

The Finchley Society Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 1992 SUPPLEMENT 7/92

To open this Supplement edition on a most warm note, it is a pleasure to reproduce in full the following letter --

Dear Spike,

The Finchley Society wishes to congratulate you on the award of an honorary C.B.E.

It is a well-deserved, and long overdue, official recognition of a lifetime's work for so many aspects of our common environmental heritage.

Although the Society represents but a few strands of the green mantle you wear we are very proud of our Patron and have bathed just a little in the reflected glory of this honour.

We wish you many more years of good health and of contented watchfulness.

Yours sincerely

David Smith Vice-President

WILFUL WASTE AND WOEFUL WANT Timothy Johnson

What price progress? Has it gone too far? Has the World taken a wrong turning and lost its way. Civilization, as it is called, has brought great benefits - but what of the side effects?

Poison in the rivers. Pollution in the seas. Destruction of the forests. The failing water supply. Drought and famine. The wasting of the World's natural resources. The drugs problem. Overcrowded prisons and juvenile crime. Health hazards. Northern Ireland. Israel and the Arabs. All the other trouble spots too. The list is endless. It goes on and on.

Other troubles nearer home take one's mind off these major issues. Litter. Traffic chaos. Deafening pop music. Television commercials and smells from the drains. This list is endless too.

But the people of the media don't let us forget. They revel in death and disaster. They keep us well informed. Unlike the Germans in Nazi times we can't say we didn't know it was happening. We can't plead ignorance. But what on earth can we do about it?

Most of us do our little best. In our own small ways we try to prevent waste. We take waste paper and bottles for recycling. But it is interesting to

reflect that in times not long past many of those bottles would have been returnable. They would have been used again and again like milk bottles. We didn't have to smash them all in bottle banks. Manufacturers seem to find it more convenient and profitable to waste the World's resources than to use them prudently. So we have lost the art of make-do-and-mend and we live in a throw-away society. It is largely the things we have to discard which are exhausting the Earth's natural riches. Disposable containers, plastic wrappings and faulty goods fill millions of dustbins every week. All these things are made from oil, coal, wood or other natural materials. No doubt the factories making them contribute to air and water pollution too. What about all those impregnable customer-proof wrappings which envelop almost everything sold in every supermarket? It needs sharp scissors and sheer determination even to fight one's way into a packet of biscuits these days. Is it really necessary? And how much does it add to the cost of the product?

Many people still alive today remember the war of 1939-45. That was a desperate situation too and it called for desperate measures. War materials were the priority and everything else was either 'in short supply' or just unobtainable. Wrapping materials were almost non-existent. Goods were either sold by weight or counted out into your hand. As far as possible you had to take your own bags or baskets to the shops to collect them. Plastic bags did not exist. Cellophane was the only near-equivalent but you couldn't get it. Paper bags were used again and again.

Perhaps this was unhygienic by today's standards. If so, the nation must have built up a natural resistance to germs because it remained healthy, perhaps healthier than it is today. Potato peelings and other kitchen waste was collected for pig food and there was very little refuse to put in the dustbin. The term was not then in general use but this was really a policy of rigorous 'Conservation'. Led by the government it was carried out effectively by the people. Everyone saw the need for it. It was a complete national drive. It made life hard on the home front but anything was preferable to the prospect of life under Hitler and the Nazis.

What about the furniture? At one time it was made to last and was handed down in families from generation to generation. This provided treasures for the Antiques Roadshow. How many manufacturers today are making antiques for the future? Chipboard and plastic components in furniture soon part company, the parting is usually final. Neither material lends itself easily to repair or restoration. The resultant debris is often seen on the skips outside the houses.

Replacement windows are well named. Several neighbours seem obliged to replace their replacement windows fairly frequently. There must be a reason for this. Fitted kitchens, unlike most replacement windows, can often look elegant. But do be careful. Sometimes their beauty is only skin deep. The veneer of respectability can conceal yet more disintegrating chipboard and plastic.

We are dogged by the word 'disposable'. It crops up everywhere and can be applied to almost anything. Surely what it really means is 'dustbin fodder' or 'litter component'. Almost all liquids of any kind are sold in non-

returnable containers of metal or plastic. Billions and billions of them. The fizzy drinks manufacturers must be among the leaders in this field. Have you noticed how many people seem to spend all their walking moments sipping from a can? Perhaps the can is a kind of status symbol? The cans cast away on the roadside are often far from empty.

The furniture and the drinks cans are only examples of widespread waste. It contributes to the over-exploitation of the World's resources and makes fuel for global warming. What a mess we are in! How can we stop the rot? First think how it was started. The Industrial Revolution started the exploitation and the invention of railways led to the rapid transport which speeded it up. You might almost say that the origins of the present Global Crisis were 'Made in England'.

Even the World's first regular television service was produced by the BBC in London. If British inventiveness was so instrumental in leading the World into its present muddle perhaps it will also be clever enough to find a way out? What do you think?

