

Founded 1971

Patron: Spike Milligan
President: Bill Tyler ARIBA, IHBC

50p

FREE TO MEMBERS

JUNE 2000

No. 6/00

MONTHLY MEETING & AGM – 29 JUNE

Members are cordially invited to the Society's Annual General Meeting at Avenue House, East End Road, Finchley N3, on 29 June at 8 p.m. Additional information on the AGM is enclosed with this issue of the Newsletter.

The AGM will be followed by a 'Members' Evening' with Noel Lynch speaking on 'Auctions, Antiques and Oddities'; Bill Tyler on 'What is Conservation?'; and Percy Reboul on 'Barnet at War'.

THE SEPTEMBER COACH TRIP

On Saturday, the 16th we are going to Bletchley Park, where, in great secrecy, Britain worked to break the codes used by the Germans and the Japanese in World War II.

When we arrive there will be time for coffee before joining an hour-long escorted tour, which starts every thirty minutes.

After the tour you can do your own thing – lunch at one of the three 'eateries', or a picnic. When refreshed, there are various exhibitions to see, which are in the actual wartime buildings. The Booking Form is enclosed with this issue of the Newsletter.

Shirley Avery (8346 8484)

PHOTOGRAPHS: NEW DEVELOPMENTS

I had a call from a Mr Thompson, who used to live in an old house opposite Christ's Church North Finchley, concerning his collection of glass lantern slides taken around 1900. We have had some prints made for the archives and will put them on display later in the year. You must not miss seeing these wonderful photos.

We are organising a competition for the best photograph taken within the grounds of Avenue House. details are enclosed with this issue of the Newsletter. Do have a go and encourage your friends and relations to join in.

We now have 1692 survey photographs.

Derek Warren (8346 5258)

PLANNING COMMITTEE – MONITORS NEEDED URGENTLY

Our Planning Committee urgently needs help in monitoring development proposals in Finchley and Friern Barnet, work that is central to the aims of our Society. In particular it needs monitors for the Woodhouse and Finchley Church End Wards

Monitors become members of the Planning Committee, which meets every other month. Monitoring is interesting work, involving liaison with Barnet Council and occasionally visiting sites to estimate the effect of development applications.

Would anyone interested please get in touch with me.

Robert Winton (8883 2633)

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

A number of trees, including a fine old oak, could not be saved from the chainsaw in the Finchley Garden Village Conservation Area. It appears that Barnet Council will be unable to take any action in this matter, but our request that all remaining trees in this conservation area should be included in a Tree Preservation Order has been registered and will be considered by the Council in due course!

At the recent meeting of the E. T. Committee we also discussed street trees, schools environmental areas, Avenue House Grounds, the Garden House in the grounds of the old Friern Hospital, the road improvements on Long Lane and Ballards Lane, the problems with the bus stand at the end of Woodhouse Road near Colney Hatch Lane, and why the bus stops are now brought out into the traffic lane instead of being situated in a lay by.

Another concern of this Committee is the covering over of front gardens. This not only involves a loss of greenery, but also prevents water soaking into the ground. Water goes instead into the drainage system, taking pollutants with it, and then enters brooks and rivers. This also adds to flooding problems further down stream.

If you would like to help and join in these discussions then come to our next meeting on Monday 10th July. Give me a ring on 8346 5258.

Derek Warren (8346 5258)

LONDON REGIONAL PASSENGERS COMMITTEE

The London Regional Passengers Committee is a group of public transport users who have regular meetings in town to discuss problems and make representations to the government and other bodies. Now, of course, contact with the Greater London Assembly will be particularly important.

Dorothy Fox has represented the Society for many years but is now unable to get to the meetings, so can you help? Ideally it would suit someone working in the City or West End, as the meetings are in the evenings every month or so. If you would like more information, please ring Dorothy on 8346 0331.

Derek Warren (8346 5258)

KNOW YOUR SOCIETY

The Finchley Society is registered as a charity because it gives us the status necessary to recover tax on covenanted subscriptions and to cash cheques given under Gift Aid. There are restrictions on charities, of course: we cannot trade, cannot undertake political activities and may not use our funds for the benefit of members. None of these limitations prevent our carrying out the activities for which we were created.

Being a charity produces more sympathetic responses to appeals for help, especially appeals for grants, and gives us a status that helps us to find volunteers. It enables us, for example, to get help from the Barnet Volunteer Bureau.

We are responsible to the Charity Commissioners and we send them annual financial returns and we must operate within their rules. Members of our Executive Committee are our Trustees and individually responsible and liable for the strict, proper and prudent control of the Society's management, activities and finances. Among the points they must watch are ensuring that our activities are non-political and are not subsidised from Society funds.

Our charitable status covers the Friends of the Avenue House Estate and the Friends of College Farm. The Stephens Collection is a separate charity associated with our Society, with which it works closely and from which it receives support.

Robert Winton (8883 2633)

A FINCHLEY SCRAPBOOK

I am indebted to Denys Peyg for alerting me to the existence, in the British Museum Prints Collection, of Volume 28 of the "George Potter Collection of North London Prints", (reference 187.C.7). It is a collection of prints, cuttings, photographs and other documents relating to places and events in Finchley from as far back as the reign of Henry VII, although most items refer to the 19th and early 20th centuries.

