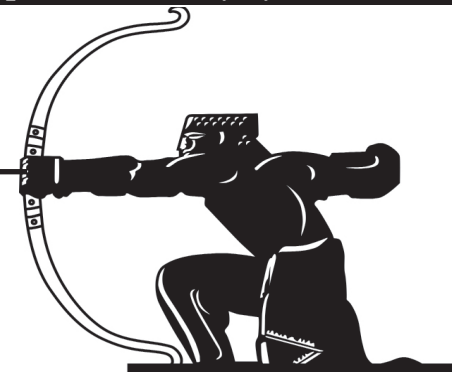


The Archer

Local News is our Aim



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

Family salon fights against 54% rent rise

By Lynn Winton

A long-standing family business in East Finchley is facing an uncertain future after new landlords demanded a rent increase of 54%. Alban Trugu and his wife Eriona, who run The Retreat Hair and Beauty on Fortis Green, have launched an appeal to help them save their livelihood.



Appeal for help: Eriona and Alban Trugu in the salon they have run for 21 years

Hairdresser Alban and beauty therapist Eriona have run the salon for 21 years after taking over the premises from Roger Brown, who opened the original salon Roger of Finchley in the 1980s. They live in the heart of N2 and have brought up their three sons here, now students at The Archer Academy. When Roger, now 85, decided to sell the freehold of the building to raise funds to enhance his senior years, Alban put in an offer. However, Roger was advised to sell to a third party.

Rent review

Shortly after taking ownership, the new landlords, who are also N2 residents, carried out a rent review, resulting in Alban and Eriona's rent soaring by 54%. The couple say this is

impossible for them to afford. Alban told *The Archer*: "My wife and I already work six days a week, and if I just accepted this new rent demand I honestly cannot survive."

I find myself fighting for the future of my family." Alban has instructed a chartered surveyor to represent him, but the dispute has already lasted a year and it is looking likely that it will have to go to arbitration, which he has been advised could cost as much as £20,000, including a £5,000 arbitration fee.

Alban said he has no choice but to fight the rent increase if he wants to keep his business alive, and believes there is a larger principle at stake.

Continued on page 6



Emma lifts for Britain

Weightlifter Emma Whitehead came away from a world championship contest with two surprise wins.

Find out how on page 4

Tell us the news

Have you got a news story or an interesting photo for us? Tell us what is going on in East Finchley by emailing news@the-archer.co.uk or leave a message on our free phone line 0800 612 0748. Thank you.

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

Copy deadlines - October: 12 September, November: 10 October, December: 14 November

BE PART OF IT Volunteers wanted

Compiled by Lynn Winton

Bin There Donate That is a successful local initiative, driven by founder Emma Frampton's passion to create a more sustainable neighbourhood. All types of help are needed for research, liaising with East Finchley shops to take in items for recycling/reusing, web and social media updates and project managing. Whether you have one spare hour a week or much more, email bintheredonatethat@gmail.com for more details.

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 to help children 'get' maths. 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.

Long Lane Pasture nature reserve is a wildlife haven and peaceful green space providing a home for birds, insects, trees and wildflowers opposite the fire station in Long Lane, N3. It is a charity run by volunteers as an urban sanctuary that connects visitors with nature and supports local conservation. They are always looking for volunteers to join them and help maintain the Pasture for two hours on a Saturday morning between 10am and 12 noon so come on down or check them out at longlanepasture.org

Finchley Foodbank is looking for a new kind of volunteer to help people with all things digital e.g. searching the internet, sending emails, or booking appointments. You will signpost people to help with the cost of living, employment, housing etc. The Foodbank team has resources for you to use and will be there to support you! You will need to be available for foodbank sessions on Tuesdays and/or Saturdays at 11.30am-2pm twice a month. To find out more, email finchleyfoodbank@gmail.com

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



Pavement hoppers: Three of the digital advertising screens in the High Road, N2

Battle against arrival of more digital advertising

By David Melsome

East Finchley Town Team, the group of volunteers set up to safeguard and promote the shopping environment in the High Road, N2, says it will continue to fight against the installation of more digital advertising panels.

There are now seven large advertising screens at various locations along the High Road pavement, some with defibrillators attached and some with electric vehicle (EV) charging points. Peter Hale, of the Town Team, said: "We consider that the pedestrian environment should have a higher priority and are striving to keep our pavements clear for the benefit of all. "Although diligent residents, with help from our councillors, have made sure that at least two advertising units have been withdrawn and others moved to a safer location, we now have five Clear Channel digital adverts and two Jolt electric

vehicle charger/advertising units which are all 3m high and 1.2m wide."

The Town Team says it supports the installation of unobtrusive EV charging units embedded into paving stones in residential streets but objects to these large advertising units taking up pavement space.

More to come

Jolt have made another two planning applications for their EV charger/advertising units and BT have now applied to replace two defunct phone boxes with digital advertising units.

Peter said: "I have informed Barnet Council's planning department that the application

for the replacement phone box near the entrance to Cherry Tree Wood is next to the signalled pedestrian crossing so does not comply with council policy. BT omitted to show the crossing on their location plan." But even if that application is turned down, it still leaves the total of digital advertising panels on the High Road possibly rising to ten.

Peter added: "There are many competing obstacles on our pavements – the East Finchley Town Team are endeavouring to work with Barnet Council to improve our high street shopping and business environment, cutting as much clutter as possible."

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

Holy Trinity Church, Church Lane, N2

Mixed species, plum, sycamore and ash; cut back trees overhanging 7 Trinity Avenue, N2 OLX by up to 2-3m. Standing in Area A1 of Tree Preservation Order. Clear 2m over vegetation and sapling trees overhanging 69 Church Lane, N2 OTH. Standing in Area A1 of Tree Preservation Order.

14 Brackenbury Road, N2

Roof extension involving rear dormer window and two front-facing roof lights.

47 Lincoln Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension with roof lights following demolition of the existing extension. Insertion of one roof light to loft. New side window and

changes to fenestration

13 Talbot Avenue, N2

Roof extension involving hip to gable, rear dormer windows with two front-facing roof lights and new side gable window. Changes to fenestration to side and rear elevations. Single storey rear extension with one roof light

Ground-floor flat, 21 New Trinity Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension with five roof lights

17 Cromwell Close, N2

Roof extension involving rear dormer window and front and side-facing conservation roof lights

Land rear of the Bobath Centre, 250 East End Road, N2

Submission of details of condition 10 (Demolition and Construction Management and Logistics Plan) pursuant to planning permission

21/2602/FUL dated 19/12/2022

46 Neale Close, N2

1 x Ash - Reduce crown by 30% (2.5m) to allow more light into all adjacent gardens.

