two streams bisect the allotment site off Plane Tree Walk, N2. On contemporary maps they both begin and end within the site boundaries but they originate further south and flow north under houses in East Finchley's county roads, where formerly cress beds were cultivated, and under Creighton Avenue.

For many years now the streams have been bubbly and smell of detergent, polluted by Thames Water drainage systems. More recently sewage, including wet wipes and condoms, appeared in the water. There are also two known properties with misconnections affecting the streams. This is where toilets and household appliances are incorrectly plumbed to the surface water sewer instead of the foul water sewer.

The neighbouring Fuel Land allotments, as well as nearby Coldfall Wood, have similar issues where the polluted water reaches them.

Unacceptable

Allotment holders have been appealing to Thames Water to fix this problem for years with no improvement. In November the East Finchley Allotment Holders Association enlisted support from local MP Sarah Sackman.

Thames Water responded to her letter, stating: “This is unacceptable to us, and we completely understand the concerns raised.”

They reported that they attended in January to check the connections from the county roads, to clean and conduct a CCTV survey of the pipework. An interceptor trap in some private pipework in one of the county roads was also unblocked.

Quality testing

Thames Water plans follow-on work to continue investigations and testing at other properties to check for misconnections. In the meantime, water quality testing by Thames21, an environmental charity working with communities to restore and look after rivers, water and nature across the Thames Basin, found the east stream results to be particularly troubling, with consistently high ammonia levels and an unpleasant smell.

East Finchley Allotments was established in 1917 and is one of the largest sites in Barnet. Leased from Barnet Council it is managed by plot-holders as a community-run concern.



Show time: Youngsters on stage at the end of a Fixation Academy production

Theatre and dance academy makes the top 100 in the UK

Business partners Laura Davitt and Carly Pryke are celebrating after the Fixation Academy of Performing Arts that they run at Finchley Youth Theatre in the High Road, N2, was named among the top 100 children's activity providers in the UK.

Their studio classes for ages three to 18 in dance, singing and acting were placed at number 34 in the list put together by clubs and activities app and website Club Hub.

Entries were assessed by expert judges, focusing on five key areas: activity benefits, safeguarding, inclusivity, com-

munity impact and business achievements.

Carly said: “To be recognised on a national level is an honour and a reflection of everything we stand for. Thank you to our incredible team, our families, and every child who walks through our doors. You are the heart of everything we do.”

Primary school children celebrate Eid

Eid al-Adha is the second of the two main festivals in Islam alongside Eid al-Fitr, occurring in Dhu al-Hijja, the twelfth and final month of the Islamic calendar. This year it was celebrated from 5 to 9 June, and on a very warm afternoon on 13 June, the children, staff and parents of Martin Primary School were excited to hold their own Eid celebrations.

All sorts of activities were involved, but the main focus was on the delicious food and drink provided by the parents. Amid the enthusiastic throng, headteacher Ziz Chater welcomed Finchley and Golders Green MP Sarah Sackman as a special guest who happily joined in the festivities. Ziz told *The Archer*: “Inclusivity is at the centre of everything we do at Martin, and it was so special to be able to hold our very own Eid event.”



Food and fun: Pupils, parents and staff enjoy the Eid celebrations

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Wetland: The flooded main field in Cherry Tree Wood. Photo Jackie Briggs

Cash injection to relieve flooding in the Wood

By John Lawrence

Barnet Council has been awarded £40,000 in government funding to help with environmental projects and there are hopes the majority of the cash will be spent on relieving the long-running flooding problem in Cherry Tree Wood.

Part of the park's playing field and areas around the tennis courts flood regularly in the winter and spring thanks to water run-off from surrounding land and poor drainage under the surface.

Anyone who visits the wood will be familiar with the 'lake' that often appears on the grass from late autumn onwards, sometimes with geese and ducks using it as a stopover. There is also a less visible high-water area behind the courts.