Victorian taste has now become fashionable again and perhaps we can now see that the Victorians had solid virtues as well as failings. I know exactly what my grandfather (born 1850) would have said about our overflowing skips and wheelie bins. He would have said "Wilful waste makes woeful want".

PERCY REBOUL WRITES

To The Editor, Fin.Soc. Newsletter Dear John,

Denys Pegg's reference in the last Newsletter Supplement to the Gordon Riots leads me to wonder whether members have seen the two superb military maps which were drawn up by the military surveyors prior to the army taking up positions on the more northerly part of Finchley Common.

The maps were made for the Officer Commanding, Major General Faucitt, and were discovered in the British Museum by Finchley's most distinguished historian, Frank Marcham. Our old friend C.O. Banks made what he described as a 'careful copy' of one of the maps and photocopies of both originals can be seen in the Borough archives in Egerton Gardens. They are well worth seeing. I am hoping that you may be able to reproduce one of the maps which reveals some fascinating detail - not least that there were three regiments stationed on the common (not two). The other map shows that the Headquarters was located in Whetstone itself carefully positioned, it seems, within striking distance of at least seven of the pubs which existed at that time. Some things don't change!

Banks suggests (and on this occasion he is probably right) that the military were present on the Common from 10 August to 20 October 1780. After quelling the riots, they withdrew to the Common and waited there for a time in case of more trouble.

Yours sincerely,

Percy Reboul, 13 Sunningfields Crescent, NW4 4RD, 081 203 3664

THE OCTAVIA HILL SOCIETY

It has been said that the two most famous women of Victorian England were Florence Nightingale and Octavia Hill. While Florence Nightingale's pioneering is today reflected in a modern nursing service, Octavia Hill's work, her ideas and ideals as regards ordinary people, their homes and environment have, in many ways, every bit as much relevance to today's problems as they did in her own day.

If we had remembered Octavia's insistence that homes should be people sized with space for gardens and recreation perhaps we would not now be pulling down large untenable tower blocks, nor would we have built great regiments of unlovely houses in which the residents have little or no pride.

It is worth reminding ourselves that, as a co-founder of the National Trust, Octavia's principal concern was to retain green and pleasant spaces for the common use of ordinary people. How many of these spaces have been infilled in our towns and villages? If we had remembered her insistence that there should be good housing for people near to their work, would our transport infrastructure now be quite so overloaded and our roads quite so crammed with environmentally polluting cars?

It could be said that Octavia Hill's work is already recorded in the National Trust and the Octavia Hill Housing Trust which manages so many properties in London, some of which were originally started by Octavia herself. However, very much at the instigation of the Wisbech and Finchley Societies, it was felt that there should be a SEPARATE Octavia Hill Society to create and run a small museum and administration centre in her birthplace, Wisbech. This would act as a focus for like minded people who, through lectures, discussions and awards would wish to promote those same ideas and ideals of hers as they relate to today's challenges in Britain and around the world.

It was also suggested that, if possible, the Society should have as its president a member of Octavia Hill's family. As Octavia never married, her nearest descendants are those of her sister Gertrude who worked closely with her. Gertrude's great grandson, Jeremy Ouvrey, who lives at Winchester, has accepted this role. Finchley Society members may remember that Mrs. Ouvrey, mother of Jeremy, was present at the lecture given last year on 27th June by Peter Clayton. Peter is to be the Society's Chairman and I will serve on the committee.

If charitable status is given, it has been decided to launch the Society formally on 6th December, 1992 - Octavia Hill Commemoration Day. Thereafter, the Society will stage Commemoration Day on the first Sunday of each December and make a Biographical Coach Tour to Octavia's grave on the second Sunday of each August.

TEACH US THIS DAY Barbara Warren

We have all been to school and we are all making history just by living, so when a booklet appears, subtitled "The origins, history and development of All Saints' C of E School, Oakleigh Road North, N20" most of us would show more than a passing interest

This well researched book, compiled by local historians Percy Reboul and John Heathfield, offer us a glimpse into half remembered youthful days, when education was simpler and involved the 3 Rs, learning poetry by heart, handwriting and Empire Day; when Mr. Thatcher kept the classroom fires burning, children were rapped on the knuckles with a ruler and the ink monitor was king!

All Saints' has evolved through the years from that first minuted meeting of the Gentlemen of Friern Barnet who decided on 28th July 1809 that a Charity School be established for the education of the poor (girls to be taught reading and needlework, boys reading! - along with moral and religious duties). Readers will detect a thread, albeit rather confusing, linking the modern All Saints' with this early attempt at education in the area, to St. James' School, and Oakleigh Infants School. So those of you who went to any of these schools, this booklet is also for you.

In spite of poor conditions, large numbers of children and lack of equipment, the teachers leap from the pages. There were Miss Marian Head and her 13 year old sister with a combined salary of £30 a year in 1859; young Mr. William Collier with 140 boys in 2 classes having to redecorate the classrooms during the evenings in 1900; and Caroline Smith, supplied with a box of chalk and 12 new slates for the 64 girls in her new class.