86 Church Lane, N2

Change of use from commercial (Class E) to one self-contained flat (Class C3). Associated refuse/recycling and cycle storage

65 Brackenbury Road, N2

Single storey side/rear infill extension. First floor rear extension. Insertion of two front-facing roof lights. Alteration to roof of existing outrigger from pitched roof to a flat roof (Retrospective)

121 High Road, N2

Demolition of rear steps and landing; single-storey rear extension with roof light to create one self-contained residential unit with associated amenity space



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Readers, rejoice! Bookcase is back at Tube station

By John Lawrence

Five months after the community bookcase was removed from the foyer of East Finchley Tube station under orders from London Fire Brigade, a new version was installed last month and books were being swapped again.



Swap stop: The new metal bookcase is in position at the tube station

The removal of the original wooden bookcase in March caused uproar amongst commuters and readers in N2 and across London where other bookcases were also suddenly scrapped. Transport for London said at the time that they were acting on warnings from the London Fire Brigade that the wooden shelves could be considered a fire hazard, particularly for sub-surface stations. East Finchley, of course, is entirely above ground. Finchley and Golders Green MP Sarah Sackman and London Mayor Sir Sadiq Khan were among those who objected to the removal of the popular book swaps and called for their reinstatement.

The Archer received letters of protest from readers. Many pointed out that piles of Metro newspapers stacked just a couple of metres away from the bookcase should also have been considered a fire hazard.

Lockable metal

Transport for London said

almost immediately that it was working to source new metal versions with lockable front covers, which they said would meet fire regulations. East Finchley was expected to receive its new case in June but it wasn't until the middle of August that it was finally installed, when its shelves were soon stocked with paperbacks and hardbacks again.

The Archer team member Lynn Winton, who established the original bookcase eight years ago, said: "I'm relieved we have a community bookcase in the station again, even if it is a rather unlovely metal one to replace the previous iteration which was solid wood and perfectly complemented the station architecture. But this change was deemed necessary by the powers that be.

"I'm glad we can go back to swapping our books, knowing they are being re-read, re-purposed and re-enjoyed. And there's now a place for me to leave copies of The Archer once again."



Over and out: Members of the N2 Cricket Club say farewell at their final match this summer

Cricket club ups stumps after 43 years in the field

By Nick Young

After 43 years of cricketing in the London area, N2 Cricket Club played its last matches this summer, and finished in style with well-earned victories over two long-term opponents.

N2CC, a Sunday casual side established in 1982 by (among others) members of the local Labour Party and quite possibly the only cricket club to be named after a postcode, has struggled to field a full XI at matches in recent years even after significantly reducing the fixture list.

At their AGM last winter the

cricketers decided to bow out with two final matches against their Mill Hill Village and Old Merchant Taylors.

Both fixtures saw N2CC not only victorious but at full strength as a few old members turned out to help bid the club farewell, with club president Dave Newbery coming on to bowl the first two deliveries of

the last match. Such was the convivial atmosphere, a reunion match next year was suggested.

After a warm afternoon in the field, N2CC were set a target of 151 by the hosts Old Merchant Taylors. As the sun set, our batsmen successfully chased that target down to ensure that the final entry in the scorebook was a win by four wickets.

Scout group appeals for volunteers to help out



Outdoor adventures: The Air Scouts enjoy cooking at camp

A local Scout group is looking for enthusiastic adults to join its volunteer team and help run fun, adventurous sessions for children aged six to ten, including games, crafts, outdoor adventures and community projects.

Derek Chambers, group lead volunteer at 224 North London Air Scouts, based in Sheldon Avenue, N6, says: "As a volunteer, you'll help plan and deliver sessions, support young

people to learn new skills, and be part of a friendly, supportive team. You don't need previous experience – just a sense of fun and a willingness to get involved. "Whether you can give an hour a week, help at events, or lend a hand behind the scenes, your time will make a real difference." Find out more at www.224northlondonscouts.org.uk and contact Derek on 07707 763344 or del@224northlondonscouts.org.uk



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Strongwoman: Emma competing in the World Drug-Free Powerlifting Federation World single lift championships in Rome

Surprise results in sweltering heat

Strongwoman Emma Whiteman recently flew to Rome to take part in the World Drug-Free Powerlifting Federation World single lift championships. Here, the mother-of-two from Chandos Road, N2, recalls the experience and how she came away with more than she bargained for.

The championships were possibly the worst actual conditions I've ever lifted in! It was 38 degrees outside and there was no air-conditioning in the venue, so even hotter inside! I drank maybe eight litres of water both days.

There was a strong GB contingent and we took the award for the country with the most placed athletes over the course of the championships.

I took part in the bench press more for fun. It's something I've really been working on for the last year, and I pressed 80kg for a new personal best,

which was also enough to give me a totally surprise win.

Next day was the deadlift. I have been focussed for two years on going for the world record, which has stood since 2010. As I move out of my age group in November, this was probably my last chance to go for it. I was so focused that, when my coach asked if I wanted to go for the win, it hadn't really occurred to me that I was also competing for a medal. All I wanted was the record!

But I knew the heat would have an impact and I really

wasn't sure I'd even get my first lift in. Then when I did get that I just kept going and it paid off. I broke the world record by 0.5kg and was 185.5kg in the end. A truly unexpected weekend to win both, especially in those conditions.

Be prepared

Training wise, I have a small gym in my back garden and work with an online powerlifting coach. I lift three times a week. Every session involves bench press but only two have deadlifts, as it takes more of a toll on my body! I'm lucky in that I work in cricket, so I can

generally train around matches or, when we're travelling away, I'll always have access to a good gym.

I love competing in strength sports, especially as a woman over 40. The masters lifting community (lifters over the age of 40) is so welcoming, and within the British Drug-Free Powerlifting Federation, is growing every year. It's so wonderful to see.

I head to the European Championships in September and I'd love to try and extend my world record, if I can.

