



When the Northern line headed south

By John Lawrence

One hundred years ago, London's busy public transport network took another step into the future when the Northern line extension to Morden opened to paying passengers.

Going beyond Kennington for the first time, trains took commuters to and from a string of new stations at Clapham, Balham, Tooting, Colliers Wood, South Wimbledon and Morden itself.

This was 13 years before the Northern line brought the tube to East Finchley but in many ways it was a mirror of what was to come our way. The stations on the new southern extension were designed by renowned architect Charles Holden. Along with Ruth Ellis and LH Bucknell, Holden went on to design East Finchley station for its reopening in 1939. The striking modernist architecture of the Holden stations marked a new direction for London

Underground and they continue to be regarded as highly influential in the field of transport architecture around the world.

Once Morden and these southern suburbs were connected to the City, they experienced a period of massive economic and residential growth in the 1920s and 1930s.

The same growth and prosperity had already been evident in East Finchley and the surrounding areas thanks to stations and services on the London and North Eastern Railway. But from the 1930s, the Northern line took these over and electrified the branches from Highgate to Mill Hill East and High Barnet, connecting us to the rest of the tube network



Deep south: The new stations taking the Northern line into the southern suburbs. Photo TFL



Front carriage: Junior Transport Secretary J T C Moore-Brabazon in the first train to arrive at Morden. Photo TFL

and helping to create the 36-mile line that today carries around 340million passengers a year.

Of course, East Finchley and Morden have always been rumoured to have a special connection. It is said that the famous Archer statue on top of our station, designed by Eric Aumonier, fired an arrow down the length of the Northern line and it came to rest in Morden station.

The fact that Archie's arrow mysteriously disappeared almost immediately shouldn't spoil the story nor stop us celebrating the subterranean links to our southern counterparts that were put in place a century ago.

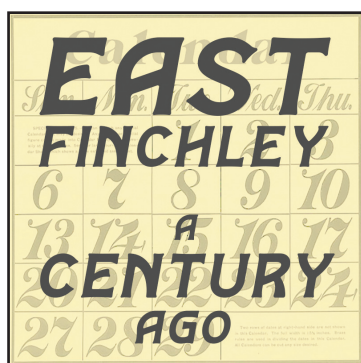


Influential: South Wimbledon station is an example of Charles Holden's Art Deco designs

East Finchley-on-Sea, heading out on safari and going to the football

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

By Frank Edwards



Flooded Wood

It's the 1926 annual meeting of the East Finchley Ratepayers' Association. Once members had sounded off about the state of East End Road, they moved on to Cherry Tree Wood. It was a delightful place, they observed, and the recently-built tennis courts were some of the best in north London.

However, the paths, laid with broken glass (!), were a disgrace. And the central field was increasingly marshy and might better be made into a pond for children. 'Why not?'

agreed one member. After rain the field looked like Southend-on-Sea when the tide was out.

Life with the lions

A wet field in Cherry Tree Wood was not unexpected but it must have surprised residents to learn from the local paper that something akin to a zoo was operating up the road at an address in Barnet High Street. This came to light in a disquieting report of a case before the County Court. The Court heard that the premises were an ordinary shop which nevertheless housed, from time-to-time, lions, tigers, elephants, monkeys, camels, bears, leopards, cheetahs, hyenas and pythons. What was described in Court, with understatement, as a curious state of affairs was not a zoo but, unhappily, a saleroom for animals. The proprietor was George Chapman, well known in the circus world as an animal trader. Chapman employed a Mr Cole at the premises. Cole

initially looked after eight elephants, then some lions from Marseilles. When throwing meat into their cage one scratched his finger. It became infected and had to be amputated. Cole sought compensation for his injury. Chapman's defence that Cole was often drunk did not sway the Court. It found in Cole's favour, indicating £2 a week as a basis for compensation.

It's only a game

If none of this aroused interest, there was always football (there always is). Filmmakers had been capturing action from football matches from the end of the 19th century and, before television, your local cinema, now called the Phoenix, then called the Coliseum, was the most likely place to view this.

In 1926 Pathé News, who provided short features shown in cinemas as pre-film entertainment, secured the rights to the

FA Cup Final. The local paper reported that Pathé had built 'crow's nests' from where their highly efficient cameramen could film the entire match. An added attraction was the promise, weather permitting, of some slow-motion footage, providing 'novel and instructive' shots of different players.

Of course, whether you took the trouble to pop down to the Coliseum might depend on how glad or sad you were about the outcome of the match. Well, in 1926, as in 2026, one finalist was Manchester City. Unlike 2026, 100 years ago, City lost 1-0 to Bolton. Are those cheers we hear?



Witness appeal after assaults

Police are appealing for witnesses after being called to two incidents relating to a woman assaulting people in East Finchley.

The assaults happened in the Long Lane area on the morning of Sunday 6 September. On the same day, a 23-year-old woman was arrested for these assaults and has been charged with two counts of wounding with intent and possession of an offensive weapon. She has been remanded into custody.

Police say there may have been other incidents of assault by the suspect that day and are urging anyone who has any information, however minor, to come forward. Call police on 101 and quote CAD 2295/06092026, or provide information anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555111 or online at crimestoppers-uk.org