The book concludes with the present day school, governed by the National Curriculum, with healthy children tackling computer studies and design technology.

The authors express the hope that this will provide a good read. I can assure you that it does.

TRENT PARK Sandra Quigley

Trent Park, originally part of the Royal Hunting Forest of Enfield Chase, now run by the Borough of Enfield, is 413 acres of mixed "ancient" woodland and open meadows. Two lakes lie at the bottom of a slope, above which sits the Middlesex University building. First built around 1777 and owned by Sir Richard Jebb, George III's physician, it was later bought, in 1926 by Sir Philip Sassoon, who died in 1939 and was the last private owner of the estate. During World War II, Trent Park was requisitioned by the War Office for the interrogation of prisoners of war, including Rudolf Hess. About 250 acres consists of woodland and the remainder open meadows, with a couple of ponds, so there is plenty of scope for picnicking and sunbathing in the open, or cooling off under the shaded woodland walks, of which there are many.

There is a Butterfly trail. A horse ride runs through the woodland area, with an entrance from Hadley Road. The Management of Trent Park is sensitive to those with special needs, requiring assistance, who should contact the Park Manager in advance: there is a Woodland trail for the blind, with tapping rail. There is also a Water Garden with special azaleas and rhododendrons.

The lower lake was recently dredged and work is due to start this month on landscaping that area and building a new darn, to be completed by Spring 1993. The lakes are home to resident and visiting water fowl. Permanent residents are Canada geese, shepherding goslings away from dogs cooling off in the lake. Mallard, coot, moorhen, a pair of great crested grebe and common tern have also nested. Tufted duck, pochard and widgeon are to be seen in winter.

If you want solitude, take the Hadley Gate entrance and walk eastward through the quiet, shaded woods. Amongst the varieties of trees are hornbeam, oak, sweet and horse chestnut, sycamore, ash, hazel, pine, rowan. silver birch amid any amount of shrubs. Purple rhododendron entwine with wild rose; honeysuckle, off the trail, can be scented before being tracked down. In springtime, fields of rape adjoin the walks to form a vivid background for clumps of purple foxgloves. Deep in the shrubbery wrens sing loud and clear and robins boldly fly down to pick at crumbs left by picnickers. By the fields, pheasant can be heard with their sudden, harsh cry - kuck, kuck, kuck! and high in the trees, green woodpeckers give out their cackling cry - rather like kookaburras, if you've ever heard one! In trees with close-growing branches, magpies' nests, loosely made of sticks and twigs, sit untidily but firmly wedged. From the leafy mould among the tree roots emerge creamy, brown-scaled heads of parasol mushrooms which make very good eating.

Coming out into a sunny meadow seems the right time to flop down, take shoes and socks off and lie back in the sun for a bit. Ah, perfect bliss!

Trent Park also run a variety of organised walks throughout the year. To find out more, ring 081-449 8706 and speak to David Smith, Park, Manager, to whom many thanks for the technical information.

Next follows a series of reports of Finchley Society events that have occurred since the April Supplement.

APRIL MEETING REPORT Robert Winton

The April 29 meeting, in front of a large audience (around 85 attended), started with a pleasurable reminder of bygone Finchley times through a reading from the "Church Monthly" of May 1921, given with great clarity by Esther Johnson. May we hope for a similar hors d'oeuvre before future main courses?

Omi this occasion the main course was "Shakespeare's Globe Theatre Re-born", presented by Lyn Williams, Secretary of the Globe Theatre Trust set up by the

American actor Sam Wannamaker in the '60s to realise his ambition of recreating the Theatre.

The theatre, on the south bank of the Thames opposite St. Pauls, was built in 1599, burnt down in 1613, rebuilt, and finally demolished in 1644. It was circular, with a diameter of about 80 ft. and had three galleries for the audience arranged around an apron stage, a design influenced by the form of bear-baiting rings. The Globe could accommodate some 3,000 spectators, with the well-to-do in the upper gallery and the artisans standing at ground level. The noise from the audience led to the introduction of rules of behaviour in 1632.

Shakespeare wrote his plays specifically for presentation at the Globe, known at that time simply as "The Theatre"; its design gave the audience a feeling of involvement and helped them to follow the action.

The re-created Globe, now under construction, cannot be on the original site, because part of it is now under Southwark Bridge, but it will be very close and will be part of a development which includes other buildings. Planning permission was given in 1987; progress has been slow, governed by the availability of finance, none of which is available from the government.

Digging started in April 1988 for the underground exhibition area, which will include a sound archive of Shakespeare performances. This has now been completed, and the 20 pillars of the main theatre are now under way.

Two-thirds of the audience, and the stage, will be under cover, and difficulties from the weather are not considered a serious problem. A permanent company will perform in the summer, and other actors and actresses in the winter.

