

50p FREE TO MEMBERS OCTOBER 1994 NO. 8/94

OCTOBER MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting on the 27th October, 1974 at Avenue House will commence at 7.45p.m. The title of Mr. District Judge Karet's talk is "You can't take it with you". Members may recall that Mr. Karet, who is of course a member, showed a number of members around his "home" court as part of an interesting trip to Brentford last year. He is an entertaining and interesting speaker and we are sure you will attend in droves, as usual.

There will be a raffle and in addition, raffle tickets for the North London Hospice Grand Draw will be available at 20p each.

MEMORIAL TO JEAN SCOTT

We are pleased to write that the memorial to Jean is proceeding apace. Planting of the rose bushes in Avenue House grounds is going ahead, white with red centres; it is hoped that planting will be completed later this year and that in early December (very tentatively the 10th), there will be an inauguration of the memorial and an unveiling of a plaque in Jean's memory.

PLANNING

1. Eruv. It may have been noticed by members that the Eruv appeal has been upheld by the Secretary of State. His view (very much summarised) was that the proposed street furniture (i.e. poles and wire) would not be environmentally detrimental or dangerous. We understand that consideration is being given by various people to the possibility of a legal challenge to that decision, presumably in the High Court, again presumably by an application for Judicial Review. (Members may recall that FinSoc considered the possibility of such a challenge in the case of the former Finchley Lido site.) Such a challenge is potentially very expensive and is not easy to mount successfully.

The Society has good reason to believe that there are members who feel very strongly indeed about the issue and who approach the matter from many different perspectives, often diametrically opposed, the connection of which with the objectives of the Society may be non-existent. The Society has made its position clear; it objected on strictly planning grounds, leaving objections on other grounds to other forums. The Society sees no reason to alter its view that that was and is the correct approach.

2. Christ's College. Some members have expressed concern about the condition of the building. This is being carefully monitored.

3. CAV Lucas Site . A developer is building a number of houses and flats on the site. The Society decided not to object to the application by the developer to demolish The Grange, a house built in 1852 but not listed. The

Society is expressing concern at the potential exacerbation of already severe traffic problems in Long Lane and Oak Lane.

4. Studio Cole. We wrote to the Council yet again about this long -too long by any standards - outstanding matter. The Council has said in effect that it is doing all it can. Members will have noticed that there appears to be some activity at the site. We are keeping the matter under careful review.

5. Estate Agents' Boards. The Society has written to the Council with a suggestion that each agent should have to get permission to put up a board, as happens in some other areas. The suggestion came from Sidney Chapman, M.P. The Council's response is awaited.

6. Finchley Central Station. The Society has taken up an offer from the Station Manager for a large poster display on the southbound platform at a cost not to exceed £940. The display will remain for 5 years. The Society considers that this will be most helpful in obtaining valuable publicity and raising the Society's image. The Stephens Collection and College Farm will also be featured and they will be making contributions towards the cost. Production of the display is under way and we look forward to seeing it in place in the not too distant future.

Helga Hatchett. We are sorry to say that one of our members Helga Hatchett, a stalwart of the Planning Committee, had a serious accident a few months ago. We are very happy that Helga is now on the mend and we wish her a very speedy recovery and look forward to seeing her back with the Society, fit and well, as soon as possible.

NORTH FINCHLEY FORUM

In the absence of Carol Halls, Eleni Makri attended the most recent North Finchley Forum when there was continuing discussion regarding the appropriate style to be adopted for street furniture, i.e. lampposts, rubbish bins, seats, etc.. It was noted that the brief for the bus garage had been approved by the Town Planning and Research Committee (this was that the site should not be used wholly for housing but should have a "mix" of uses).

A video was presented showing how traffic schemes were operated in four very different locations. These would be considered in greater detail with reference to the possible pedestrianisation of part of North Finchley. The options so far considered were :

1. Pedestrianise the High Road except for servicing and southbound buses. Provide roundabout at either end of Kingsway.
2. Pedestrianise Ballards Lane except for servicing and northbound buses. Roundabouts as in Option 1.
3. Retain through traffic on narrow through carriageways in both High Road and Ballards Lane with service bays which could also be used for parking and bus stands. Roundabouts as in Options 1 and 2 could be included if advantageous.

It was stressed that the schemes so far presented were at a very early stage and further consultation would take place.

