

Founded 1971

Patron: Spike Milligan KBE. President:  
Bill Tyler AADipl.ARIBA, IHBC

**FEBRUARY 2002**

no.2/02

**MONTHLY MEETING - FEBRUARY 2002** [www.finchleysociety.org](http://www.finchleysociety.org) Members are cordially invited to the February meeting in the Drawing Room of Avenue House, East End Road, N3 on Thursday, February 28th at 7.45pm.for 8.00pm. The speaker will be Steve Presland, Head of Environmental Services, LBB. His talk will cover a number of environmental services, such as Neighbourhood Wardens, refuse, street cleansing and recycling. It will also cover the Council's new WasteWise project and the Council's initiative for town centres known as Streetwise.

**ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE** - David Smith, 8883 4154, Chairman  
Next meeting on March 7<sup>th</sup> 8.00pm at 17, Abbots Gardens, N2. Please ring David if you are coming to observe.

*East Finchley Station Board*

The committee are pleased to announce that the information board is up at East Finchley Station by kind permission of London Transport, and does include our web-site address. This has taken Peter Marsh 2/4 years of often frustrating work. He will now be tackling, when his strength returns, the inclusion of our web-site address and the telephone number up-date on the Finchley Central information board on the up platform. (Ed. While we are here can we remind people that Finchley Central is a station and that the area is called Church End.)

**VOLUNTEERS**

Our most urgent needs are :

- ◆ Monitors for our Planning Committee.
- ◆ Help with a small publicity working party.
- ◆ Help with putting up equipment at monthly meetings.

Please get in touch with Robert Winton, on 020 8883 2633: a phone call will not commit you to anything.

**ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT.**- Miranda Dunn, 8371 9744, Chairman

Next meeting on March 11th at 83, Wentworth Avenue at 8.00pm. Please ring Derek if you will be attending as an observer....8346 5258

*Open Spaces*

The Environment and Transport Committee are checking the over 60 'Green Spaces' in Finchley and Friern Barnet, together with the brooks and 18 ponds, although only 7 of the latter have public access. So do report any pollution or other problems that you see.

Barnet are going to introduce Town Keepers to deal with litter, graffiti, fly-posting, pavements and street furniture, let us hope that they will bring back Park Keepers!

#### *Graffiti*

Meanwhile the Neighbourhood Management Team 8343 8184 or e-mail: [nms.CB@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:nms.CB@barnet.gov.uk) will effectively clear up on your property for a reasonable sum.

#### *Spring Bulbs*

The triangle at the top of Gravel Hill, at the junction with Hendon Lane, N3, has been planted with bulbs. We arranged this with the financial help of Mortgage Express, so keep a look out to see what appears in the Spring.

#### *Wildlife*

On March 13<sup>th</sup> we will be visiting Rocklands Pond and the Dollis Brook for frogs and kingfishers. More details in the March newsletter.

*Deterioration of the 263 Bus Service-* Peter Crockford, 020 8883 4537 After letters in local papers, and frequent moans from regular users of the no. 263 buses at bus stops and on buses, an in-depth survey was carried out for over 10 months, on the intervals between 263 buses in the same direction. The results from some 2,500 individual records fully support local complaints that the 263 timetable is chaotic.

From an average recording time of about 1 hr. a day Mon-Fri, there were nearly 160 cases of two 263 buses arriving together or only a minute or two apart (including 23 cases of three 263s and sometimes four, nearly together). While these pairs were only 4% of all 263s under Arriva's control, they jumped to 10% when First National North took over, around 20<sup>th</sup> April 2001. Under Arriva, passengers had to wait 10mins. or more 3 times a day in each direction, but 6 times a day under FNN and 12 times a day on Sundays and bank holidays. The common complaint that after a long wait (usually 18-25mins) two 263s came together was also borne out, with 70 cases recorded in 10 months.

For an off-peak timetable interval of 10 mins. we might have expected that at least half of all 263 buses should arrive within 8-12 mins. of each other. In fact only 19% of Arriva buses and 22% of FNN 263s did arrive within 8-12 mins. Another irritating feature in East Finchley is that around 1 in 6 of all buses are not available for picking up passengers due to 'Sorry not in Service' notices on the front, or, being on the wrong routes and not stopping to pick up fares. This compares with only 1 in 15 buses all over London.

From consultation with London Buses Customer Services, it seems that yet another operator may take over running 263 buses early this year. If so, we will be monitoring their performance too.

Time intervals on 8<sup>th</sup> November last year-  
26,20,16,0,2,20,1,38,38,34,11,0,14,0,10,6,9,4,4,18,17,20,16.

#### **THE GOOD OLD DAYS(1)**

*The Phoenix Cinema - Mari I'Anson*

On Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> January I was invited with other Friends of the Phoenix to an evening of excerpts from some early films. We were treated to a Berkely Busby musical, a scene from 'Mr. Deeds goes to Town', 'Singing in the Rain' with that unforgettable dancing sequence with Gene Kelly, 'The Importance of being Earnest' with the handbag scene and some dancing with Fred Astaire. There was a short break for home-made cakes and drinks.