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago: September 2015

Transport for London announced that the ticket office at East Finchley Tube station would close in January 2016, as part of its modernisation programme. Other Northern line ticket offices were scheduled to close before the end of 2015. Regular station staff were to be redeployed elsewhere and passengers would have to rely on ticket machines, online top-ups and contactless payments in future.

15 years ago: September 2010

The Phoenix Cinema reopened after an extensive restoration project, including the building of a new first-floor café area. The project was completed as the cinema approached its centenary. Ten years on in 2025, it has just undergone further building work to provide a second screen space, plus much-needed new seating in the main auditorium.

25 years ago: July 2000

Popular local pub, the Windsor Castle, in The Walks, N2, won the title 'Best Bloomin' Pub in Barnet' for its impressive array of tubs, window boxes and hanging baskets. The then managers, David and Carole Shephard, had won many prizes in local and London-wide competitions during the eight years they had been running the establishment, ably assisted by regular customer and keen gardener Brian Davies.

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School closes shop project and launches new space for community

By Charlotte Charlesworth

East Finchley's Oak Lodge School has announced the closure of The Lodge shop, a project that has been at the heart of the school's community work experience offer since 2020.

The closure comes due to increasing rates, making it no longer viable to continue operating in the current retail parade location in East End Road, N2, just 400 metres from the school in Heath View.

The Lodge began as an aspirational idea to promote employability and provide real-life experiences for students helping them develop skills in social interaction, communication, maths, stock control, organisation, window dressing, and even product creation.

Its success has been a community effort. Support from Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer enabled the school to employ Carol Bellingham as a full-time manager who helped make it a supportive space for students and customers.

Funding from The Hadley Trust, Jesus Hospital Charity, The Finchley Charities, and a

parent who paid for the shopfit, also got the project off the ground. Hearts of Oak charity volunteers worked to ensure students had access to unique experiences and practical learning.

New venture

Oak Lodge School said that while the closure of The Lodge is a sad milestone it is excited to announce that Carol Bellingham will be returning to support the development of a new in-house community space.

This initiative will allow students to continue gaining valuable work experience and employability skills, within the school environment. More details are to be announced.

Oak Lodge School said it wanted to extend its heartfelt thanks to everyone who has supported The Lodge shop over the years.



Saved from landfill: North London Hospice's Emily Cronin with the textile recycling team in Jamestown, Ghana. Photo North London Hospice

Clothes kept out of landfill sites

By David Melsome

North London Hospice's 18 charity shops in Barnet, Enfield and Haringey have joined a project to support the circular fashion economy by working closely with UK and Ghanaian textile traders.

Fast fashion is creating a huge problem for the planet, says the hospice, citing international research showing the world produces 92 million tons of textile waste every year, with 87% of the materials used to make clothing ending up in landfill, the equivalent of one truckload every second. Just 1% of clothes are recycled into new garments.

North London Hospice says its shops already saved 734,000 items from going to landfill last year alone. Now through a partnership with Sait Recycling, clothes that are not suitable for sale but are still recyclable are being sent to Ghanaian traders, establishing full traceability of textiles from UK charity shops to markets across Africa.

Retail transformation manager Emily Cronin said: "North London Hospice will be sending 195 tonnes of clothing and 28 tonnes of shoes to Sait Recycling every year." Through software tracking, the donated textiles will be tracked beyond the shop floor, building a more sustainable and circular supply chain.

Care agency named in top 20

A family-owned, home care agency based in Finchley, has been named among the top 20 providers out of more than 2,000 in London by the independent reviews platform homecare.co.uk.

Established over 30 years ago, Golders Green Nursing supports elderly and vulnerable adults across central and north London, including several in East Finchley. Director of Golders Green Nursing, Giles Moody, who lives in N2, said: "This award means a great deal to us because it's based entirely on feedback from the people who matter most - our clients and their families."

The agency says it builds strong local community connections, not just with health-care providers such as GPs and physiotherapists, but also with local hairdressers, gardeners and others that can provide a trusted service at home for their clients.



Recognition: Care agency director Giles Moody, centre, celebrates their Top 20 listing with colleagues

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Under threat: The Retreat hair and beauty salon in Fortis Green, N2

Continued from Page 1

He said: "If I don't do this, and my rent skyrockets, that's going to affect all my fellow traders in Fortis Green and beyond, as it will set a precedent for their rent reviews."

Crowdfunding appeal

In desperation, Alban and Eriona have launched a crowdfunding campaign to help them cover their arbitration costs. You can find out more by searching for 'Save The Retreat' at gofundme.com. *The Archer* spoke to original owner Roger Brown, who many local people remember with

affection. He told us: "Alban is the best tenant you could ever wish for. We never had a cross word in all those years. There was no need, he kept the salon immaculate, always investing in upgrading the premises, and never a day late with the rent. I wanted to safeguard his living. 'Alban made a formal offer for the full asking price, but I was guided to take this other, lower offer. I feel so sorry about it now that he's in this nightmare situation.'"

The Archer has contacted the new landlords to give them an opportunity to respond but has had no reply.

Age well and stay connected

Age UK Barnet has announced the return of its flagship Silver Sunday event on Sunday 5 October. Now in its 13th year, Silver Sunday is a national day of activities designed to celebrate older people and this year in particular highlights the importance of staying socially connected to tackle loneliness and isolation.

Helen Newman, Chief Executive of Age UK Barnet said: "Last year, over 700 people joined us, making it not only the largest Silver Sunday celebration in the country but also the biggest event for older people in Barnet."

There will be live music and dance performances, a disco, creative workshops, health checks, and advice sessions on topics such as making a will and probate. There will also be a talk on the power of social connections by cognitive neuroscientist Professor Catherine Loveday, plus refreshments and a light lunch.

"Silver Sunday is a wonderful reminder that older people are a vibrant, essential part of our communities," said Helen. "It's about coming together, making new friends, trying something different - and

above all, feeling valued and celebrated."

The event takes place at Middlesex University, The Burroughs, NW4 4BT, on Sunday 5 October from 11am to 3pm. For more information contact Salima Jiwa at Age UK Barnet on salima.jiwa@ageukbarnet.org.uk or call her on 07503 353157.