The "Friends of Shakespeare's Globe" was founded in 1985 to raise the necessary £8 million, and now has 1,700 members who are advised on progress and can take part in associated activities.

Barbara Warren gave a deserved vote of thanks for an absorbing view of the Globe past, present and future.

THE GLOBE - A DOUBT Peter Pickering

I wonder if others felt, as I did, that the enthusiastic Lyn Williams at our April meeting was actually trying to get people to subscribe to the erection, at considerable expense, of a fake? We are far from clear what Shakespeare's Globe theatre was like, but we know it was not in the same place, of the same materials, or the same in design (she admitted that because of the fire regulations it will have more staircases). We also know that if it had survived to the present day, as have many houses, churches, Oxford colleges, etc., from its time, it would, like them, have been frequently repaired, altered modernised.

So, I thought, down with the Globe theatre project, as fit rather for Disneyland than for a city with many real historic buildings in need of a few thousand pounds to keep the rain amid the vandals out. But then, I mused. why did I approve of the rebuilding of Uppark after the fire, or of Catherine the Great's palaces outside St Petersburg after the war? Surely they also are now just fakes.

Is it perhaps a matter of continuity? When a reconstruction is based on the shell of an original, is carried out while many people remember the original, or - and here I am even less sure - uses the plans and specifications of the original architect, then it has an authenticity that the Globe must inevitably lack.

What do other members think?

ENVIRONMENTAL WEEK REPORTS

1. SCHOOLS PRESENTATION Barbara Warren

Norman and I visited three schools in Finchley which, in fact, we had both been closely associated with in one way or another, so that it became a trip down Memory Lane. We had been invited to give our "present" of a magnificent hanging basket of flowers to each of the three schools at a morning assembly. I don't think either of us was quite sure of our reception and what to expect from 3 such different schools, but we soon realised that it was a perfect medium to get to the younger generation.

Our brief was to remind the children about Environment Week, but we were soon talking with enthusiasm about College Farm amid Avenue House and other lovely parts of Finchley, and the part played by The Finchley Society.

At Manorside the Deputy Head was so enthusiastic about our Tree Survey that she has encouraged every child to take part; a project that she will organise herself.

We were thus emboldened to mention it at the other schools - St. Mary's at Dollis Park and Northside. Hopefully Oliver will be swamped with enthusiastic tree addresses.

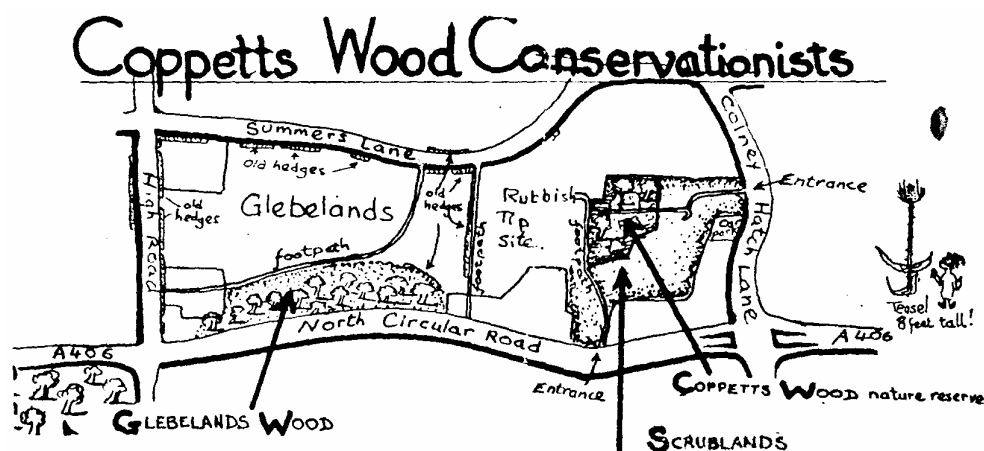
We were met with the utmost courtesy and treated as persons with an important mission. The children were attentive amid concerned and anxious to tell us of their particular worries, and we were shown work on the Environment already in progress. All the baskets are now hanging in places carefully thought about, and are already treasured. We must do something like this next year.

2. OUR OWN DOCTOR WHO Barbara Warren

On the very hot Sunday afternoon of May 17th, Dr. Oliver Natelson conducted about a dozen of us into the cool depths of Coppetts Wood Nature Reserve and back in time. The wood is of ancient origin with huge mature trees: oak, ash, chestnut and elm, as well as centuries-old coppices of hornbeam and hazel,

used by our ancestors in holding down the thatched roofs of their cottages with the pliable withies, notwithstanding the watchful eye of the "land owners", and of course, as firewood, snatched at dead of night. The feeling of being part of that ancient lifestyle is very much with you as you progress along the winding paths.

The fact that it has such an overwhelming abundance of life brings you sharply back to the present as the lushness is due to the fact that it was once part of the sewage works amid a refuse tip! This part of Coppetts Wood history is responsible for the enormous variety of flora found there, supporting a great number of insects and birds. Towards the end of our walk the always-surprising Doctor produced cold drinks amid biscuits from the dense vegetation!