The cinema foyer is still in the throes of rebuilding and will open next March, with several celebrities who are already supporters of the Phoenix. They are very keen to enrol new Friends who will benefit from a monthly newsletter, reduced ticket prices and special events. Write to The Phoenix Cinema at 142, High Road , E. Finchley, N2 9ED or e-mail: [phoenix.cinema@virgin.net](mailto:phoenix.cinema@virgin.net).

### **THE GOOD OLD DAYS (2) - Mari l'Anson**

As I walk around Finchley these days, several things bother me. As we often hanker after the 'good old days', and I am now of an age that qualifies for this attitude to life, I ask myself questions about things that puzzle me. Of course I know the answers, but I am still at a loss to understand why 'something has not been done about it?'

For instance -

- ◆ Why are the recently installed barriers at the tube station kept open more often than not? This does nothing to discourage fare dodgers which the barriers were supposed to do.
- ◆ Why are the new road signs pointing the wrong way? Is it to fool the devil or to confuse visitors?
- ◆ Why do people get away with forming groups at bus stops instead of the orderly queues of the past? Once your life was in danger if you jumped the queue. Now you can push and shove as you will, and nobody seems to mind.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

....that you can have a couple of quite long country walks in Finchley without ever being much more than a stone's throw from the North Circular Road?

As a result of the Burial Act of 1652, the crowded boroughs of inner London were obliged to buy space for cemeteries. So, having relatively cheaper land available not too far off, Finchley was ideally placed.

In East End Road, where the North Circular passes below, can be found St. Marylebone cemetery. This served the affluent middle classes of Marylebone, Hampstead and Highgate, with a high proportion of professional and military occupations. Magnificent cedar trees now tower above elaborate memorials, some to well known figures. Do not miss The Willows, a quiet, secluded garden, signposted behind the crematorium. In addition to the willow trees there is a small pool with a fountain, a memorial rose garden and lawns

Located in the High Road, N2 is St. Pancras and Islington cemetery, like St. Marylebone opened in 1854. The mass of graves is almost a mile wide and is large enough to have more than twenty named roads, in addition to numerous footpaths within the boundaries. Stroll here and you could be deep in the countryside, the wildlife blissfully unaware that they are living out their lives in a capital city. Somewhere in an unmarked grave, lies the remains of Valentine Bambrick, who in 1858 was awarded the Victoria Cross for his exploits during the Indian Mutiny . Unfortunately he was one of only eight holders of the VC to have forfeited the medal. He died in Pentonville prison in 1864 aged 29 years.

Just a thought ....I wonder if there are more dead people in East Finchley than those currently living there.

Tony McTeare, Glenhill Close

### **VALENTINE BAMBRICK**

The Finchley Society are assisting the King's Royal Rifle Corps Association in having a plaque placed in the Islington Cemetery Chapel in memory of Riflemen Valentine Bambrick VC

## **WHAT'S ON?**

*Friern Barnet and District Local History Society*

All meetings on Tuesdays at The Old Fire Station, next to the Town Hall  
February 26<sup>th</sup>, "Whetstone Crossroads" by John Heathfield

*Friends of the Library*

February 18<sup>th</sup>. 'Ringing in the Millennium' by Roy Mills

*Hornsey Historical Society*

February 13<sup>th</sup> 8.00pm at Union Church Hall, Ferme Park Road, N8 'The Coming of Electricity to North London.'

## **ARCHIVES**

Barbara Warren, a kinswoman of Ena Constable, has presented a copy of the diary that Ena compiled when she was the Chairman (equivalent of a Mayor) of Friern Barnet Urban District Council to the FinSoc archives. However, Percy Reboul, seeing its importance to the Borough, is photographing its pages ready for inclusion into the Borough Archives. Barbara has already donated several photos of Ena on duty, both as Chairman and in 1967 as Councillor Leslie Snelling's Mayoress of London Borough of Barnet. Those of you who knew her will not be surprised at the interesting details!! narrated in her dairies. She had an eye for slightly amusing events involving pompous officials, but loved children and food.

## **MEMBERS**

Membership Secretary...Lynn Bresler, 30, Birkbeck Road , N. Finchley, London N12 8DZ... 8446 6249, e-mail: LynnBressler@aol.com

## **DONATIONS**

Treasurer...Nigel Doe, 020 8445 1278 e-mail: Nigel@Trakka.co.uk

Many thanks to Menai Computers Ltd . who have sent a donation through the internet.

## **MONTHLY MEETINGS**

Events Secretary...Josie Robinson, 46 Burleigh Gardens, Southgate, N14 SAG  
020 8368 4387

**EDITOR-** Barbara C Warren

83 Wentworth Avenue Finchley London N3 1YN 020 8346 5258

e-mail barwar@waitrose.com

Our printer at Ballards Lane Methodist Church, Tony Gossett, had a heart attack last year, but fortunately the November issue had been printed and all we had to do was liberate it from the print room. As we were told that he would not be around for two or three months we made arrangements for the January newsletter to be printed by the Council printshop. Because they had not a green print colour the black blobs around PJ's obituary did not look like shamrocks. However, Tony has recovered well and is back in business but with limited hours. He will only be working two out of the four weeks per month. This means that our newsletter will have to be in a lot earlier so that he can print it during those last two weeks.

Copy for the March newsletter to reach Stephen Yeo by **February 15th.** at 2 Torrington Grove, N12 9NA or e-mail JSYeo@compuserve.com

*We care for Finchley **and** Friern Barnet*