Find a London walking route

Transport for London has published a series of walking maps that show the times and distances between stations for anyone travelling on foot. Shops, amenities and major attractions are also shown. The downloadable maps are available at tfl.gov.uk/modes/walking/



Handmade: The stunning Lancaster bomber model was created by Linda's father Edmund, right

An heirloom from the troubled days of war

With VJ Day last month and Battle of Britain Memorial Day this month, many memories of the Second World War are being unearthed. One special memento was handed down to Linda Dolata, of Leopold Road, N2, as Diana Cormack reports.

When the Second World War ended in 1945, thousands of military personnel who had come to Britain to join our troops were able to return to their homelands to take up their lives again. Not so for those from Poland, where the Russians had imposed Communist rule, causing many brave Polish citizens to stay where they were.

One of these was Edmund Dolata, from Gniezno, North West Poland, who, at the age of 24 had found his way to England as part of the Polish Air Force. En route he had escaped from internment on the Romanian border, then managed to make his way to Malta from where he reached Marseille.

After serving with the French Air Force he came to England in 1939 to join the Polish Free Forces. He trained as ground crew with Polish Bomber Squadron 300 based in Lincolnshire, supporting the Halifax, Wellington and Lancaster aeroplanes.

Demobbed in 1946, he found engineering work with British Rail. Some three years later he met and married Eileen, an Irish nurse and they set up home in Highgate, the house deposit coming from money

he made selling homemade Christmas cards to Lincolnshire farms in the late 1940s.

Next generation

They spent their old age in Heath View Close, East Finchley. This was not far from their daughter Linda, who is now about to pass on an heirloom from her father to the next generation.

Whilst the bombers they maintained were on missions, some airmen occupied themselves making models from the cockpit Perspex of crashed aircraft. Edmund meticulously made an exquisite model Lancaster, which Linda believes to be unique.

Prior to handing it down to younger family members, Linda had some damage carefully repaired by Talbot Designs Ltd on Long Lane, N3, so the 80-year-old model looks as

good as ever.

Coincidentally, for this year's VE Day celebrations, I brought out a Perspex copy of the RAF badge which my father presented to my WAAF mother before they married during the war.

Linda Dolata also told *The Archer*: "When on the run my father stole a hat from a shop in Romania because he was conspicuous without one. He felt guilty all his life. My boyfriend Kevin is presently cycling and camping for months in rural Romania and has donated a decent sum of money from me to a poor village church to cover the cost of the theft."

Do you have any wartime mementos of your own. Please let The Archer by emailing news@the-archer.co.uk or leaving a message on our free phone line 0800 612 0748.

Power on for a new term at friendly computer club

Term is about to start again at the Five Bells Computer Club, providing free and friendly help with smartphones, laptops and tablets thanks to further funding from the National Lottery Community Fund. One-to-one drop-in sessions start at the Five Bells Pub on East End Road, N2, on Tuesday 16 September between 2pm and 4pm. There will also be

classroom-style digital skills workshops at the East Finchley Constitutional Club, The Walks, N2, on Thursday mornings from 10am to 12.30pm. The workshops are free to participants, but booking is essential as numbers are limited. For information and bookings, email: fivebells.computerclub@gmail.com

Car boot sale date

The monthly Muswell Hill Indoor Car Boot Sale takes place on Saturday 27 September from 10am to 1pm at Hornsey Parish Church Hall, on the corner of Cranley Gardens and Park Road, N10 3AH. Buses W7, W3 and 144 stop nearby. Admission is 50p and refreshments are available. For information, call 020 8368 8180.



Seniors walk in road to avoid trip hazards

By John Lawrence

People aged in their 70s, 80s and 90s are calling for action after being forced to walk in the middle of the road to avoid dangerous trip hazards on the pavements.



Watch your step: A mountainous tree root is just one of the pavement obstacles in Sylvester Road. Photo Annette Morris

Residents of The Finchley Charities homes in Wilmot Close, N2, have been campaigning for two years for repair work to be carried out on the walkways in nearby Sylvester Road. For most of them, this is their main route to the nearest shops in the High Road and to the 263 bus route. But severe cracks and mounds caused by tree roots, along with loose and uneven paving slabs, mean there are several spots on both sides of the road that are impassable for anyone less steady on their feet or with a bulky walking frame. Annette Morris, who has been leading the campaign, says this means many of her neighbours would rather walk out into the road, between the two sides of closely parked cars, rather than risk falling over an obstacle. Annette said: "The pavement is generally in a shocking condition and it's getting worse all the time. There are paving stones that actually rock when you walk on them, and large mounds of tree roots that you are forced to climb over. Even for those who are sure-footed it

is a difficult road to walk down."

Pavement petition

Annette originally reported the pavements to Barnet Council and submitted a petition signed by fellow residents in 2023. At the time, she received the backing of Cllr Danny Rich, who is a trustee at The Finchley Charities. Cllr Rich is now Mayor of Barnet and is continuing to support the residents in their call for repair work to be carried out.

"We've done as much as we can and taken it through all the right channels but still nothing has been done," said Annette. "We all worry that someone will suffer a serious injury down Sylvester Road before the council takes notice."

A Barnet Council spokesperson told The Archer that the council was investing a record £97m to fix Barnet's roads and pavements. He added: "We will inspect Sylvester Road and ensure that damage that meets the council level for repair will be fixed and are working to develop a solution for raised tree roots."

Date set for murder trial

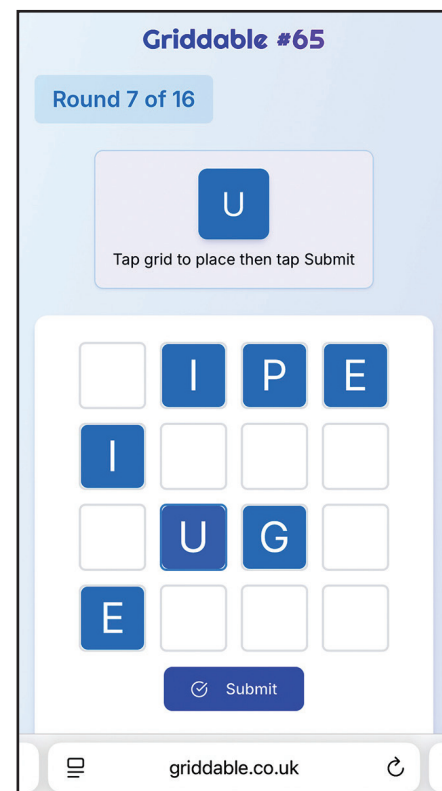
A trial date has been set for the two men charged with the murder of Anthony Littler close to East Finchley tube station in 1984.