Nine months to act
The funding handed to Barnet Council has been designated

to cover three projects in the borough, the largest of which is the Cherry Tree Wood flood problem. It has to be spent by the end of March 2026.

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood have worked with the council and with Thames Water for the past four years to identify the causes of the poor drainage. This development gives them a chance to put some of their solutions into practice. Once the work is approved, it will be Barnet Council staff or contractors who carry it out.

Mass walk to help homeless



Walk Joint enterprise: Participants in the Hindu community sponsored walk

A sunset 10km charity walk organised by the local Hindu community raised more than £2,000 for Homeless Action in Barnet. More than 170 people of all ages from the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (UK) Finchley and Depala communities came together on the evening of Friday 25 April for the circular walk setting off from Victoria Park in N3.

These include creating grass-lined ditches to divert water flow away from the field and into specifically designed biodiverse wetland zones around the perimeter.

There could also be water butts to capture run-off from the toilets and pavilion roofs and prevent it from entering the ground around the tennis courts.

Roger Chapman, chair of the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood, said: "With the money we have available, we are aiming for a range of smaller-scale interventions. They won't necessarily lead to a wonderfully dry field, but they will certainly make it less wet."

"Seva is at the heart of Hinduism," said one of the event organisers. "It's about serving others without expectation, and tonight was a beautiful example of that. By coming together for this cause, we are living out our values and giving back to the wider community."

Marcin Nocek, the Night Shelter Coordinator from Homeless Action in Barnet joined the event and expressed his gratitude for how the donation would help the charity to support many people facing homelessness in the borough.

Campaign for schools to teach social cohesion

By David Melsome

Twenty years ago this month, East Finchley resident Miriam Hyman went to work and didn't come home. Miriam was killed in the London bombings of 7 July 2005. She was 32.

On the tenth anniversary of the bombings in 2015, the Miriam Hyman Memorial Trust launched Miriam's Vision, an online educational resource about social cohesion for teachers based on Miriam's story.

With the change in government in 2024, the Department for Education launched its Curriculum and Assessment Review and the trust urged it to explicitly include teaching on social cohesion in the curriculum.

There were hopeful signs when the government review issued an interim report and acknowledged the importance of the subject, saying: "The curriculum plays a crucial role in... promoting social cohesion and sustaining democracy."

Education is vital

Miriam's family and the trust have kept up the pressure by writing to the Minister for School Standards,



Inspiration: Miriam Hyman

Catherine McKinnell MP, who responded positively. Esther Hyman, Miriam's sister, said: "Our experience is testament to the devastating consequences of failing to address social cohesion in a meaningful way. Education is vital. Our message is clear: Include social cohesion in the National Curriculum."

Mavis Hyman, Miriam's mother and Chair of MHMT Trustees, said: "The fact that social cohesion is mentioned in the Executive Summary of the CAR interim report is encouraging."

"Miriam's Vision proposes democracy as a viable alternative to violent extremism, so we are aligned with the report's general ethos. However, we are now advocating that social cohesion should be overtly included in the new National Curriculum." Find out more at www.miriam-hyman.com.

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Treasures and surprises at the Antiques Roadshow



Stately setting: Hundreds of visitors on the lawn at Stephens House and Gardens for the Antiques Roadshow.

Reporting by Lynn Winton



On camera: Presenter Fiona Bruce during filming of one of the three episodes

Thousands of lucky ticket holders, many heaving bags with intriguingly shaped packages, flocked through the gates of Stephens House and Gardens in East End Road, N3, when the BBC filmed *Antiques Roadshow* there on Sunday 1 June. Hosted by Fiona Bruce, the programme is heading for its 48th series after being on air since 1979. And for its Finchley outing there was no shortage of people with a plethora of amazing items, willing to queue at the experts' tables for as long as three hours, many with poignant stories, and all watched by a very good-natured crowd.

The Archer spoke to local people with fascinating objects and there is a chance you might see them in one of the three Stephens House episodes that

will be broadcast when the new season starts in the autumn, when their valuations will also be revealed.