3. SURVEY OF CHURCH END CONSERVATION AREA

A walk by 8 members on Tuesday, 19th May around Gravel Hill, the north end of Hendon Lane amid Regents Park Road revealed a sad state of neglect for one of Finchley's older areas - especially one designated as a Conservation Area.

Barbara Warren is consolidating the reports submitted by the members who attended and only preliminary notes are as yet available, but they do make very bleak reading -- an area short of street trees amid with many existing ones infested -- several litter black spots near public seating or just wind-blown -- street names missing, or in need of smartening up -- parked cars at the library obscuring an isolated pleasant garden, although it is no longer the scented garden for the blind, that it originally was -- fly posting throughout the area -- disused and semi-derelict buildings abound, particularly in Regents Park Road and Hendon Lane, including Grove Lodge which, scandalously, is Council owned! -- pedestrian paving in poor and often dangerous condition (almost alone in the 'Finchleys' the conservation area still has not been re-paved in the Borough's red-pavior style!) -- litter bins either overflowing or standing empty in appropriate places.

Barbara has commented for the newsletter -- "Our team was very enthusiastic and, with clipboards, we perhaps looked rather official, as a result of which some worried faces appeared. However, we also found ourselves in conversation

with residents, who were only too happy to give us any history of the premises we were inspecting. We peered apprehensively into dingy corners and onto private property never before seen by any of our members. In fact one member said that since he had joined The Finchley Society he had seen more of Finchley than he had done in his life. It took us over 2 hours to get all the information and then we felt we could have gone over it again and found we had missed something. In fact, armed with the report I think we will have to go over the area again to make completely sure of our facts and figures. When all is complete, we will present this to the Council, Councillors amid the Civic Trust and anybody else who might be interested.

4. SCHOOLS ART COMPETITION

Jane Ower and family were kind enough to judge the "Our Environment" competition for which entries were on show at College Farm on 21st-23rd May amid at the June 7th Open Day.

Prize winners were -

Nursery	1. Rebecca Moodey
	2. Maryam Vanat
Infants	1. Matilda Sims
	2. Farrah Hassan
	3. Christopher White
Lower Juniors	1. Michael Konnan
	2. Farid Hashemi
Top Juniors	1. Salila Rovas
	2. Marnumaldris
	3. Asad Hameed

In each class the top prize was one year's free entry to College Farm with drawing materials, atlases, wildlife books. Tee shirts and pens for those at 2nd and 3rd.

5. The Environment Week Walk on Sunday 24th May conducted by Derek Warren around the Darlands Walk Nature Reserve was, frankly, poorly attended. Only 13 members took part but as is always the case at Darlands, it was an enjoyable afternoon for those favoured few.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

More than seventy members plus Marina Pirotta from Hendon Times Group Newspapers attended the 1992 AGM chaired by Vice President David Smith in Jean Scott's last-minute absence.

Additional apologies for absence were received from other members including Bill Tyler, Gerry Barrett-Newberry, Margaret Pacey, June James, Rosalind Batchelor and Mrs J. Brown.

In his introductory address, David Smith chose an important theme: "Let's hear it for Finchley", echoing his comments when last he chaired arm AGM (Where is Finchley). By "Let's hear it", David actually sought members' co-operation in writing it, that is, to make more use of the word FINCHLEY in daily correspondence, referring to our individual addresses.

We Eds beg to be excused, for the word appears twice in our own address without additionally illustrating N12 as being a Finchley, but, that aside, David feels we should all be proud to embellish N2, N3 amid N12 respectively as East Finchley, Finchley Church and North Finchley.

As a secondary theme David asked that Finchley Society members should look out any local memorabilia they may have, that might perhaps be "safer" in the Society's possession. His comments arose from a recent incident when some most interesting documents were rescued at the eleventh hour from a "disposing bonfire". So David asked everyone, "before you get some time in the future to the bonfire stage yourselves, please think about lodging that item or document in the Fin.Soc. archives - or make a bequest before you go!" He stressed that even in the unimaginable circumstances of the Finchley Society being wound up at some future time, all of its local treasures would remain "safe", due to a clause in the Constitution which stipulates that the archive would be passed to another "competent authority".

Moving on to the main business of the evening, the Society's Chairman Norman Burgess and the Hon. Treasurers respectively of Fin.Soc. and Friends of College Farm gave their reports. From the floor in response to the former, Barbara Warren added to the Chairman's acknowledgment of various important "workers", that of Pat Marsh, now Secretary to the Environment Committee. Joe Ingall, Hon. Treasurer, was at pains to stress to members that despite the valuable additional funds resulting from increased subs this year, the figures next year will see a reduction in interest earned, since the largest chunk of present capital, the £3,600 from our Avenue House insurance payment, will by then have been transferred to the fund of the Society's recently formed committee involved with setting up the Museum of Writing, who are charged with administering (amid spending) it. Joe therefore urged all members to continue to support fund-raising events so that in the coming year we can consolidate on the sounder base that currently exists.

