

Seen on the Green - James Alexandrou

By : **thomgoddard**

This is an area centric biography on James Alexandrou, one of many famous people to come from Chingford, North-East London. This article was originally published in The Chingford Directory in March 2013.



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Famous Faces From Chingford

by Councillor Thom Goddard, Chingford Historical Society member.

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This Month: James Alexandrou

In the stock market the smart person knows when to buy into a company. However, the real trick is knowing when to leave. Chingford resident James Alexandrou has appeared in many award winning plays and documentaries but is best known for the 10 years he spent in BBC One's Eastenders. His greatest moment may have been when out with the Eastenders cast: "That's when the realisation hit me. The blind arrogance... was seen as typical of soap actors (it's not by the way). It was then I realised that I was associated with this. It was then I realised I was also regarded like this. It was then I realised I wanted to leave the show".

James Alekos Alexandrou was born on 12th April 1985 in Islington. At the age of eight the family moved to Chingford and James attended the Church of England Infants school. To keep him occupied after school his mother enrolled James in Anna Scher Drama school. Here his fellow classmates included Natalie Cassidy, who James would go on to marry - on the television. Otherwise James had a regular childhood and excelled at swimming holding the London under-12 records for freestyle and backstroke. One day at the C of E school, James was called into the Head Teacher's office and, seeing his mum in tears, he thought he was in trouble. But it was something that was to change his life - he'd just won the part of Martin Fowler on the BBC soap opera "Eastenders".

In 1996 James moved to Chingford Foundation School but missed the first day as that was when he started filming. He missed some classes but achieved his GCSEs as he called the school "very supportive". On screen it was slightly different, as Martin Fowler "achieved" joining a gang, burglary, drug addiction, car theft, blackmail, drug dealing and vandalism. But James found Martin a role model of what not to do in life.

James' revelation came after 9 years in Eastenders and he announced he was leaving. His final show, broadcast on 2nd February 2007, left the door open for James to return. However, he saw instant stage success

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with praise for his work with the British Shakespeare Company in *Henry V* and *As You Like It*. He also turned down the chance to replace Daniel Radcliffe in the West End hit *Equus*.

The stage work continues to bring success as James played Romeo at the Globe Theatre on the Southbank and starred in *DNA* from the National Theatre. Having made the successful move away from *EastEnders*, would he ever go back: *I would love to come back one day - that's if EastEnders would have me*³. So do keep a look out for any famous people you meet in the Mount or have seen on the Green!

If you spot anyone contact: seenonthegreen@allstartalent.co.uk

monkeywithalaptop.blogspot.co.uk 2009

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