Antiques Roadshow textiles expert Ronnie Archer-Morgan was very excited to see Sharon Selzer's magnificent collection of World War Two propaganda scarves and the film crew sprung into action, arranging them as a backdrop whilst Sharon was interviewed.

These colourful scarves were manufactured to help the war effort by reinforcing patriotic messages such as 'Careless talk costs lives', 'Switch off that light' and 'Is your journey really necessary?'



Sewn messages: Sharon Selzer and her scarves

"I come from a family of costume designers, tailors, milliners and artists, and I had the first vintage fashion shop in London's East End," Sharon explained. "All my life I've collected beautiful scarves and have 1,250. I'm always looking

for ones that tell a story and I knew these were the ones to take to the roadshow.

"Ronnie was delightful and so kind. Sometimes, when I feel a bit down, I spread my scarves out on the bed and start to feel better."



Well-connected: Amanda and Jonathan Olins with their artwork

Jonathan Olins also had an exciting time being filmed. He told *The Archer*: "In 1966, as a young teenager living in East Finchley I went to St Ives on holiday with my parents. They appreciated modern art and visited a few galleries, returning with some interesting ceramics and art.

"After they passed away nearly 25 years ago, one of the pieces I inherited was a small, signed Denis Mitchell rectangular-framed picture. We knew he had a connection with Barbara Hepworth but nothing more. So we took this along and chatted to the English paintings specialist."

That specialist Lawrence Hendra was immediately interested in the piece and confirmed that Denis Mitchell was sculptor Barbara Hepworth's assistant for 10 years, before working independently, and this piece was in preparation for a 10ft bronze that was commissioned by the Foreign Office for display at the University of the Andes in Colombia.

Jonathan added:

"The mounting and framing is typical of the 1960s and even though we enjoy it far too much to sell it, we were very pleasantly surprised at its high value."



Chocolate pot: Jane Marsh with ceramics expert Will Farmer

Archer team member Jane Marsh grew up surrounded by beautiful objects as her parents owned an antique emporium in the King's Road in Chelsea. One of the porcelain pieces she inherited was something she knew nothing about, other than her mother had called it a

'chocolate pot'.

Jane said: "Ceramics expert Will Farmer explained it was Parisian, mid-19th century, and a very grand way to keep one's special drink warm, whether that was coffee, tea or chocolate. And he was quite taken with it, so that's something."



Stained-glass: Jennifer Grocock with expert Marc Allum

Church End Councillor Jennifer Grocock took along a stained-glass artwork that a friend had bequeathed to her in her will many years ago. "It was a wonderful day and the expert Marc Allum, being a stained-glass collector himself, was tremendous," said Jennifer. "As soon as he saw it he told me it had a connection to the 14th century artist Albrecht Durer, but he was not going to tell me anything else until the camera crew were ready to start filming, then he revealed it was based on the Durer woodcut original and painted by a 17th century Dutch artist. I had absolutely no idea. It was just amazing to now understand what it is."



Park packed out for a

Thanks to Mike Coles and Claire McHugh for these wonderful photos from the East Finchley Festival in Cherry Tree Wood on Sunday 22 June. As always, it was a day to remember!



Hundreds of festival visitors fill the field in Cherry Tree Wood



Tackling practice with Finchley Rugby Club



Graceful movement from Counterpoint Dance



Is one of those for me, Mum?



A better view up here



On court action with Lemon Pickleball



Fun in front of the main stage



Main stage host Kate Galston



Cherry Tree Café refreshment



fine festival knees-up



Stage Academy dancers give it their all in a rousing routine



Ilana Banana keeps youngsters entertained in the Storytelling Tent



Elegance from Madhuriya Indian Dance



A youngster relishes his lunch



Singer InSect makes an impression



Crepes were just some of the amazing food options on offer;



The Main Stage crew kept the music flowing all afternoon



Review: So, What's the Plan?