Anthony Stewart, 59, of Old Farm Road, N2, and Michael Stewart, 55, of Station Road,

New Barnet, EN5, will stand trial at the Old Bailey on Thursday 16 April next year. Customs and Excise executive Anthony Littler, 45, was found with serious head injuries on a path leading from the station to East End Road at around 12.15am on 1 May 1984. He died at the scene.



Puzzlers: Matt Robinson and Stuart Miller are hoping their daily word challenge game will take off



Game on: Players use a 4 x 4 grid to form as many words as possible

Move over, Wordle, there's a new word game in town!

By John Lawrence

A word game invented for the digital age by two East Finchley men could be the next smash hit daily challenge to rank alongside global favourites like Scrabble and Wordle.

Brothers-in-law Stuart Miller and Matt Robinson have created Griddable, where players can compete with a friend or against the computer to fill a grid with as many four-letter words as possible.

Sounds easy? Well, not quite, because players take turns choosing letters for the grid, meaning you have to play with the letters you're given... and they may not fit the words you were planning.

Having tried it for myself, I can say it is fun, frustrating and addictive in all the right ways, and it's a great four or five-minute diversion whenever you're on your phone or laptop. It's free to play and no app is required.

Origins of the game

Stuart, who works in financial services and lives in Ashburnham Close, N2, said: "The origin of the game is that my dad used to play this back in the 1950s with a pencil and paper against friends. He then played with us growing up and I challenged Matt on a holiday in Spain about three years ago to a game. We thought it would translate really well to an online version. Matt, who works in the tech

sector and lives in Oakview Gardens, N2, said: "Neither of us are coders so we didn't know how to start developing it, but I was able to use AI platforms to do it for us. After a lot of tweaking and troubleshooting, we created a final version. "What we wanted was something simple, easy to use with no barriers and no log in. If

people like it and share it, even better. It seems really popular with friends and family and the leaderboards have taken off." The pair are waiting to see if Griddable takes off and may then create a physical version of the game that could be a great stocking filler at Christmas. Try it for yourself at griddable.co.uk



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Twice as tall as us!



Sky high: Ernie and Rufus beneath the sunflowers

Brothers Ernie and Rufus enjoyed watching the spectacular bed of sunflowers on Church Lane, N2, grow high above their heads on their way to nursery over the summer. The bed is watered and cared for by volunteers, who will next

be planting bulbs for the spring and tidying up a large area of vegetation on the corner of The Walks. To find out more about the community garden project or to get involved email Mary and Judith at churchlanegardens@gmail.com.



Growth potential: Youngsters plant small saplings to create three Tiny Forests Photos Earthwatch Europe

This is how a forest starts

Children from four schools helped to plant three new 'Tiny Forests' along the route of the Mutton Brook, which flows from East Finchley to Hendon. Each tennis court-sized plot holds around 600 native trees, creating vibrant pockets of biodiversity in urban surroundings, in this case alongside the North Circular Road.

They join an existing Tiny Forest and a wildflower meadow already in place to form a green corridor that is designed to improve air

quality and attract wildlife. Children from Brookland Infant and Junior, Kerem Primary, Henrietta Barnett and Moss Hall Nursery all took part in the tree planting, supported by adult volunteers and GoodGym Barnet, whose community action runs will

take them back to the growing woodlands for future watering and maintenance sessions. The Tiny Forests project is organised by Earthwatch Europe, Barnet Council and local tech firm Pure Data Centres.

Did you know?

The Archer is printed each month on paper made from 100% recycled fibre, mostly retrieved from old newspapers collected by local authorities around the country. It is made here in the UK in King's Lynn in Norfolk, some 50km from our printers Sharman and Co in Peterborough.

Sweet success for Luna's lemonade



Lip-smacking: Luna advertises her summer lemonade sale in aid of Finchley Foodbank

By Luna, aged seven

In August I decided to sell home-made lemonade to my neighbours on Hertford Road. I juiced 12 lemons with my mum. I really enjoyed making the drinks to give out, meeting

new people, and chatting to everyone about their holidays. Thanks to the generosity of my neighbours, I raised £45. All money raised went to Finchley Foodbank. Find out more about them at www.finchleyfoodbank.org.uk



All ears: Kate Brown leads the storytelling in the nature circle in Cherry Tree Wood

Butterflies in the storytelling circle

By Diana Cormack

At the end of July, the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood organised another storytelling session for eight-year-olds and under. Set in the Children's Nature Circle next to the playground in the park, the topic was 'Five Butterflies of Cherry Tree Wood'.

Through her story, Kate Brown skilfully introduced the Brimstone, Holly Blue, Orange Tip, Peacock and White butterflies to the appreciative young audience and their accompany-

ing adults.

The children's contributions and interaction increased when *The Big Hungry Caterpillar* book appeared, with the read-

through causing many comments and suggestions from the youngsters. Amazingly, one nine-month-old in their buggy was particularly enthusiastic.



Natural paradise: The community lawn at the mansion block off Aylmer Road before, left, and after it was allowed to develop into a more nature-friendly meadow. Photos Deborah Greenfield

Tightly mown lawn turned into meadow

By Deborah Greenfield

Until early this year, the communal lawn at a large block of flats in Aylmer Road, N2, was kept pristine and closely cropped, a green carpet mown twice a month for neatness, but at the expense of wildflowers, bees, and butterflies. A tidy but lifeless patch of green.

This changed when a director on the block's board proposed a partial meadow idea. Instead of a featureless lawn, why not bring a slice of wild countryside into the city, encouraging new blooms and wildlife? The response was overwhelmingly positive, with

most residents voting in favour and only three opposed.

The block's regular gardeners welcomed the experiment, eager to foster more biodiversity. They even agreed to a lower annual fee to reflect the reduced mowing. Rather than spending thousands clearing grass and

planting new wildflowers, the team took a gentler and much more affordable approach, mapping out meadow zones and simply leaving them unmown.

Just a few months later, the transformation was striking. Once bare grass is now home to the gentle sway of yarrow,

knapweed, clover attracting honeybees, and bird's foot trefoil drawing delicate blue and white butterflies. Residents even seeded some poppies, with hopes they will multiply along with new wildflowers next spring.

