Caring, committed and kind Ann Bronkhorst: 1942 – 2026

Ann Bronkhorst, who has died aged 84, was a valued member of our team here at The Archer and shared her energies with many other community groups in East Finchley.

Ann grew up around the horse-racing town of Newmarket, Suffolk, and was educated at Saint Felix Girls' Boarding School, near Southwold, an experience that gave her a slightly mischievous and rebellious streak.



Ann Bronkhorst

An avid reader in those school years of the 1950s, books remained her great passion in life. After studying English Literature at the University of London, she went on to take up a teaching post at Camden School for Girls, where she remained working for her entire career.

It was during her first year at university that she met her future husband Martin at an anti-Apartheid social event. They married in 1965 and the following year moved into Durham Road, N2, where they spent their whole married life in a home and garden they loved.

Through taking their children Daniel and Sarah to Martin Primary School and her involvement with the East Finchley Neighbourhood Association over the years, Ann came to know so many people in the area and was always happy to stop and chat.

When she finally retired from teaching, with her typical energy, she took up part-time editing and distribution of The Archer. Her knowledge of the East Finchley area and its history was invaluable. The whole team misses her wisdom and her way of passing this on gently and quietly. She had a wonderful way of calming any discussions that got too heated and was always willing to help, particularly as a staunch supporter of our East Finchley Festival stall.

Ann greatly cared about the environment and her locality. She was a member of The Friends of Coldfall Wood, where she would often walk, play and pick blackberries with her grandsons Jonas and Zac. She also loved the neighbouring Highbury and Islington Cemetery where one of her passions was to feed the foxes.

In August 2025 Ann was diagnosed with cancer. She bore her illness without complaint, showing dignity and grace throughout. She died at home surrounded by her entire family and holding the hand of her husband of 61 years.

A lifetime of service–David Smith: 1939 – 2026

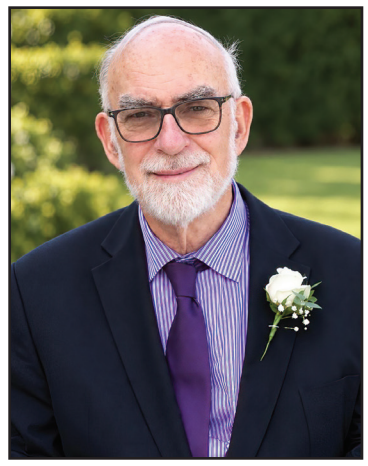
David Smith, a lifelong Finchley resident whose commitment to education, local history and community life spanned decades, has died aged 86.

Born on 7 November 1939, David grew up in Abbots Gardens, N2, an area that would remain at the heart of his life. He attended Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School in East Finchley and later Christ's College Finchley, before training as a teacher.

A lifelong love of France began during his teenage years. After studying French in Paris, David went on to teach in Bordeaux before returning to England, where he taught at Torrington Park and later Edgware School, remaining there until his retirement.

In 2007, David was awarded a London Borough of Barnet Civic Award, recognising 30 years of service as a governor of Holy Trinity Primary School and his wider contribution to community life.

His relationship with Holy Trinity Church in Church Lane, N2 stretched back to his childhood and continued throughout his life. Even when declining mobility meant he was no longer able to attend church himself, members of the church continued to visit him and Father Marius brought Holy Communion to his home.



David Smith

David was a founding member and President of The Finchley Society and had a deep interest in preserving and recording the history of the area in which he had spent so much of his life.

He was a prolific letter writer and correspondent. His family became accustomed to seeing replies from Prime Ministers, members of the Royal Household and well-known figures including Joanna Lumley and Spike Milligan.

Behind his public and community contribution was a devoted family man. David and his wife Joanna created their family at Abbots Gardens, raising their adopted children, Julian Smith and Miranda Burgum.

Miranda remembers a childhood filled with experiences, from camping in Norfolk to theatre, museums and lengthy family journeys around Europe. At the centre of many of those adventures was David's much-loved VW camper van, a refurbished German police van of which he was immensely proud, despite its habit of breaking down.