Lives of young people: Lucy Brindle, Sophie Precious Muringu and Harry Gascoigne

The Other Palace Theatre, Victoria, SW1
By Jessica Holt

East Finchley resident Harry Gascoigne has written a delightful musical play about life for three characters in their twenties who work together in a coffee shop. While on their break they explore their lives through song. They all have one ambition in common; they want to be famous and, in my view, this trio deserve to be.

In this small, welcoming studio theatre it sometimes felt we were in the West End. Some of the songs were so powerfully sung and with such sincerity the audience felt part of their angst. Musicals are not my passion, but I could not think of a better way to explore the frustrations of these young people.

Harry Gascoigne on the

keyboard explores with great humour the difficulties of dating apps and some of the bizarre episodes that can take place. Sophie Precious Muringu sings whilst playing guitar about the humiliating auditions she experiences.

Lucy Brindle sings about the trials of sharing a home

with strangers and falling in love with one of them. The strain of unrequited love and failure at auditions sends her back home, where the loss of independence alongside the constant pressure to continue her education drives her back to the coffee shop.

Harry successfully presents the difficulties many of our younger generation experience (low-paid work, inability to buy a home, how to connect with others) but he never does it in a self-pitying way. The piece is full of humour and comic moments which resonated with the audience of young people.

I spoke to Harry after the performance, and he was very pleased with the positive responses to his work. I expressed my view that the piece was enjoyable and succeeded in its artistic intentions but was there any potential for more dialogue? Both of us felt there was, but maybe that's a different play altogether.

Choir blends poetry and music in concert

Following its sell-out performance of J S Bach's Mass in B minor in March, popular local choir North London Chorus has announced that its next concert this month will feature two pieces the choir has never before performed in its 38-year history.

The climax of the concert is Edward Elgar's 1912 paean to art and artists for mezzo-soprano, chorus and orchestra, The Music Makers, in which stanzas from Arthur O'Shaughnessy's Ode are set to some of the composer's finest music.

The concert will open with Brahms' Schicksalslied (Song of Destiny), generally regarded as the finest of Brahms's shorter choral works. Completing the programme will be a popular work for solo voice and orchestra and a showcase for mezzo-soprano Clare Pressland. Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (Songs of a Wayfarer) is a setting of four poems by composer Gustav Mahler.

All three pieces were originally composed for large orchestral forces, but the choir is delighted to introduce them into their repertoire thanks to the existence of skilled arrangements for chamber orchestra. The concert takes place on Saturday 12 July at 7.30pm at St James's Church, Muswell Hill, N10. Tickets are available at northlondonchorus.org/tickets.



Isolation: Aidan Casey and Ella Dorman-Gajic

Review: Shelley at Upstairs at the Gatehouse, Highgate

By Jessica Holt

This new play written by Richard Bradbury blends the past and the present by encouraging us to link the state's surveillance of poet Shelley by the then Home Secretary, Lord Sidmouth with the current surveillance of our society.

This is achieved with the use of a TV monitor centre stage from which Lord Sidmouth, played by Charlie Coldfield, lectures us on the evils of radicalism as perpetrated by Shelley. The play focuses on this rather than Shelley's wonderful poetry.

Shelley played by Aidan Casey is somewhat overshadowed by the two women in his life, his equally radical first wife Harriet played by Ella Dorman-Gajic and their friend Elizabeth Hitchener played by Maureen Casey.

The play begins with the

Shelleys escaping from Ireland where their political views are unacceptable to the British Government. But it is in Ireland where he forms his ideas on justice, on the freedom of the individual and the right to oppose oppressive regimes. They return to England and live in hiding in Lynmouth where the strain on their relationship placed on them by constant surveillance eventually leads to Shelley's second marriage to Mary and living abroad.

The set and sound effects successfully create the isolation of the couple's seaside existence. The moments when Shelley reads some of his poetry remind us of his genius alongside other poets and his friends Keats and Byron. Shelley's poem *The Mask of Anarchy* is a powerful attack on Lord Sidmouth and the Establishment he represents but doesn't compensate for Shelley's unfulfilled life and tragic death.