From the floor the question of "covenanting" subscriptions was raised - as was the possibility of developing commercial sponsorship. The Hon. Treasurer pointed out that covenanting is clearly set out as a beneficial option on our membership forms, and on the subject of sponsorship he believed he spoke for a majority in stressing the Society's independence of spirit, be it in creed, style or politics, and that we should stay free of any influences that sponsorship might bring - although "donations" could be seen in a different light.

The Treasurer's report on the accounts of the Friends of College Farm raised no questions this year.

A number of observations followed "from the floor", including -

Avenue House grounds are certainly not as spruce as they were - the Park Ranger system appears to be not an adequate enough substitute for permanent "superintending".

Full support and encouragement should be given to Janet Durrant who operates the re-opened refreshment kiosk amid who is vigilant about vandalism and other troublesome activities. She additionally has on sale some Fin.Soc. booklets and very kindly donates to the Society the revenue from hire of deckchairs.

Finally, also proposed from the floor -

By Robert Winton for President Jean Scott - Get well soon - you were much missed at the AGM.

By Jim Martin - a round of applause in appreciation of the officers conducting the meeting.

After a break for refreshments amid further conversation, a slide show organised for the evening by Peter Marsh, courtesy of the monthly magazine Traditional Homes, with the theme "Architectural Messes" was presented by Norman Burgess in the unavoidable absence of Bill Tyler whose professional views had been anticipated.

If the subject were not indeed such a serious one, some of the shots would have on their own been hilariously funny! They included -

An amazing "spaghetti" of outside plumbing. Bizarre and even lopsided home extensions. An elegant Regency facade in Brighton given "Tudor" treatment. The ubiquitous out of character wall cladding. Disfiguration of fascias by out of scale window replacement.

Sadly despite so many "best endeavours" including those of The Finchley Society, some of these 'messes' are all too typically found in Finchley. The slide presentation certainly put down some important markers for our Planning Committee (and members generally) to strive against in the future!

Eds: The more "technical" aspects of the AGM (nominations. elections. etc.) have already been fully reported - in the June newsletter.

On 14th June, the Eds were pleased to accept an unexpected invitation to take afternoon tea at Victoria House, Gruneisen Road, N3 (Ballards Lane, opposite the Victoria Park main entrance). This took place during an open day by the owners Stainer and Bell Ltd. in celebration of having finally settled in at Victoria House.

The company have of course been a familiar name in Finchley since the late 1970s when they moved their head office from the West End to premises (with the shop front familiar to locals and passers-by) in High Road, East Finchley.

Joint Managing Directors Keith and Carol Wakefield made us very welcome and in addition to the aforementioned afternoon tea we greatly enjoyed learning about the range and scale of the music which the company publishes, from religious choral, hymn and organ to the works of many classical composers such as Elgar, Delius, Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams, whose estates they exclusively represent. You may imagine that the rack after rack of shelving packed with manuscripts at Victoria House is to the outsider quite bewildering in its extent - but of course "the computer knows where every piece is!"

Intriguingly the directors also maintain in the building a small collection of organs including the sort that we would recognise as coming from the cinema - conjuring up visions of quite unique "music while you work". Finally, we were interested to discover that the orchestral scores for a Philharmonia Concert we were to attend that evening at the Festival Hall (including Vaughan Williams' Sea Symphony) had been provided by - yes of course, Stainer and Bell!

THE EAST FINCHLEY COMMUNITY FESTIVAL David Smith

I enjoyed the Community Festival in Cherry Tree Woods. It was a sunny day and the setting - trees amid grass - made a perfect backdrop for the event. What marks it out as something special is its genuine feeling of community and a total absence of commercialism. People had time to stand and chat uninterrupted by public address, by amplified music and funfair roar. It is true to say that there were some stalls representing national bodies such as Greenpeace and BTCV in addition to all the local ones, but in such a peaceful and concordant atmosphere it was impossible to conjure up the feared spectres of subversion and violence that inspired the withdrawal of the Council's grant to the Festival a few years ago.

So, next year, why not come to the Festival? Especially if you live in Church End or North End, cross the great divide, otherwise known as the North Circular Road, and join us in East End for a pleasant afternoon.

QUO VADIS (or Getting to know the Neighbours) Muriel Large

It is all too easy for individuals, and indeed organisations, simply to plough their own furrow, and very salutary to look over the fence to see how others are progressing. So it was that at the June meeting, the last of the season, the Finchley Society reviewed its work amid measured it alongside that of the Mill Hill Society and the Barnet Society, whose members were welcomed to both platform and to the audience, which numbered approximately 60.

Conservation had been the starting point in all cases - Mill Hill seeking to preserve Lawrence Street and its neighbourhood as well as a much-loved pond threatened by drought amid "development", Barnet faced with containing a postwar overspill of population from London, and the Finchley Society to keep and improve the cottages in Lodge Lane.