For anyone interested in our local history it is a jewel box of delights. I was intrigued, for example, by one print entitled "Dispersion of the Dissenters' Meeting on Finchley Common. John Bunyan menacing Colonel Trelawney". The print is dated 1847 but when did this event take place?

Elsewhere is an account of "The Story of Finchley Common told from Local Records" by W. B. Passmore (1899). It includes details of the crimes of Dick Turpin in this place. An article from "The Daily Graphic" of 25th November 1904 celebrates the arrival in Finchley of the first "Motor Fire Engine" in the country. A photograph shows the crew testing the pump by directing their hoses up the tower of Christ's College in Hendon Lane. The school in those days was directly opposite the fire station. (I was saddened to discover on a recent visit to the Science Museum that the fire engine is no longer an exhibit having been put into store)

A sad event took place at Park Farm, East End Road in the autumn of 1905 when 'Lord' George Sanger sold off his circus menagerie and equipment on his retirement. (He had been 'on the road' for 70 years). There are several newspaper articles and photographs including one depicting an elephant having its toe-nails cut before the sale'. An even sadder event was the murder of Sanger in 1911, recorded by several newspapers with accompanying photographs. These include a photo of the murderer who went on to commit suicide on a nearby railway line.

At this point a member of staff informed me that the Room was closing for lunch. I can't wait to go back!

David Smith (8883 4154)

THE GHOSTS OF AVENUE HOUSE

We all know Avenue House that we love and use. It has become part of us. But what of the ghosts of the Stephens family who lived and loved and worked in the familiar rooms? The 1881 census, researched by FinSoc member Eillen Parnwell, reveals their ages and the devoted staff who kept the house running. Running! Imagine taking the coals to the Turret Room way into the clouds.

Read their names below, and conjure up a picture of each one, where they came from and the social life of 120 years ago.

1881 British Census

Dwelling: Manor Road Avenue House
 Census Place: Finchley, Middlesex, England

Source FHL Film 134 1333 PRO Ref RG11 Piece 1371 Folio 43 Page 79

	Marr	Age	Sex	Birthplace
Henry C STEPHENS Rel: Head Occ: Writing Ink Manufacturer	M	42	M	London, Middlesex, England
Margaret A STEPHENS Rel: Wife	M	39	F	Hull, York, England
Margaret A STEPHENS Rel: Daur Occ: Scholar	U	17	F	Finchley, Middlesex, England
Henry Frk STEPHENS Rel: Son Occ: Scholar		15	M	Finchley, Middlesex, England
Michael E. STEPHENS Rel: Son Occ: Scholar		12	M	Finchley, Middlesex, England
James MESSENGER Rel: Serv Occ: Butler	M	32	M	Down Ampney, Gloucester, England
Elizabeth MESSENGER Rel: Serv Occ: Housekeeper	M	28	F	Bocking, Essex, England
Clara S. DICKS Rel: Serv Occ: Housemaid	U	24	F	Sherrington, Buckingham, England
Ellen CHAPMAN Rel: Serv Occ: Kitchenmaid	U	24	F	Bocking, Essex, England
Mary A. Roche Rel: Serv Occ: Housemaid	U	20	F	Ireland
Mary SQUIRE Rel: Serv Occ: Housemaid	U	21	F	Newport, Devon, England

NEW MEMBERS

Our membership secretary is Lyn Bresler, 30 Birkbeck Road, North Finchley, London N12 8DZ (8446 6249). We are happy to welcome as new members:

- Andrew & Carolyn Berkeley, N3
- Helga Lazarus, N3

DONATIONS

Our Treasurer is P J Kelly (8445 9054). This month, we received donations from

- Mr R.S. Buchanan, N3
- Mr A. Forsyth, East Barnet
- Mr & Mrs Robert Winton, N2

FOR YOUR DIARY

17 June 10.00 to 12.00	Coffee Morning hosted by Andrea Whittaker, 9 Stanhope Avenue, N3
18 June	East Finchley Community Festival , Helpers required for FinSoc Information Stand, contact Derek Warren (8346 5258)
19 June 8 for 8.15 pm	Gil Hutchings on "An Attempt on My Life, a lighthearted talk by a 'Jack of All Trades'", Church End Finchley Library
29 June 7.45 for 8 p.m.	Monthly Meeting and AGM , Avenue House Followed by a Members' Evening with Noel Lynch ("Auctions, Antiques and Oddities"); Bill Tyler ("What is Conservation?"); Percy Reboul ("Barnet at War").
10 July	Environment and Transport Committee Meeting Contact Derek Warren (8346 5258)
17 July 8 for 8.15 pm	David Baker on "The Customs and Folklore of Weddings" Church End Finchley Library
16 September	Coach Trip, Bletchley Park Contact Shirley Avery (8346 8484) for information
28 September	Monthly Meeting , Avenue House Mr R W G Smith on "The Story of Hampstead Heath" [replaces the talk by Rudi Vis MP on "Parliament and Parliamentary Life"]

**REPORTS FOR THE SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER
BY 25 AUGUST
TO BARBARA WARREN
(8346 5258 or barwar@waitrose.com)**