



Every step tells a story in Big Fun Walk's 30th year

By David Melsome

The annual Big Fun Walk in aid of North London Hospice reaches its 30th anniversary in May and the charity is celebrating with discounted tickets and a special theme.

It was 1996 when the first group of participants set out on the beautiful nine-mile route from Cherry Tree Wood in East Finchley to Westminster, passing through Highgate Wood, Hampstead Heath, Primrose Hill, Regents Park, Hyde Park and St James's Park along the way.

This year's walk takes place on Sunday 10 May and there are discounted ticket prices for anyone signing up by 15 February. The theme will be 'Every Step Holds a Story', to keep alive the memories and stories

of those people we have loved. Walkers are encouraged to dress up for the occasion if they wish. "From beloved fairytale heroes to timeless adventurers, let your outfit reflect the tales that



The Big Fun Walk is a massive fundraiser for North London Hospice. Photo North London Hospice

inspire you," say organisers.

Louise Cohen, senior events and community officer at North London Hospice, said: "Join us for the 30th anniversary of our Big Fun Walk on 10 May. Along the way you can expect stunning views, inspiring company, and a finish line filled with music, celebration and moments that will stay with you.

"When you collect your medal, you'll know you've done something that truly matters for yourself, for those whose stories you hold in your heart and for your community too." To find out more and sign up, visit <https://northlondonhospice.org>

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago:
February 2016

Long-time East Finchley residents may well remember local milkman Keith Wallace, who retired at the end of 2015. Keith started his delivery round in our area during the bitter winter of 1984, serving the community for over 30 years. Loyal customers thanked Keith for his many years of service with a farewell party at the Clissold Arms in Fortis Green.

15 years ago:
February 2011

Also at the Clissold Arms, we reported that Kinks leader and songwriter Ray Davies and drummer Mick Avory made a return trip to the pub where Ray started out with his brother Dave, to celebrate the naming of the Kinks Room. Among items now on display are a signed copy of the group's first single, a cover of Little Richard's Long Tall Sally, a guitar and many photographs. The Davies family lived at 6 Denmark Terrace, across the road from the Clissold Arms

25 years ago:
February 2001

Local residents were becoming increasingly concerned about the growing number of housing developments planned for East Finchley. According to local MP, RudiVis, East Finchley was already the most densely populated ward in the whole of Barnet. Despite this, the three proposals we highlighted, the McCarthy and Stone retirement flats between Bedford and Hertford Roads, the block of flats behind Budgens and the one between Park and Leslie Roads were all passed and built in subsequent years.



Before and after: Amara Yates holds the hair she donated to children who have lost their own

Amara gives away her proudest possession

By Lynn Winton

Amara Yates is only six years old but has already made a great start as a successful charity fundraiser. As well as donating her hair to make a wig for a child suffering hair loss due to cancer treatment, she has raised more than £1,400 for The Little Princess Trust.

The charity provides around 2,000 real-hair wigs free of charge every year to children who have lost their own hair due to cancer treatment and other conditions.

Amara's mother Farrah Jameel told The Archer: "It all began a couple of years ago, when Amara was still a toddler at Monkey Puzzle Nursery. She knew another little girl who was undergoing cancer treatment and she asked an innocent question about this little girl's hair. "We discussed it and I explained what had happened. Over time

we returned to that chat and she decided she would give her very long hair away, and the charity is one I was aware of through my work as a GP.

"Amara adores Rapunzel and loved her long hair. Letting it go felt big and emotional. But she also remembered the other little girl her age who lost her hair. After many conversations, stories, and hugs, Amara decided she could turn something could turn something she loved into something that might help another child feel brave again."

If you would like to help boost Amara's efforts, please use the QR code below to go straight to the donation page or go to [justgiving.com](https://www.justgiving.com) and search for 'Amara Little Princess'.



Water place for a leak to appear

By Cobi Jacobs

Thames Water has faced ongoing national scrutiny over sewage discharges into public bodies of water across the country. Closer to home, however, residents say the company has caused problems of a different nature.

Over the past two or so years, locals report that a persistent leak outside the Fortis Green pumping station has left water streaming across the pavement, causing a build-up of leaves and debris.

While not as severe as the sewage problems seen elsewhere, the problem has posed a very real risk for those navigating the pavement. One parent told the paper that their child has fallen several times while trying to scooter through the slippery mix of water and leaves.

During the winter months, this leak becomes an even greater hazard, as the water freezes into a thin sheet of ice. Compounding the danger is the fact that the leak sits directly opposite two schools, Tetherdown Primary School and Treehouse School for Autism, meaning that children frequently encounter it.



Water hazard: The leak outside the Thames Water station in Woodside Avenue

Fortunately, as we went to press, the situation had seemingly improved. The pavement has largely dried, and blue barriers erected inside the pumping station grounds suggest recent repair work. To Thames Water's

credit, a warning cone had been placed at the site while the leak was active.

Even with the apparent fix, many residents may wish to remain cautious when in the vicinity of the affected spot... just in case the leak returns.

Pop-up café

Older residents in East Finchley have a new place to meet, chat and unwind thanks to a monthly pop-up drop-in café launched by Age UK Barnet. The next dates are Saturday 28 February and Saturday 28 March from 10.30am to 12 noon.

The relaxed and friendly sessions are open to anyone over 55 and offers free fresh pastries, coffee and tea, along with games, a warm welcome and plenty of good company. There's no need to book. People are encouraged to simply drop in, whether they come with a friend or on their own.

Organisers hope the café will become a regular social highlight for local older adults. "Our aim is to offer a place where people can turn up as they are, relax, chat, maybe play a game, and enjoy a treat or two," said Tamara from Age UK Barnet.

For more information, call Tamara on 020 8129 7619 or email activities@ageukbarnet.org.uk.