There was, however, considerable difference in circumstances. Barnet, an historic market town and now a railhead, near the M1 amid M25 with all the pressures its geographical position brought, and having other societies in its area with whom to co-operate; Mill Hill concerned to maintain a village atmosphere that included ponds, meadows and a variety of fine old houses, large and small; Finchley (the most recently formed waging an expensive campaign to have road-widening done rationally, coping with the ever-present replacement of Edwardian streets and houses by flats or supernumary office blocks, struggling to keep the Glebelands as an urban open space amid breathing new life into College Farm, still facing an uncertain future despite the support from a wide public for its Open Days and rare breeds of farm animals.

The differences were also reflected in the membership, for example. Both Barnet and Mill Hill had a creditable thousand members. All the societies stressed the need for young (or younger) people amid contact with schools as a useful path. Clearing out a pond may not be everyone's idea of a happy day but doing "something active" was by no means a bad way of drawing in adolescents and making a point to the world at large. Family membership was also invaluable.

Checking of planning applications going before Barnet Council was on the regular agenda of all the societies although there was cause for envy of the contacts via conservation societies as a route for receiving details of such proposals without the need to pay the not inconsiderable fees for having direct information. Contact with local councillors and officials was pursued by all, in a variety of ways.

The question of subscriptions could have been a thorny one, ranging as they did from £1.50 to £6.00 for an individual member, but the difference was fully explained in greater frequency of newsletters and meetings, and of social events.

Finally, there was agreement as to the need to build up and ever enlarge a dedicated band of workers to share out the load.

The excellent slide presentations underlined successes and failures recorded by all the societies and there were glances to the future as well as a recognition that not everything new was necessarily bad.

That there was work still to do was realised all round, with a ~aim welcome in all the societies for anyone who would lend a hand to preserve and improve the area in which we all lived.

DOVER 4th JULY Harry Sharpe

8.40 am from Kingsway. Well, not much after 8.40 anyway. My excuse is that there was no bus, it's a long walk from Whetstone and it gets longer every year. A brief stop to pick up the contingent at East Finchley - nobody late there, and we are off.

It's a great pleasure to sit high in a coach and to be able to take in all those things you don't have time to look at when driving. And how these drivers weave through the traffic along the minor roads, enabling one to see and appreciate some of the buildings of an earlier age, with well proportioned frontages and graceful iron balconies. Then we are going along the Balls Pond Road. Unbelievable! It's real, and I always thought it was a music hall joke, but no! Again, often hidden amongst decaying shops some most attractive early Victorian architecture. So we go on. Through the Blackwall Tunnel, swooping neatly into the right traffic lane and plunging into the right hole. Why can't I do that? Up again into south London. It always looks 'different'. Then smoothly along major roads until we stop at a Service Area for a break. There is a festival atmosphere here, with bunting fluttering all around and entertainers performing on the patio. Watching a juggler who was dressed in motley, with a pointed cap enclosing his face, who was skilfully handling three long sticks one could feel carried back some 500 years -- his predecessors probably were doing the same on this very spot in Chaucer's day.

And so to Dover. Those who had opted for the 'energetic' tour alighted near the castle. From the road it appeared to be sited on the top of a mountain, but half way up our guide, philosopher and friend, Kurt, negotiated entry at the pay kiosk and this gave us a breather. Inside the gates there is much to see amid we broke into loose groups according to inclinations, many opting to take the 45 minute tour of 'Hellfire Corner' before energy was dissipated elsewhere. This proved to be a vast system of tunnels, first excavated long before, but enlarged for defensive use in the Napoleonic wars, and again enlarged for use in '39 - '45. The tour takes in the parts used as HQ at the time of Dunkirk and subsequently.

Life underground with poor lighting and ventilation, coupled with dampness would have been anything but comfortable for the hundreds working in the telephone exchanges and plotting areas. The only place where daylight could be seen was from the window of a tiny cubicle - the WRAC loo! It's said that there was always a queue. The tour was most interesting, and we finally emerged on to a balcony from which Winston Churchill viewed the action when he visited, and we were dazzled by the light after our mole like tour. The brightness however proved to be illusory; we were facing south with the white cliffs behind us. Those who chose to leave at that time and head back along the paths to the castle were caught in a minor cloudburst and had to shelter in a marquee which happened to be conveniently placed, and for the next fifteen minutes or so were marooned and could only watch as rainwater flooded down the paths and came up in great waterspouts from the drains. Looking seaward all was lost in mist. The wise people who had stayed behind were able to retreat to a buffet.

There is much to see in the castle amid its outbuildings and fortifications amid one senses everywhere its history, from the Roman lighthouse, built in the first century, still standing, through invading Angles, Jutes, Saxons, to

the Norman invasion, 1066 and all that, on to the Civil War of 1642, and to today. The expenditure of energy in getting to the top of the main keep is well rewarded by the view and visiting the outlying parts was tiring, but worthwhile.