RICKY SAVAGE... THE VOICE OF IRRESPONSIBILITY

God only knows

The early 1960s was when the American dream became reality. There was a new, young president in John F Kennedy, wars had been won and teenagers were starting to rule the world. Middle America had survived rock'n'roll, Elvis was in the army and the time was right for something new. And it could only come from one place, California.

This was the land of sun, sand and surf, complete with long hot summers when high school kids could spend their time at the beach, where all the boys were clean-cut and handsome in a parentally approved way and the girls were pretty, blonde and lived in bikinis. This was the time of surfing, cars and Coca Cola. And it had the music to match.

I'm not sure where it started, maybe with Jan and Dean, but I know where it went and that's The Beach Boys. Why? Because Brian Wilson was a genius. Together with his brothers, a cousin and a friend he hit the spot with a series of surf anthems like *Surfer Girl*, *California Girls* and *Surfer USA*, songs that captured a time. They meant as much to American kids as The Beatles did to Brits. They were the sound of an endless summer.

Deaf in one ear and scared of the ocean, Brian was not a surfer boy. Instead, he was the man who wrote the songs, created the harmonies that gave them their sound. For about five years in the mid-60s, California boys and girls had a soundtrack that was 'Fun, Fun, Fun' whether you dreamed of 'Barbara Ann' or not.

The pressure to deliver the next song and the constant touring was something Brian found a bit much. He stopped touring in 1964 when his first round of mental health problems stepped in. He was diagnosed as having schizoaffective disorder and mild bi-polar disorder, so while the band hit the road he stayed at home and created masterpieces.

The masterpiece was *Pet Sounds* and the standout track was *Good Vibrations* with its swirling arrangement and close harmonies that took pop music a step further and left Paul McCartney lost for words. The follow-up LP *Smile* never happened and as the 1970s began, Brian retreated. Maybe this was due to his mental health, maybe it was due to the LSD and cocaine, but the world had moved on and left California behind.

But eventually he came back, clean and together. He spent the first 20 years of this century touring with a band of excellent musicians, recreating the sound that had made him. He even finally got *Smile* finished. In 2004 he played the Legends slot at Glastonbury to a crowd so packed that I guess there were more people there to watch him than the headline acts. Hell, there were even dudes crowd surfing, on surfboards. God only knows where we would have been without him.

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Letters

Don't get scammed

Dear Editor,

I was subject to a very similar incident to that of Valerie Teague ('The day I got caught in a motorcycle crash scam', The Archer, April 2025).

Last year, I was very slowly nosing out of Springcroft Avenue to turn right onto Southern Road when I spotted a delivery-type motorcycle seemingly stationary behind a parked car to my right. As I pulled out, it shot out and hit the front offside of my car.

The young guy, all masked up, 'fell off' and I immediately got out mainly concerned about him and any potential injury. Barely any damage to my old car, his plastic front mudguard slightly damaged. He was okay and I got his first name. I gave my mobile number.

He quickly took pictures, I thought, "What a good idea" so I did too, fortunately. I then, at his suggestion, moved my car to avoid blocking traffic. When I turned around he was riding away.

I immediately contacted my insurers and sent them the pics. I did say that I was a bit suspicious and they said I was right to be so. Subsequently, I got a few calls from some 'agency' investigating the 'accident', wanting to talk to me, to which, every time, I replied "Contact my insurers".

My insurance company said that there is a six-month time limit on making a claim and that they heard nothing, so it went away.

The lessons from all this are: Be aware; Stay calm; Note witnesses; Check for apparent injuries; Take pictures; If in doubt insist on an ambulance or police call; Tell your insurers immediately.

Robin Dunn,
Springcroft Avenue, N2.