(Carol Halls, the Society's permanent Forum representative, has been approached by one member who has suggested the building of a multi-storey car park on the old Gaumont Site to solve car parking problems. This would not appear to be very likely in view of the fact that approval has already been given for this site for offices with some leisure content but she would be pleased to receive any views on this or any other matter concerning North Finchley Forum matters - 445 6172).

It was agreed that future meetings should be 'public' so check local papers for dates, times and venue if you would like to attend.

ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

1. Peter Crockford has located 19 clocks, only 3 of which were showing the correct time (15.8%) whereas in other areas of North London which he had surveyed the figure was 32%, over double. COME ON BARNET. WIND THEM UP!
2. Oliver Natelson tells us that -
 - a. He has asked the Borough to add a pond to the Glebe Lands.
 - b. The Borough is asking English Nature to designate Coppets Wood a Local Nature Reserve.
 - c. He is hoping to start a movement to plant acorns or oak saplings along historic routes.
 - d. Opposition to the proposed changes to the North Circular at Henlys Corner is continuing.
 - e. A wild life survey is being conducted in the grounds of Friern Barnet Hospital.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Catherine Schmitt of The Finchley Horticultural Society has invited FinSoc members to attend a talk on crime prevention for gardens and allotments by P.C. Peter Hayward on 1st November, 1994 at 8 p.m. at Moss Hall Junior School.

Sunday, 20th November. at 3 p.m in the Victorian Drawing Room, Avenue House. A Beethoven Piano Recital by Peter Frankl in aid of the Finchley Arts Centre Trust (FACT). Tickets priced £7.50 (which includes refreshments) can be obtained from Finchley Arts Centre Trust, 17 Finchley Lodge, Gainsborough Road, N12 8AL (Tel. 445 4175).

3rd December, 1994. Coffee morning at the home of Mari l'Anson, 5 The Grove, N3 (nr. Tesco's) from 10.30 to 12.30p.m. Entrance 50p. Coffee and

biscuits. There will be a Bring and Buy, a raffle, and, as usual, a good opportunity for a chat with friends.

Christmas Party. The party was booked last year for the 15th December and the fee paid. On the 7th September our Chairman was telephoned and told that owing to a special booking, the 15th was now not available: he was not asked, he was told. FinSoc has been offered and has had to accept the 8th December. Bookings are at present in the hands of the Council. This is an unsatisfactory and discourteous way for it to carry out its duties. Organisations should not be inconvenienced in this arbitrary and high-handed fashion. Avenue House is administered by Trustees for the benefit of Finchley. The Trustees have delegated their duties to Council Officers at the Town Hall - not even to officers based at Avenue House who are in touch with what goes on and are familiar with arrangements on a day-to-day basis. We are making representations to the Trustees. In the meantime though, please note the change of date from the 15th to the 8th December.

THE FINCHLEY SOCIETY AT OLD HIGHGATE STATION

We may try to run cars for local trips and holidays, but it's public transport for travel to work in Town. The arrival of the railway at "Finchley for Hendon" in 1867 made commuting possible, and we have all seen the subsequent developments.

These days, when the tube stops at Highgate, few people realise that above them is a station with platforms, waiting rooms, etc. David Smith found that a visit to the old Highgate 'steam' station could be arranged and on 18 June a party of twelve gathered for the visit.

In case you've not known, our trains came this way from Finsbury Park on the LNER main line to the north, and had started at King's Cross or, for City workers, Moorgate Street and Broad Street. At Highgate trains from the Alexandra Palace Branch joined.

In 1910, for example, there were up trains from Highgate at 8.0, 8.4, 8.7, 8.14, 8.18, 8.22, 8.30, 8.33, 8.40, 8.43, 8.46, 8.50, 8.54 and 8.58. As a young man I used to catch the 8.30 from Church End Finchley and get to Broad Street at 8.57. Good going - in the rush hour.

In 1933, London traffic was so congested that London Transport planned elaborate links. In 1936 a start was made on the Archway (ex "Highgate") to East Finchley tunnel, and this line was working in July 1939 to East Finchley and to Barnet April 1940. Highgate station was not completed until January 1941, and until March that year steam passenger trains continued to East Finchley. Thereafter London to Ally Pally steam continued, passengers changing at Highgate for Finchley and beyond. It was war time, and the branch struggled on with interrupted services, eventually being served infrequently by a two-coach push and pull, but I have a photo of earlier days when a rush hour trip meant real smoke and steam on the 1 in 40 from Crouch End.