At 3.20 we met back at the coach to continue the second part of our tour, making a short stop in Dover to pick up the part of the company who had opted to visit the 'White Cliffs Experience', and then on to Folkestone to visit the Euro Tunnel exhibition.

Whatever one may think about the tunnel, the exhibition is bright, interesting and absorbing. The technology of the construction work is copiously illustrated with pictures and models, and there is a large working model to show the shuttle train organisation which is the delight of every child -- and I suspect most parents too.

Outside the exhibition hall is an enormous piece of tunnel boring machinery - the cutting head in fact. It has a large notice attached, "FOR SALE - One Careful Owner", if you should be interested.

Finally to a clean and pleasant 'French stye' (so it said) tea room. A rest before joining the coach for the return and to give a mental vote of thanks to Shirley and Joe who were the organisers -- this was later put into words by our chairman.

As we sped along the road I thought of that lighthouse tower in the castle complex, which once lighted the Roman galleys, their cohorts later to follow the road we were taking to London.

I was denied a further view of the Balls Pond Road. We took the Dartford Tunnel and M25. Nothing Roman about that.

DAY OF THE FINCHLEY CARNIVAL Eileen Cox

The morning of Carnival Day began for the Finchley Society with Norman and Betty Burgess collecting the Finchley Society Trailer from College Farm assisted by Ken Duffin and Peter Marsh. David Smith kindly provided his camper van and drove the trailer to Victoria Park.

It might come as a surprise to some of our members that there are people living in the area who have never heard of The Finchley Society let alone its aims and endeavours. So therefore we try to "show our flag" as much as possible. This was one such occasion and we viewed the cloudy skies and blustery breeze with some apprehension in case they should put visitors off. However, our display always stands out as tasteful, bright and informative and from it we are generally able to attract interest from like-minded citizens.

Happily, as the public began to make its way front the Carnival Procession (which was somewhat smaller this year), to see what the park itself had to

offer, the sun began to shine brightly and we ourselves kept eyes open for anyone showing a glimmer of interest in our display.

There were not only visitors from our immediate locality but also from Golders Green. Whetstone and other places outside the London area -- indeed I spoke to a family from Norway! It would appear that when people come to visit their parents or grandparents at this time of the year, Carnival Day amid Victoria Park are valuable attractions for their own children or for the entire expanded family.

On what developed as a beautiful and warm afternoon, we were thankful that, in these times of horrific suffering by people elsewhere in the world, here was an oasis of normality where families could enjoy each other's company in untroubled surroundings.

We were very pleased also to be visited by 14 other FINSOC members and we did gain a couple of new members so we can hope that our efforts to publicise the Finchley Society's existence amid work, will not have been in vain.

FRIERN BARNET SHOW 7th-8th AUGUST

A bonny affair amid a family affair as usual! The Finchley Society presence fully matched those moods with a smiling team and an attractive stall layout.

Along with our dismantled display - trailer panels we were delighted to show a very eye-catching feature on trees, specially created by Oliver Natelson, whose drive for a street trees survey was given suitable prominence.

Those members who were in attendance at the stand during the two days were steadily kept busy and we are much indebted to Joan Butcher and her team, together with everyone who contributed to the setting up and breakdown of the display, not to mention "trailing" the trailer back amid forth from College Farm.

There are strong signs that all those efforts have already led to new member recruitment and, above all, it was clearly fun to be involved with this annual 'fun event'.

TAILPIECES

1. Members who attended the Shire Horse Show at Peterborough earlier in the year will marvel at the stamina of Chris and Jane Ower, together with horses Nicknack and Paddiwack, who have since been on parade at Crystal Palace, Suffolk County Show, Richmond Horse Show, South of England Show, Ware Steam Rally and the Middlesex Show -- all in addition of course to routine "home" engagements at College Farm Country Fairs, especially that of this month (5th) which featured the annual Finchley Carnage Procession.

2. Thanks to Muriel Large who first spotted it and Clifford's Antiques in Long Lane, in whose window the original appeared, we hope you will be amused

by the 1902 Estate Agents promotion of Derby Avenue, reproduced as our final page feature.

3. Heather Winton writes to say "not everybody knows that" Austen Chamberlain (brother of Neville, once Prime Minister) although from a staunchly Birmingham family, is buried here in Finchley, at St. Marylebone cemetery.

The Chamberlain family, particularly father Joseph, were all distinguished horticulturists and all played significant roles in the Royal Horticultural Society. To quote from that body's journal *The Garden*. January 1992.

"Austen Chamberlain died in March 1937. His brother Neville recorded in his diary, 'This afternoon we have been to St. Marylebone Cemetery beyond Hampstead to see the urn deposited in the grave. The flowers were marvellously beautiful and the spot chosen looks over a wide view. The birds were singing in the trees and I felt it was a good place'. Half a century later, this cemetery was sold by Westminster Council for five pence."