The plan is simple: let eve-

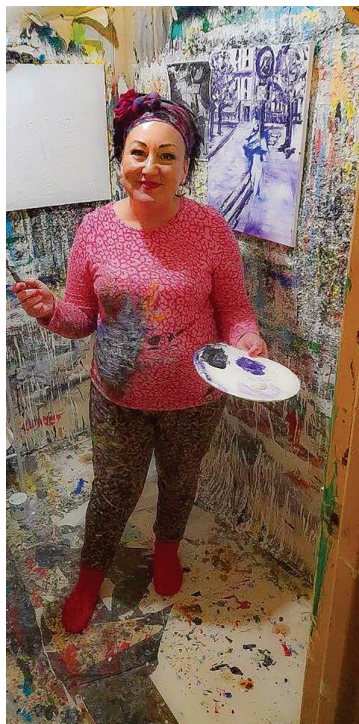
rything bloom and seed, then cut down the meadow areas in early September. Next year they should be even more beautiful, literally buzzing with life. The community is sharing this story in hopes of inspiring other blocks with communal gardens to give something similar a try.

Artists inspired by life

Art works by two local artists are on show and for sale at the Old Marine Arts Group tattoo and art studio in Colney Hatch Lane, N10, throughout September.

Theresa Monagle grew up on a council estate in Muswell Hill and has been painting since she was a teenager. She prefers to work with thick paint that she applies and sculpts onto the canvas using a palette knife. Theresa says: "Painting has become very much a therapy for my mental health. My paintings are inspired by life itself."

Meanwhile, Nigel Chaloner started drawing during



Life as art: Artist Theresa Monagle

the Covid lockdown and says: "My work tends to focus on real people, real situations and the odd existential crisis." He is now a filmmaker in Brighton.



Real people: Nigel Chaloner with some of his pieces

Sounds of the summer

Residents, trustees and special guests enjoyed The Finchley Charities summer party at the charity's Homefield Gardens site in East Finchley. Mayor of Barnet, Cllr Danny Rich, was the guest of honour and there was music from the band Interfunk.



Sun and smiles: Barnet Mayor Cllr Danny Rich, right, with other guests at The Finchley Charities

The Finchley Charities is the largest almshouse charity housing provider in Barnet and dates way back to 1488. It provides 174 homes across their three sites, accommodating men, women and couples aged 55 and over from a diverse range of ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Each of its schemes has its

own Community Hall where residents enjoy activities and events, from art classes to bingo, quizzes to bridge club, craft clubs and regular coffee

mornings. Residents are also encouraged to take up volunteering opportunities in the wider community.

RICKY SAVAGE... THE VOICE OF IRRESPONSIBILITY

Wrong hot summer

In the weird world of weather, this summer hit the jackpot. The rain gods decided to go elsewhere so Glastonbury was a sun-fest not a full-on mud-wallow and there wasn't a complete washout test match, which just isn't British. The only bit of proper sporting weather was a wet British Grand Prix. What we had most of the time was hot, hot and hotter.

At times like this, man's best friend doesn't want to go walkies. Instead the Crufts failure wants to lie listlessly in the shade whining quietly. Meanwhile, the family apex predator is equally annoyed and is avoiding hot tin roofs while it concentrates on its Snap-cat account.

But it was the perfect weather for a barbie, that annual horror show that scares the neighbours. Bright sun always brings out the worst in *homo stupido* as he dives into his wardrobe and emerges in his cooking shorts. Last time he destroyed the garden shed, next door's fence and an apple tree. And every year the result is a bin liner full of undercooked chicken for the local foxes.

Now I'm fed up with the heatwaves. If I'd wanted wall-to-wall sun, bright blue skies and sunburn, I'd have headed for the Costa Del Living for the full-on Spanish lager experience, but I didn't. I wanted a proper British summer. You know, warm, wet and full of dive-bombing seagulls.

It usually starts with two days of sunshine in late April before horizontal drizzles sets in for May. It means taking an umbrella and an extra jumper and avoiding anywhere that offers an al fresco dining experience with added wasps. And rain for the first week of Wimbledon at least. As my grandmother used to say, if God had wanted us to have long, hot tropical summers in Britain, he'd never have given us Blackpool or Butlins.



Small screens down for big screen hit



Screen addiction: *Super Connected* is a multi-media experience

Singer-songwriter and filmmaker Tim Arnold is returning to his roots this September with a special one-night-only event at the Phoenix Cinema in East Finchley.

A former pupil of Tet-herdown Primary School in Muswell Hill, he moved back to the area 10 years ago and is now showing his nationally acclaimed masterpiece *Super Connected*, about our enslavement to Big Tech, which was shot in and around N2 and N10.

It promises to be a powerful film drama presented as a live experience, with Arnold performing his full album of the same name in sync with the movie. Through 12 interlocking songs, he wrote and directed the film, shaping each scene as a visual expression of the songs.

Described by *MOJO* magazine as "a lush and dramatic piece on our enslavement to Big Tech" with special effects by Valerie Charlton (model maker for *Monty Python and Brazil*), the film also includes a vocal cameo by Stephen Fry. On the night, live sound will be mixed in the cinema by Radiohead's live producer Jim Warren.

After the screening on Friday 26 September, the audience is invited to stay for a 'Screenless Social', an informal, tech-free gathering with cast and crew. Book at phoenixcinema.co.uk

Dictator drama

A new play opening this month in Highgate imagines north London after a future general election won by a new leader who may or may not be a dictator.

Make Britain Great Again, written by Francis Beckett, asks how people and institutions would react to an authoritarian leader who does not like having his views being questioned. It plays Upstairs at the Gatehouse in Highgate Village from

30 September to 5 October, and again from 14 to 19 October, Tuesday to Saturday at 7.30pm, and Sunday at 4pm. Tickets from www.upstairsatthegatehouse.com, phone 020 8340 3488, or in person at the box office.

Review: Bed

Upstairs at the Gatehouse, Highgate

By Jessica Holt

Set entirely on a bed, this playful and poignant solo show invites audiences into the vivid imagination of a boy who has stepped back from the outside world.