Goods trains were of course steam hauled, with milk, bricks and coal for Mill Hill Gas Works, and the Royal Train was kept in Wellington sidings. I had at one time a copy of the working timetable for the train's movements to and from Wolferton on King George's death at Sandringham.

About 1954 the Ally Pally service died, with the Finchley and beyond goods lasting into the seventies. But still a bit of the old steam track is used through East Finchley middle platforms to the storage sidings by Highgate Woods.

So far, history and explanation. My father, Joseph Martin, was the stationmaster at Crouch End and Highgate from 1943 to 1952. Therefore I put my name promptly on David's list, delighted to find folk who knew other aspects of the line's workings.

Our guides from LT were resplendent in uniform, and one, Bob Cantey, accompanied us below. In mufti - on his day off - was the equally knowledgeable Bob Aley. It being agreed that we went at our own risk, we went through normally-locked doors upward to the old steam platform-island, but originally at the sides.

To pierce the Shepherd's Hill ridge twin tunnels were bored for 140 yards, emerging at a pit with a steep side up to Archway Road and an island platform (originally both sides). We explored one of these tunnels, walking over rough ballast and were surprised at the size of the tunnel. Where it ends, beyond the barrier, the walkway to Finsbury Park starts.

The station platform has relics of the old days - alas, no "Skegness is so Bracing" posters, but huts, steps, signal mountings and so on. Residents of a converted railway hut look out on the scheme; otherwise it is secret and lonely.

Recovering our nerve and breath we entered the only walkable northbound tunnel of 330 yards, and this has sleepers, chairs, even a length of rail! Our guides saw us slowly and safely through, and no doubt counted heads!

Not only daylight but a veritable nature reserve in this neglected area. So much to imagine and to look for - even a hidden signal box. Even more here, our two experts answered questions unceasingly, and were rarely stumped. And so, cautiously, back to the platform, the stairs and 1994.

It was stressed that the old station causes drainage problems for LT and that what we saw will possibly disappear soon. All the more reason to be grateful to The Finchley Society and to our London Transport friends, who took such pride in their line - and agreed that they had learned, too.

(Since putting the above together from many sources, I have seen a copy of the London Underground Railway Society's publication "Underground 9" of 1981. In the greatest detail, Brian Hardy explains the coming of the tube to our parts.

THE OCTAVIA HILL SOCIETY - COACH DAY 14TH AUGUST, 1994

The Annual Coach Tour started at Octavia Hill's birthplace in Wisbech and finished at her graveside at Crockham Hill in Kent. Betty and Norman Burgess, Joan Sturdy and Christina Leslie met Mrs. Ouvrey (Senior) at Finchley Central Station. First we visited the site of her Finchley childhood, currently a wasteland created by the North Circular Road widening, near where The Green Man Pub was, and we then went to Highgate where her grandfather, Thomas Southwood Smith, lived.

After refreshments provided by Gwynd Gosling at Highgate Literary and Scientific Society, we visited the graves of James and Caroline Hill in Highgate Cemetery. After lunch by courtesy of Diane Saville at Ospringle House in the Church Commissioners Estate Office at Waterloo, we visited the Blackfriars Settlement, formerly the Women's University Settlement, with which Octavia was associated. Betty Judge talked to the Society about the work there and Harbinder Kaur, the Director, conducted us round.

We drove to Kent to see the Octavia Hill Woodlands at Toys Hill and then, after tea, visited her graveside in Crockham Hill Church. A short, moving service was conducted by Jeremy Ouvrey at the graveside with a reading of Octavia Hill's favourite poem entitled 'Longing' by James Russell Lowell.

Another memorable and successful day organised by Peter Clayton.

Details of the Commemoration Day in Wisbech on Sunday 4th December are available from Betty and Norman Burgess, 346 6337. There will be a lecture by Gillian Darley entitled 'Octavia Hill and the Working Woman'.

HERITAGE DAYS - 10/11 SEPTEMBER

The Heritage Days, 10th & 11th September were extremely successful. Over 100 people, including the Mayor of Barnet, Cllr. Ellis Hillman, who had no previous knowledge of Avenue House, visited. The Chairman spoke to one couple who had travelled from Wapping, and another couple from Ilford who had heard the publicity put out by The Civic Trust. The 'Folk on the Lawn' concert promoted by the Finchley Arts Centre Trust proved to be a very happy occasion with dancing for old and young alike. The Society has informed the Civic Trust that we would be prepared to repeat the opening of Avenue House again in 1995. The Chairman wishes to specially thank David Smith and Peter Marsh for taking our publicity trailer on to the back terrace.

