

## Fairlop Lions

**F**airlop Lions are a charitable organisation, based in Redbridge, who raise money for good causes.

Since its inception in November 2004 the club has raised and donated £85,000 to local, national and international causes. Speaking on their behalf Paul Chakravarti said, "Christmas is meant to be a time of giving and charitable works. This year the Fairlop Lions decided to say 'Merry Christmas



Redbridge' by giving 14 parent beds to the children's Clover Ward at King

George Hospital so that parents who cannot be at home with their child over the festive period can at least be comfortable. The Lions have also donated £3,500 to the Redbridge Disability Association to fund a Christmas party for 100 disabled children who live in Redbridge. The club wishes all the readers a very happy Christmas and prosperous new year!"

## Chanukah

**C**hanukah is also known as the festival of lights and is celebrated every year for eight days. As it is a Jewish holiday, it goes by the lunar calendar so the English date varies from year to year. This year it starts at sunset on 21 December.

The miracle of Chanukah was that the oil lasted eight days in the temple, when it should have only lasted for one day. We celebrate by lighting a menorah, which has eight branches to it, as well as a special light, which is



used to light all the other candles. Chanukah is a happy festival and is celebrated by singing songs, eating oily foods and giving presents.

**A**mier Ahmed, 30, is a Muslim and lives in Ilford. This is what Christmas means to him:

"Christmas has always been a fun time for my family and friends. Some of my favourite childhood memories are of my family enjoying Christmas together."

"I don't think you have to be Christian to enjoy Christmas. I've always enjoyed the Christmas lights, and decorations; they cheer you up during the winter weather!"

"When I think of Christmas I think food, lights and laughter!"



**A**lthough Valentines Mansion and Gardens doesn't open until Valentines Day 2009 during a recent preview hard hat tour winners took the chance to get a little choir practice ready for next year.

Valentines Choir said, "We wish you a Merry Christmas;

We wish you a Merry Christmas; We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

Kate Wilson of the choir said, "I think that Valentines Mansion is going to be one of the best presents for the Borough ever. It's not just a historic house, it's also going to be a superb venue. Just seeing the tour winners practicing a few carols in the Mansion was fantastic - it made me realise just what a magical place this is. I can't wait for the Christmas events next year!"



From left to right : Marie Chant, Doreen Wright, Phyllis Bowers, Kate Wilson, Margaret Heather and Karen Green

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