Ben Donaghy plays the once-hopeful teenager who now escapes into fantasy: performing stand-up for imaginary crowds, travelling the globe in his mind, and dreaming of a boyfriend who never leaves. The bed becomes his world: a space of comfort, danger, invention, reflection and performance. Blending comedy, movement and heartfelt storytelling, Blending comedy,

movement and heartfelt storytelling, *BED* explores the messiness of identity,



Between the sheets: Ben Donaghy in *Bed*

BED explores the messiness of identity, the fear of intimacy, and the quiet ache of wanting to be understood.

Following performances at Camden and Durham Fringe, *BED* headed to the Edinburgh Festival last month, after being named a Best Newcomer finalist at the North East Culture Awards 2024.



Classics with a modern twist: The OperaUpClose company are coming to the Artsdepot

Opera up close and personal

National touring company OperaUpClose return to Artsdepot in North Finchley this month with a concoction of classics by Puccini, Mozart and Verdi in English translations and with a contemporary twist.

OperaCocktail tells the story of five friends trying to make sense of life and love, and includes much-loved favourites like *Habanera* from

Carmen and Verdi's *Drinking Song* from *La Traviata*. There will be an evening performance on Saturday 13 September and a matinee the same

day, which will be preceded by a chance for the audience to meet the cast. Book tickets at www.artsdepot.co.uk or call the box office on 020 8369 5454.

A night of tribute and voices



Ready to recite: The audience enjoying a reading at the N2 Poetry launch

By Shereen Abdallah

N2 Poetry magazine has reached its 11th edition and this latest was dedicated to the memory of Daphne Chamberlain, a committed member of the magazine's board and also a member of *The Archer* newspaper team for more than 30 years.

It was launched on Sunday 27 July at Pond Square Chapel, Highgate, with an audience of poets and poetry lovers welcomed by founder and local poet Dennis Evans, who began the event with a recitation of Daphne's poem 'Poetry'.

Other poems covered a wide range of subjects from riding

the subway, owning a dog, to clowns in the Old French Quarter. The launch concluded with Steph Bramwell, the publisher of *N2 Poetry*, reciting 'Summer Haiku' by Ruby Joseph, a much-loved writer who sadly East Finchley lost this summer.

Poets also confronted the bloodshed in the Middle East, and in doing so allowed the

evening to provide a rare gift; a space where people from different races and faiths, (or none) could listen and bear witness without judgement, even to voices that challenged their own opinions and beliefs.

To submit a maximum of four poems for N2 Poetry Issue 12, e-mail n2poetry@outlook.com



Letters

Signs of trouble
Dear Editor,

Walking around recently I have seen road signs like this several times.



But what exactly does it mean? My fairly logical mind says that the road ahead of me is closed and that there is a diversion to the right. That seems to make sense so I'll head right . . .

Except that what it actually is trying to say is that the road to the right is closed and I should keep going ahead.

And if I take a diversion then I might encounter this sign:



Which clearly means that if I have been diverted then I should drive on through Iceland . . .

Don't believe everything you see in this day and age.

Bob Janes
Address supplied

Editor's note: And thanks to reader Jon Stratton who sent us this photo of tangled signs at the end of Leicester Road. Someone had clearly twisted them round, making it impossible for road users coming off the High Road to read either.

**Keen drummer**
Dear Editor,

I would like to ask all *The Archer* readers if they are in a band or know of anyone who is in a band that needs a drummer.

I am based in East Finchley and love playing all styles of music, preferably a mix of 50s Rock and Roll and Rockabilly, 60s Pop, 70s Glam and Punk, to more current material.

Along with focusing on the

drums, I also play harmonica and dulcimer. I can also provide good backing vocals and songwriting.

If your band is interested in doing original material, I have many original songs that I have written for previous bands I have been in. The band names were Husk, Swill Love Gods and Sound of the Suburb.

Please note that I am always available, since I am retired and have plenty of free time. I am really looking forward to hearing from anyone who needs a drummer. Many thanks and keep on rocking.

Chris Berlingieri
Address supplied

Editor's note: Contact Chris via our email address news@the-archer.co.uk

Volunteers come forward
Dear Editor,

Thanks to Long Lane Pasture featuring in the 'Be Part of It' column in the wonderful *Archer*, three new volunteers arrived at the pasture to help out alongside the team we already have. The new arrivals will be a great help in our work maintaining the nature reserve and others are always welcome to join us from 10am to 12pm every Saturday morning.

Maureen Delandro
Address supplied

Editor's note: Find our Be Part of It column on page 2 every month. Community organisations and charities can send appeals for volunteers (maximum 80 words) to news@the-archer.co.uk. Find out more about Long Lane Pasture at longlanepasture.org

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.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS
LOCAL POLICE, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE**How to report a crime**

- Call **999** in an emergency when there is a danger to life or a crime is in progress
- Call **101** for non-emergencies, if your property has been stolen or damaged, you wish to report drug dealing or a minor traffic accident, and for general police enquiries

- Report crime to your local Safer Neighbourhood Team by email: eastfinchley.snt@met.police.uk gardensuburb.snt@met.police.uk or fortisgreen.snt@met.police.uk

Find full details for the local SNTs at www.iloven2.co.uk/local-government-and-policing

- Stay anonymous and report information to Crimestoppers on **0800 555111**

Beat boredom with this classic family card game

Archer readers Isabella, 13, and Rafael, nine, have a favourite card game to share that's great to play with a friend or a group of up to five people. Egyptian Ratscrew is a modern version of the game some might already know as Beat Jack Out of Doors or Beggar My Neighbour.

Isabella and Rafael say: "Whilst on our holiday visiting family in America, our cousins and I were looking for a game to play which would entertain all of us as we are all different ages. We tried Monopoly but the youngest obviously found it tedious so my elder cousin suggested playing E.R.S which, after getting the hang of it, we found it to be fun for all of us. Even the adults wanted to play."

The aim is to get the whole deck. Be speedy and attentive. Character flipping: Ace - 4, King - 3, Queen - 2, Jack - 1

Rules

Distribute a pack of playing cards faced downwards amongst the players.

Players take turns flipping their top card face up, creating a central pile.

If a player flips a character card (Jack, Queen, King or Ace) the next player must flip a certain amount of cards, as above. If no character cards



Don't miss a trick: Isabel and Rafael's family in the thick of a game of ERS

turn up, the first player gets to keep the pile

However, if the second player does flip a character card, the next player must then follow the same character flipping rules, and so on round the circle. Once no character card shows up, the preceding player gets to keep the pile.