Save our trees

Dear Editor,

I have written this poem in response to a question in your full-page article on the proposed Cherry Tree Quarter (The Archer, June 2025) about cutting down the silver birch trees on the site. I am hoping you will find it good enough to publish.

Sally Spiers
Address supplied

The Silver Birches of East Finchley

The day Archie was 'auled up the station roof, arrah poised like Progress to fly dahn the Norfern line, we was nuffin but free gangly tow-'ead striplin's, randy teenagers, root-toes reachin', limbs entanglin'.

Leanin' loose-curl'd afros in towards one anofer, flaun'ed skin-tight silver lame, grew wild in our forgotten corner of the 'igh Road and Cherry Tree, besides the We teach all hearts to break graffiti. Wot?

Did you fink we could not love? True, we was aloof from unwanted attentions of pissing drunks.

We kep' our caresses for pigeons and parakeets,

our comfort for beetles and borers who burrow in our fissures. Our skin's grown papery since, our trunks tattooed and scarred, but still we stand, an affectionate embrace, a magnificent menage-a-trois, whisperin' sweet endearments frough mycelia - now shoutin' urgently, We ain't dead yet, you know.

Assisted dyin'? No two doctors and a judge for us.

It'll be Archie's arrah let loose - a bulldozer

and a new 70-home 'Quar'er' wot breaks our 'earts.

Priced out

Dear Editor,

I just felt that it was worth pointing out that, of the proposed development of flats in Cherry Tree Quarter and Manor Park Road, N2, NONE will be 'affordable'. There doesn't seem much point in building 'luxury' flats if nobody can afford to buy them...

Harriet Connides,
Address supplied

Thieving Lane

Dear Editor,

Thanks for an interesting June edition. Frank Edwards asks where Thieving Lane used to be ('East Finchley A Century Ago', pg 9). Thieving Lane Field is shown as plot 896 on the Finchley tithe award map of 1841, pretty much on the line of The Bishops Avenue. What's in a name, eh?

Alan Ereira
Address Supplied

Editor's note: For more details, search 'Village into Borough' by G R P Lawrence, published online at barnet.gov.uk. The relevant pages are 38-42.

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.

Enter the Fun Palace

The Grange Big Local team is hosting a Fun Palace at Tarling Road Community Centre in East Finchley on Saturday 6 September, marking the official end of the 10-year regeneration project with celebration and community spirit. There will be stalls and plenty of family-friendly activities to take part in for free. To run an activity, perform or help out on the day, contact info@grangebiglocal.org.

A legacy that will keep on giving

By George Outen

The generous legacy of an East Finchley resident of over 70 years is being put to good use in the search to find a new breakthrough in the battle against kidney disease.

Dr Irina Grigorieva from Cardiff University has recently received the Iris Bruton Award of £250,000 in partnership with Kidney Research UK to look at how a type of kidney cell could promote healing and repair to improve kidney function.

Iris Bruton died in 2022 at the amazing age of 106. She and her late husband Cyril moved into Cherry Tree Road, N2, in the 1950s where they remained for the rest of their lives.

Cyril was a local boy and as a child played amongst the foundations of the houses on Cherry Tree Road during their construction. Little did he know then that this would be his future home.

Born in Edmonton, Iris was brought up in the East End where her parents ran a pub. After the Second World War, the family moved to East Finchley to run the off-licence on the corner of the High Road and Leicester Road.

It was then that she met Cyril, who was living on Leicester Road with his mother having returned from serving in the war, which included a significant amount of time spent in a German POW camp.



Medical research funding: Iris Bruton on her 100th birthday

Iris was a keen gardener and her pride and joy were her 'girls', the two enormous hydrangea bushes that bloomed profusely in her front garden which she had cultivated from cuttings.

She lived a full life and had numerous careers including at a tailors on Savile Row, a munitions factory off Brick Lane and a cigarette factory. Cyril was

a postman and together they shared their lives with a number of cats and dogs over the years.

Whilst Iris was fit and healthy throughout her life, Cyril was touched by both heart and kidney conditions. Consequently, it was Iris's wish that her legacy be split between Kidney Research UK and the British Heart Foundation.