TRIP TO BATH

The coach trip to Bath on 24th September was, by all reports, a most enjoyable and interesting visit. Thanks are due to Shirley Avery for her excellent organisation, as usual.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

A report on the meeting will appear in the next newsletter.

INVITATIONS FROM NEIGHBOURING SOCIETIES

HENDON AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY (HADAS)

Saturday, 29th October. City Walk with Mary O'Connell. Meeting at Farringdon Station (Circle and Metropolitan) at 2 p.m. prompt. Going first to the House of Detention Exhibition where the Warden has promised refreshments. (This will not involve him dipping into his 30 ton-a-day ration of gruel - unless specially requested!). Prison records will be made available for your perusal. Afterwards you may follow the "Dark Walk", seeing cells, washhouse and kitchen. All are well-documented and escort tapes are available. Price £3.50 including entry and tea. For more details contact Mrs. D. A. Newbury, 55 Sunningfields Road, Hendon, NW4 4RA. Tel: 081 203 0950.

Tuesday, 1st November. Lecture at Hendon Library, The Burroughs, Hendon, NW4 at 8 p.m. for 8.30 p.m. start. "The Hoxne Hoard and others: Late Treasures from Britain" by Dr. Catherine Johns.

Saturday, 19th November. LAMAS Conference at Museum of London. 29th Local History Conference on the theme "London Poor - 1700 to 1900". Lectures from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. will include "Care of the Infant Poor in 18C London"; "Victorian Poor Law"; "The Labouring Poor"; and "The London Rookeries in the 19C". Tickets £3.50 each can be obtained from Local History Conference c/o 31 Lynton Road, Harrow, HA2 9NJ. Please enclose s.a.e. for reply and make cheques out to London and Middlesex Archaeological Society. Early application is advised; there is no guarantee that tickets will be available on the day.

THE BARNET SOCIETY

Thursday, 20th October at 8 p.m. in the Fern Room, Salisbury Road. Lecture on 'Rolls-Royces in Barnet and elsewhere and some helicopters too' by Douglas H. Green of Hadley Green Motors.

FINCHLEY ART SOCIETY

Wednesday, 26th October, 7.30 p.m. Cary Room, Trinity Church Centre, N12, Demonstration in Oils by Gordon Hales entitled "Along the shoreline".

LONDON MUSEUM OF JEWISH LIFE, Sternberg Centre, 80 East End Road, Finchley, N3.

10th October to 13th November, Sunday - Thursday 10.30 a.m to 4 p.m. A unique exhibition entitled "Living up West - Jewish life in the West End" exploring the colourful and vibrant Jewish community in the West End, right through from the 18th century until the present day.

THE MIDDLESEX SOCIETY

Saturday, 22nd October at 2.30 p.m. Meet Rosemary Bresson in the booking hall of Southgate (Piccadilly line) Underground Station for a short walk and talk about Southgate's Industrial Heritage. Learn about the once-famous Simmons Ice Wells which supplied ice to fishmongers, butchers and confectioners before the days of refrigeration. See some odd street furniture, including an Edward VIII postbox, one of only two in Middlesex.

NORTH LONDON HOSPICE

3/4/5 November at 8 p.m., Saturday, also at 3.30 p.m. "Son et Lumiere" at Monken Hadley. Tickets: Adults £5, Concessions £3.50; Family Ticket for matinee only £14. Old Bull Arts Centre 081 449 0048.

19th November. Gift Fair at Union Church, Mill Hill, NW7. Further details from Joan Ellis 081 959 1276.

FINANCIAL COVENANTS FOR FINSOC

We are pleased to report that Charlotte Hume has agreed to become the Society's Covenant Secretary. If you wish to covenant your membership subscription which, as you know, if you are a tax payer, will mean your subscription is worth more to the Society, please contact her at the monthly meetings or by telephone on 346 2722.