Players should pay attention at all times. If they see any player flip two cards of the same value then they can slap the deck

and get to keep the pile.

The game repeats until someone acquires a full deck.

And no cheating, because if you slap the pile when you shouldn't have, you must place one card at the bottom of the pile as a penalty. Plus you always have to keep your hand on your lap, otherwise it is called hovering. If you hover, you have to put one of your cards at the bottom of the pile.

Have fun!

Open morning for U3A

North London U3A is again running its annual open morning to showcase its regular year-round activities. Member Mike Lewin says: "The open morning is our opportunity to promote what we have to offer to retired and semi-retired members of the public from Finchley, Highgate and Muswell Hill, or further afield."

"Our members have been telling us that as well as interest group activities, which range from subjects like literature and languages to more energetic activities, such as yoga and walks, they also enjoy purely social events."

The open morning will take place on Monday 15 September from 10am to 11.30 am at St Margaret's Church, Victoria Avenue, Finchley, London N3. You can find out more information on the NLU3A website: www.nlu3a.org.uk

Double discus delight for schoolgirl Elkie



Discus champion: Elkie Baker

Fortismere School student and East Finchley resident Elkie Baker won both the English Schools Championships and the National Under-17 Women's Discus titles this summer at the Alexander Stadium in Birmingham.

Elkie, 16, is a member of London Heathside Athletics Club, based in Finsbury Park, and also represented English Schools in the SIAB International meeting against Ireland, Wales and Scotland.



Behind the scenes in the sorting room

By Lauren Fleishman

This is the scene in the sorting room at the Mind charity shop in the High Road, N2. Shop manager Tash Clarke, describes it as the place “where the magic happens”.

“We aim to sort through around 100 bags a week,” says Tash. “Anything from clothes and accessories to all kinds of bric-a-brac. We also get some lovely designer clothing and accessories. We have a new vintage rail, and they are a great talking point. “Our volunteers are really at the heart of what we do. Without their help, we could not function as a shop. Just yesterday, a lady came in who I know has had a very difficult time over the past few years. She just came in for a chat, and we ended up chatting for probably half an hour, which resulted in her decision that she would like to volunteer. “Another woman came in after her partner had passed away. She was emotionally attached to his belongings, but she trusted us to take care of them and price them appropriately.



Backroom bargains: Tash Clarke among the dozens of donations in the Mind charity shop. Photo Lauren Fleishman

That trust means everything.” Tash is mental health first-aid trained and, although she hasn’t had the funds to pursue

counselling as a career, she’s found that managing the shop allows her to support people in a way that’s very community-based. There is a local branch

of Mind in Edmonton where people can access free counselling and employment support. Tash adds: “I want this shop to be a place where people can

come in not just to browse our lovely second-hand wares, but also to have a chat. I want it to be a safe space, somewhere that’s not just about shopping.”

Gold stars for the kids... but some of our bricks are missing

By Frank Edwards

This is some of the news from East Finchley, 100 years ago, as revealed in newspaper archives.

So, summer is ending. That time of year when schools are out and children are about, having fun, or being irritating, depending on your point of view. In 1925 the perspective of the Finchley Press was surprisingly positive. Children are better behaved, it announced, noting a fall in offences committed during the holiday period.

Mischiefous pursuits such as apple stealing, incessant knocking on doors and joy riding on the tail-boards of carts had largely disappeared. Celebrating this change, the paper put it down to good parenting, improved teaching and the availability of play centres.

Plank pranks

Some children still went off script. A constable spotted teenagers Reginald Mills and Frederick Prowse, of Leslie Road, N2, carrying a 9ft long plank, value 2s/6d, along the road. The boys were charged with theft and appeared in court along with the plank. It’s okay, they said. They had been using

the plank as a see-saw and were taking it back to where they found it. The magistrates accepted Reg and Fred’s explanation and let them off with a warning.

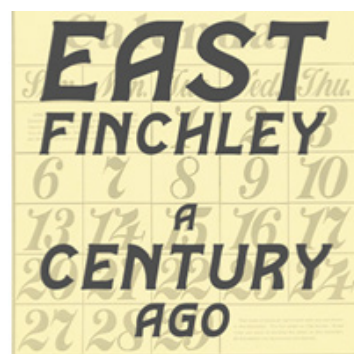
Nicked bricks

If children were usually better behaved, this did not always apply to adults. In June 1925, three horse and cart deliverymen stole 1,000 bricks from a depot at East Finchley station. The bricks were destined for the development of the Summerlee Estate, then in progress, but found their way instead to the premises of a local builder in East End Road, N2.

When apprehended, the brick-lifters readily confessed to the theft. In return for their cooperation, they received fines rather than imprisonment.

And finally...

The Hendon and Finchley Times was super excited about a new mansion halfway down The Bishops Avenue, with white stone walls and a green tiled roof. The paper was par-



ticularly taken by a rumour that the developer and future occupier was none other than Steve Donoghue.

Steve who? Steve Donoghue, champion jockey, victorious in the 1925 Derby and one of the most renowned sporting celebrities of his day. Think David Beckham but on a horse. What a lift Steve will give the area, enthused the paper, it will become as famous as Golders Green.

Sadly, East Finchley did not get to rival Golders Green. There is no evidence Steve unsaddled in The Bishops Avenue. Indeed in 1925, although still winning races, he was already facing financial difficulties which, a few years later, left him bankrupt with assets of less than £600.

Finchley in wartime

London Blue Badge and City of London Green Badge tourist guide Mark King will be leading a walk on Sunday 7 September to commemorate the First Battle of the Marne in 1914.

The gentle two-hour walk will see sights and hear stories about the local men and women who volunteered or were recruited to serve, as well as learning about life on the home front. It starts at Henly’s Corner and ends in Finchley Central. Book at www.eventbrite.co.uk by searching ‘Finchley Goes to War’.

Looking for volunteers?

Are you looking for volunteers to help in your community group or organisation? Our Be Part of It column is published on page 2 every month and gets results. Submissions are

free and are included subject to available space. Please submit your listing up to a maximum of 80 words to news@the-archer.co.uk, marking your email ‘Be Part of It’.

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