She also remembers the quieter moments: walking with her father and their red setter to Hampstead Heath before school, and growing up in a home where curiosity, independence and doing the right thing were encouraged.

She said David adored his grandchildren and later his great-grandchildren. His life was defined by the things that mattered to him: education, history, Holy Trinity, Finchley, community, family and, above all, people.

He is remembered by his daughter Miranda Burgum, his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and the wider family he loved, alongside the memory of his late wife Joanna and son Julian.

Evening of light with Finchley Symphony Orchestra

Finchley Symphony Orchestra opens its new season this month with an evening of shorter pieces conducted by Christopher Stark. Debussy's Petite Suite and Ravel's Mother Goose, originally written for piano, will be performed in their full orchestral colours. Poulenc's Sinfonietta and Mozart's Haffner symphony complete the programme.

The concert takes place at Trinity Church, Nether Street, North Finchley, on Saturday 21 November, starting at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £18, £15 for those under 26 and are free to under 18s. Payment at the door is by card only.

You can save £1 per ticket by booking online in advance at **www.finchleysymphony.org**.

Puzzle time: Re-Griddable

Re-Griddable is a twist on the free daily online game griddable.co.uk created by two East Finchley residents, Stuart Miller and Matt Robinson. There may be more than one solution to each Re-Griddable but there is definitely at least one, which comes from a maximum scoring game of Griddable.

If you get stuck the official Griddable word-checker may help (griddable.co.uk/word-checker). If you like playing Griddable online, why not join the East Finchley Leaderboard? Go to Groups on the site and use code BUJRM4.

Re-Griddable No.9

Place the letters to create eight four-letter words — four left-to-right and four downwards.

BEEILORS

S	T		
		D	E
O	R		
		S	T

Turn to page 11 for this month's solution

Paul Savill: The man who made The Archer

By David Hobbs

***The Archer* as we know it today is largely down to one man, Paul Savill, who has recently passed away. The newspaper was founded early in 1993 by four friends but it was not until Paul Savill became editor the following autumn that the paper became what it is today.**

He moulded a team of enthusiastic volunteers into a group who could put together a monthly newspaper that was genuinely about East Finchley news for East Finchley people. It was under Paul's editorship that the paper took shape with cartoons, a Young Archer page, the Ricky Savage column and a gardening column alongside local news. Paul's view that the paper should be non-partisan and non-political ensured that it won respect and a wide readership.

Back then editorial meetings took place on Saturday mornings in Maddens in the High Road, where the next issue was planned and articles commissioned, with everyone encouraged to contribute. In those early days the same volunteers would all get together to deliver it around N2. Although we were all volunteers, Paul ensured that it was not an amateur operation.

Paul allowed writers the freedom to develop their own style. By the time he handed the editor's job to me in 1998 the paper was firmly established and I found he was a hard act to follow. He gave me one piece of advice: that if journalism is power without responsibility, then The Archer is different; it's run by volunteers so being editor is about responsibility without power. I hope he would agree that we have followed his advice.

Diana Cormack joined the newspaper team in those early days. She recalls: "To this day I recall Paul being very strict about three rules. These were to always write to length, always get the name right and always have an East Finchley connection. "Reaching the right number of words then, when submissions were hand-written and given to a typist to prepare for the paper, was not easy. However, it stood me in good stead and now, when I write an article, it is usually pretty near the required word count. This makes me think of Paul and I thank him for putting me on the right track."



Paul Savill, right, with David Hobbs in 2003

Paul was born in October 1941 and grew up in Barnes. After leaving school he chose not to go to university and found a job instead. He made his career in publishing and PR, working for a number of major companies before running his own PR consultancy.

After leaving The Archer, Paul and his second wife Ursula moved to Wales, before retiring to the Algarve where he wrote for the local English language newspaper. They returned to England about ten years ago. Sadly he was later diagnosed with dementia and died in May 2025 in the Whittington Hospital where the staff were very supportive of him in his last days.

Paul was married twice, having two sons, Daniel and Jonathan, from his first marriage. In the 1980s he met Ursula and became stepfather to her daughter, Lisa who still lives locally.