THE LONDON REGIONAL PASSENGERS COMMITTEE

We have received the following press release from Rufus Barnes (Telephone 071 839 1898 - day, 0799 524640 evenings) dated 3rd October, 1994 from LRPC -

"The LRPC, the rail and bus passenger 'watchdog' in London today gave its strong support for a proposal by the London Committee on Accessible Transport, which administers the Capital's public transport travel concession scheme for elderly and disabled residents on behalf of the London Boroughs, to replace the half price discount on rail cheap day returns by a free travel scheme (after 0930 Mondays to Fridays and all day at weekends). The London Boroughs are now considering the idea, which would cost each authority about £45,000 per year.

Professor Eric Midwinter, Chairman of LRPC said 'The London Regional Passengers Committee welcomes and strongly supports this initiative which will bring the rail concession into line with that on London buses and tubes and will improve travel opportunities for elderly and disabled residents - particularly those in South London, which has a sparse London Underground service. The extra borough funding would be a worthwhile expense which might, in the long run, reduce expenditure on the bus and tube concessions owing to the switch of elderly and disabled passengers to rail. We urge the London Boroughs, which have to be unanimous for the proposal to go ahead,

to agree the suggestion so that the quality of life for elderly and disabled people can be enhanced'."

If you have a view on this, please let Eileen Cox know on 445 8422.

INCONVENIENCE

We have also received a report by Eric Midwinter from the London Regional Passengers Committee on a survey of lavatory facilities at London railway stations called Inconvenience; whether the report was sent to us for review or whether just for our conv.....oh, well never mind! Anyway, it is subtitled "A survey of lavatories on London's stations". It is fascinating; 28 pages of report and photographs of station loos, (some clean and well maintained - [now there's a relief] and others horrid) and various tables (e.g. distribution of stations surveyed, the toilet table, London Underground 'Ladies' and 'Gents', ditto for British Rail). There are some surveyors' comments on some underground stations ("Woodside Park - both 'ladies' and 'gents' were locked. A sign on one said closed due to vandalism").

Only two-fifths of the 714 railways and Underground stations in the London region have toilets. Of these, about half were surveyed, of which only 8% were above the basic standard, 48% just about met a basic standard, and no less than 44% were below standard, some of them exhibiting the most squalid characteristics.

Tottenham Hale was voted 'Top Toilet', while Welwyn Garden City, sadly, had the worst station toilets.

Anyone wishing to read this most interesting report should contact Eileen Cox 445 8422.

Whilst on the subject of loos, may we remind you that member Peter Crockford produced a most comprehensive survey of London's public lavatories which was referred to in July 1991 and January 1992 Newsletter Supplements and his full summary under the reference ENV/51/PJWC is available from him on request, on 883 4537.

REQUEST FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FOR MEMBERS' EVENING

24th November, 1994 - Members' Evening. We have some contributions for the meeting but there is still room for more. David Smith would be delighted to hear from you if you would like to present a short talk on a subject of interest to the members. David's number is 883 4154.

A REQUEST FOR REPORTS FOR THE NEWSLETTER

May we remind readers that we welcome brief reports [not more than say 200 words] of meetings notified in the Newsletter which they have attended, for

consideration for publication in the Newsletter. The Editor will be more than happy to assist shy contributors. Please contact Eileen Cox (herself a contributor) on 445 8422 or Norman Bar on 346 7321.

VICE PRESIDENT AND LIFE MEMBERS

It is recommended by the Executive Committee that Mrs Carol Halls be asked to become a Vice-President of the Society and the following be asked to become Life Members of the Society:

Norman Burgess: Pat Dunnill: Dorothy Fox: Chris Ower: Jane Ower: Harry Sharpe: Bill Williams.

It is proposed to ask the October meeting to approve the list which was drawn up on the recommendation of a sub-committee formed to consider the matter.

INDUSTRIAL CORNER - De DION BOUTON FACTORY

Readers will recall an item about the factory in the June Newsletter. We understand that HADAS has had a response from John Heathfield, published in the May 1994 Newsletter, which we quote from with the permission of the HADAS Newsletter with thanks.

The De Dion Bouton factory - This is shown in Kelly's directory of 1928 at Woodside Workshop, High Road, North Finchley. It later became a cylinder grinding workshop and has been replaced by a set of offices. A photo of the facade of the lorry works is in the Newton Collection at Barnet Museum.

Our readers may recall that our 1936 Kelly's recorded the Burtonwood Motor Engineering Co. Ltd. cylinder grinders on the north side of Woodside Grove at the junction with the High Road. Was that it?