Diary of an allotment beginner: Part One... The spot of the plot



Starting out: Nadia had a choice of plots

By Nadia Savvopoulou

Four years ago, after visiting allotments during London's Festival of Architecture and being seduced by the serenity, I put my name on a waiting list for one, a list so long that one risks forgetting having entered it.

I built an imaginary world around my visit, complete with rustic shed and rusty tools and the sound of a rooster I'd last heard in my mother's agricultural village in the Peloponnese. And, having established a good track record of not killing plants in the meantime, the idea of an allotment took root.

So, when I was offered a plot in March at Fuel Land Allot-

ments in East Finchley with a rooster next door, it felt idyllic. But it didn't take long to work out that, when feelings turned to thoughts of working the plot, it was not a viable option for an allotment newbie like me.

Bordered on one side by a stream, the small, uncultivated plot was dominated by a tall and wide bramble patch. With no

rustic shed for rusty tools, and the shared greenhouse and most of the compost heap already commandeered by others, it met neither aesthetic nor practical demands for a beginner like me.

On the advice of more experienced gardeners that the plot would be a challenge even for them, I asked myself "Did I really wait four years only to reject this plot?" Yes... because another opportunity presented itself a split second before I actually conceded that I should not take this plot.

The new plot was in a sunnier spot, bigger, with a compost heap, a rustic shed in a restorable state (with A LOT of work required), and plenty of old rusty tools. Recently cultivated and covered in geotextile and plastic rather than hummocks of grass, this plot offered a more realistic chance of growing something in year one. Oh, and still a rooster next to it!

To cut a long story short, it took me an hour after having visited this new plot to accept it. My neighbours are mostly friendly people who have offered advice and help, and I feel at peace when I am there... much as I imagined. So, lesson one: trust your gut.



A walk along our own waterway



Easy to spot: Painted walls enhance the stream at one point



Charm of its own: The Mutton Brook in Hampstead Garden Suburb

By Steve Ford

A warm sunny afternoon in April inspired me to get out and finally walk the length of the Mutton Brook, something I've been meaning to do for years. Our humble waterway rises in Cherry Tree Wood and joins another stream, the Dollis Brook, around 2.5 miles (4km) later, before that in turn becomes part of the River Brent.

While trying not to get too carried away, I think the brook has a certain charm of its own, despite being constrained by a concrete bed and wooden banks from source to end. What struck me most was the change in character that the brook undergoes

during its short course.

It begins with gushing energy as it exits and enters drains and pipes at the edge of the wood in N2, then becomes a largely unnoticed culvert running behind flats, before emerging as a tranquil urban

stream running under willow trees in Northway Gardens in NW11 and through meadows near Henlys Corner.

The sunlight dappling on the water, waddling ducks and general lack of people on the path on that day made the walk

feel somewhat more rural than one would expect in the heart of north London. The surprising amount of nature in evidence certainly helped.

During the walk, I saw a respectable 10 species of bird, half a dozen types of butterfly,

including the colourful orange tips that are around in spring-time, as well as some lovely bluebells, garlic and damsons, which greatly helped cheer up the banks.

The presence of humans was, of course, also in evidence. There was a frustrating number of sweet and crisp packets strewn on the path, which turned the walk into a bit of a litter picking exercise. Most disturbing of all, I found the remains of a barbecue and beer picnic, complete with paper plates, left on the path, just a few metres from a bin. Needless to say, I cleared it up.

On the flip side, where the brook emerges from a sewer among the undergrowth and water company equipment behind Belvedere Court, off Lyttelton Road, N2, someone at some time has done an admirable job of adding colourful spots of paint. The effect is to make an ordinary pipe look like the potential home of naiads or some other water fairies. At least that's what I thought. While the Mighty Ganges it is certainly not, the Mutton Brook is our local waterway and something we are lucky to have. Go and seek it out.

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