



FEELING THE BURN: The new gym equipment at Archer's Health and Fitness Club is tested out.

Council unveils gym's completed fitness studios

IMPROVEMENTS made to a Hitchin leisure facility as part of a £1.8m development project are complete. Improvements to both Archers Gym and the Hitchin Swimming Centre in Fishponds Road are being funded by North Hertfordshire Council (NHDC) and

Stevenage Leisure Limited (SLL), which manages the facilities. At Archers, three state-of-the-art, brand new fitness studios have been built, with a low intensity room, a high intensity room and a personal training room kitted out with new equipment.

The studios also make possible a wide range of new classes, such as yoga, pilates and Latinise as well as group fitness and personal training. Meanwhile, at the swimming centre, work on a newly-designed changing village continues, with

work to be completed later in the spring. The majority of the male- and female-only areas have been replaced by six family cubicles and two group changing areas, as well as new individual cubicles and a rinse-down area in shower zones.

Tributes to fallen to feature in film

BY RUPERT MARQUAND
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EIGHTY-seven men from Arlesley lost their lives in the First World War after they were sent to fight as far afield as Iraq and Turkey.

Now those men are set to be commemorated as residents in the town have set up a project to lay a cross on each of their graves and make a documentary.

The Arlesley Remembers project was the idea of town councillor Duncan Wang, who was inspired after watching a military history program in which the SAS had done something similar.

He said: "The idea is we'll get volunteers from the village or living relatives to visit cemeteries and place the crosses on the graves."

"We hope it will leave a legacy, for this generation and future generations, of the his-

tory of the First World War, but the focus is to commemorate the 87 individuals."

Most of the soldiers were killed in Belgium and France but there are also five graves in Israel, two in Turkey, one in Iraq and 12 unknown.

With travel to Iraq not recommended by the British government, Mr Wang wrote to the embassy there, who responded to say they would lay a cross at the grave on their behalf.

He added: "Some men don't have a grave, so they are commemorated in war memorial cemeteries. So we'll adopt an anonymous grave for them."

"There were 10 names we knew absolutely nothing about, but we found two of them by accident when I searched on the internet."

The idea to film a 30-minute documentary which follows the journey of the residents as they carry out the project

came from Jodie Chillery, who lives in the town.

Local schools are involved with preparing the crosses and researching the history of the War Memorial, while surviving relatives are being invited to lay a poppy cross.

Donations helped raise more than £2,000 for the making of the documentary and will go towards the required equipment.

Mr Wang added: "We've had an unbelievable response. The idea is to record as much as possible and people going out to cemeteries in Europe will be filmed."

It is hoped the last of the crosses will be placed by Remembrance Sunday, while the film will be broadcast later in the year.

If you would like to donate to the project, you can do so online at crowdunder.co.uk/arlesley-remembers-you-documentary/

Team goes retro with VW van for '70s collection

A TEAM collecting memories and artefacts for an exhibition on the '70s will look the part this weekend, when they pitch up in a VW Camper Van in Letchworth.

Staff members from the Garden City Collection will be parked in Garden Square, Leys Avenue, from 9.30am to 4pm this Saturday, awaiting visitors who can contribute towards the new project, Saving the '70s.

They would like to hear about life in Letchworth in the 1970s, particularly leisure and ideals such as radicalism or the good life.

Memories and objects collected will be part of a town cen-

tre exhibition from May 24 to June 1.

Themed events at that time will focus on the changes that took place in Letchworth in the 70s, and highlight the role of leisure and popular culture.

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