AVENUE HOUSE

1. We regret that the pot containing the aspidistra donated to Avenue House through the good offices of Dorothy Fox has been broken. Could any members provide a replacement please. Offers to Eileen Cox on 081 445 8422. Thanks.

2. We understand that £50,000 per annum is being spent on the maintenance of the grounds of Avenue House. Do members consider that this is money well spent? Are we getting value for money? Letters to Eileen Cox or Norman Bar please (details on last page).

STEPHENS COLLECTION

More stewards for the Stephens Collection are urgently required. Just two and a half hours per month. If you can help, please contact Charlotte Hume on 346 2722.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Perran Newman, family history researcher, is seeking information that may lead to the location of living descendants of ancestors who lived in the Finchley Area. Last known details are as follows:

Frederick William MOSS, 16 Friern Watch Avenue. Died 1.1.31 had three children Hubert, Muriel Ada and Fanny.

Hubert married Maud DOWELL and lived at Luccomb High Road, Whetstone. He died in 1918 but had two boys Jack and Tom. Tom married a Kathleen ??. Jack married Bridget ?? and had three children, John, Joanna and Rory. Fanny did not marry.

Muriel Ada married William Leonard WESTCOTT. They lived at 39 Etchingam Park Road. William died in 1958 and his wife then moved to Somerset where she died in 1975. William was a solicitor with offices in the Strand. They had four children - three daughters. Barbara who married Vivian HOLMAN: Ruth who married Benjamin ESSEX: Annette who married Bert WILLIS: a son James who married Joan ?? and had a daughter Sheila.

Any information, however trivial, that may lead me to locate living descendants would be much appreciated. Please call or write Perran Newman, 13 Ascham Lane, Whittlesford, Cambridge CB2 4NT. Tel: 0223 832480.

LIFTS

Eileen Cox has received two requests for lifts. One to and from Granville Road (off Ballards Lane) and the other to and from Grove Road (off Tally Ho Corner). Please contact her on 445 8422 if you can help.

LOCAL FACTS & CURIOSITIES

John Whittington

The well-known firm of UNIGATE was formed some years ago by the amalgamation of UNITED DAIRIES and COW & GATE. United Dairies itself had been formed from several dairy companies, one of the larger ones being MANOR FARM DAIRY. Between the wars United Dairies had a large depot in East Finchley High Road near to the railway station where, during steam train days, large quantities of milk in glass-lined railway tank wagons were brought daily. The wagons were shunted in and out of the depot by a small petrol engined locomotive. The milk was bottled there and distributed by road to the surrounding areas. The site of the sidings is now the station car park and where the depot stood is housing and offices.

In common with other dairy companies United Dairies had shops in most districts. The one for Church End Finchley was in Hendon Lane on the corner of Victoria Avenue. The Manor Farm Company was the first occupier of the premises and still today above the flats over the shop, just below gutter level,

can be seen in the stonework the legend "MANOR FARM DAIRY". (Reprinted with permission and thanks from St. Mary's Church News, August, 1994)

AUTUMN BRAIN TWISTER

Stewart J. Wild asks - If the person who made it didn't want it,
and the person who bought it didn't use it,
and the person who used it didn't know it....

What is 'it'?

DONATIONS

The Society's thanks are due to Mr. L. F. Martin: Patrick & Susan Moriarty:
Mrs E. F. Pearce: and Miss P. Quaife for their additional donations to funds.

THE FINCHLEY SOCIETY

PATRON	Spike Milligan
PRESIDENT	Bill Tyler
VICE-PRESIDENT	David Smith
CHAIR	Norman Burgess, 28 Vines Avenue, Finchley, London, N3 2QD (346 6337)
VICE-CHAIR	Norman Bar, 48 Granville Road, Finchley, London, N12 0HJ (346 7321)
HON. SECRETARY	Eileen Cox, 56 Grove Road, London, N12 9DY (445 8422)
HON. TREASURER	P. J. Kelly, 57 Summers Lane, London, N12 0P8 (445 9054)
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	June Saffer, 32 Ventnor Drive, London, N20 8BP (445 1480)
PRESS OFFICER	Robert Winton, 224 Creighton Avenue, East Finchley, N2 9BD (883 2633)
EDITOR	Norman Bar (346 7321)
NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION	Carol Halls, 1 Finchley Villas, Finchley Park, London, N12 9JT (445 6172)

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