

Founded 1971  
[www.finchleysociety.org.uk](http://www.finchleysociety.org.uk)

Patron: Spike Milligan  
President: Bill Tyler ARIBA, IHBC

50p

FREE TO MEMBERS

March 2002

No. 03/02

### ***Monthly Meeting – 28 March***

Members are cordially invited to the Society's monthly meeting at Avenue House, East End Road, Finchley N3, on Thursday 28 March at 8 p.m.

Norman Burgess will talk about "Old Finchley and its Surroundings". Norman has a wealth of local information and his talk is bound to be very entertaining.

*For the latest information on Finchley Society meetings go to  
[www.finchleysociety.org.uk/programme\\_2001.htm](http://www.finchleysociety.org.uk/programme_2001.htm)*

### ***Spring Coach Trip to the Isle of Wight – Saturday, May 18***

Those members who were on the last coach trip will remember we discussed a trip to the island and hoped for a two-day visit. We could not, alas, get a hotel booking for single night, so we are going for the day.

It will mean an early start to catch the 8.45 ferry at Southampton. After an hour's sail we will be there for the opening time at Osborne House – "a place of one's own, quiet and retired" for Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. They bought the original smallish house in 1845. This was replaced with a building in the Italianate style by Thomas Cubitt, completed in 1851.

There has been some interesting renovation recently so we will take plenty of time to look around. Lunch in Sandown will be followed by a tour of the Island, pausing at Yafford Hill for tea. The return ferry is at 7 pm. Pam of *Plan Ahead Coaches* has negotiated an excellent deal for us, but for a minimum party of 25. So roll up for this amazing bargain!

Shirley Avery

PS If anyone needs a lift to the early start, give Shirley a ring on 8446 8484 and she will do her best to arrange this.

### ***Spring Walk – Wednesday, March 13***

On Wednesday 13th March we hope to see a kingfisher if we are lucky, some frogs, and perhaps ... ?

We will stroll alongside the Dollis Brook for about an hour, meeting at 10.30 am on the bridge over the brook in Fursby Avenue N.3. This is about 400 metres west of West Finchley station. Although most of the route will be along a tarmac path there is a muddy section to get to Rocklands pond. Do come and join us.

*Derek Warren*

### ***Celebrate Poetry in Finchley***

People young and old are being invited to enter a poetry competition with the theme "Celebrate Finchley". It is being run by local resident Martin Huckle, with the support of the Finchley Society. With such a wide-ranging theme it is hoped to attract poems – no more than twenty lines in length – that celebrate a place, a person, an event, an emotion that links with Finchley.

Entry is open to all who live or work in Finchley. Full details are in a leaflet that will soon be available in local shops or can be obtained direct from the organizer on 020 8343 1987 or [martin.huckle@gb.unisys.com](mailto:martin.huckle@gb.unisys.com). The closing date is April 8.

*David Smith*

### ***Victoria Park Centenary – Saturday, May 11***

On 10th May 1902 Victoria Park in Ballards Lane was opened by HRH The Princess Christian. The whole project, including the purchase of the land, cost about £9,500, made possible by the munificence of Mr F. A. Hamilton and Mr H. C. Stephens.

We hope to celebrate this centenary on Saturday 11th May with a picnic and a Punch and Judy show. Other ideas and help would be appreciated. Please give me a ring 020 8346 5258.

*Derek Warren*

### ***Scattered Kerbside Box Lids – Mystery Solved***

Hands up all those who get annoyed because the lids are never put back on your kerbside recycling box after it is emptied. As I thought, quite a lot of you with your hands up – and I would join you if I weren't writing this. Well, put your hands down now and read the following extract from the report on the Barnet Council Conference 17 January:

*Question from Councillor Brian Gordon: "Can something be done to ensure that collectors replace recycling boxes with the lids on after they are emptied?"*

*Answer by Councillor Geof Cooke: "The lid is placed either under, next to or within the box to allow operatives to tell whether the box has been serviced or not. This is standard practice for the service."*

In other words it keeps the collectors happy and it doesn't matter if we take in our box after it has collected rain. But if only Brian Gordon had asked why the boxes cannot be left upside down!

*Robert Winton*

### ***Golden Jubilee Walk – Monday, June 3***

We are planning to study the wildlife and check for pollution along the Dollis and Mutton brooks on Bank Holiday Monday 3rd June. I need help to patrol one of nine separate sections between Brook Farm and Lyttelton Playing Fields for just one hour.

Let me know if you can help on a stretch near you. If you can't recognise the birds or flowers, you can at least spot rubbish or pollution in the water. I hope that there will be at least two or three people in each group.

*Derek Warren*

### ***Front Gardens – Paved with Good Intentions?***

Increasingly the roads are becoming more crowded and parking more difficult, in an area that was developed before there was a need to provide garages. So it is understandable that people sometimes decide to use their front gardens to park their car. Changing to a hard surface can, however, have disastrous consequences on the environment, as is illustrated in the very informative leaflet produced by the North Finchley Local Agenda 21.

Please read the leaflet and if you are thinking about converting your front garden, perhaps consider putting into effect some of the ideas recommended in the leaflet.

### ***Gardening In Muswell Hill – Wednesday, March 20***

The Muswell Hill & Fortis Green Association is holding a meeting on "Gardening in Muswell Hill" at the Friends Meeting House in Church Crescent at 8 pm on Wednesday, March 20. Non-members are welcome. The speaker is Pamela Defries, Secretary of the Muswell Hill & District Horticultural Society, who will also conduct an "information" evening to answer questions on your plants.

### ***The London Archaeological Archive – Online***

The Museum of London have just launched an online search facility for the catalogues held by the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre. The archive holds information on the finds and records from archaeological digs in London. Construction of the archive seems to be in its early stages, but searches under Finchley produce some details of digs.

The archive can be accessed at [www.museumoflondon.org.uk](http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk).

### ***Buried in Finchley***

Society member Mrs Marian Werner has sent me a page from the Radio Times saying that Robert Donat's ashes were placed in "the Memorial Garden Finchley".

Another member, Tony McTeare, informs me that this refers to his ashes being scattered in Ward 8 in the Willows memorial garden at the St. Marylebone Crematorium, East End Road.

Robert Donat was a very well known actor in the 1930s, 40s and 50s. Among his best known films are "Goodbye Mr Chips", "The Count of Monte Christo" and "The 39 Steps". A chronic asthmatic, he died in 1958 at the age of only 53.

Further investigation reveals that Robert Donat lived in Hampstead Garden Suburb. A blue plaque was erected in his memory at 8 Meadway in 1994.

The Royal Society of Arts erected the first blue plaque on Lord Byron's London home in 1867. By 1901 there were 36 plaques, and the London County Council took over the scheme, followed by the Greater London Council in 1965 and English Heritage in 1986. You can find more about blue plaques at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/> or at <http://www.blueplaque.com/> . You can also read about them in *Discovering London Plaques* by Derek Sumeray, from Shire Publications.

A follow-up to the information in the February newsletter: The timetable for bus route 263 has been effectively reduced during the daytime and evening, with buses running "about every 10 minutes during the day" and "about every 12 minutes in the evening".

### ***New Members***

Our membership secretary is Lynn Bresler, 30 Birkbeck Road, North Finchley, London N12 8DZ (8446 6249). We are happy to welcome Melvyn Dresner of N3 as a new member:

### ***Donations***

Our Treasurer is Nigel Doe (8445 1278). This month, we received donations from:

A.W. Philbey, N2

Mrs Sylvia Dominy, N3

Pat Dunnill, N3

Peter Clayton, Wisbech

Tony McTeare, N3

Dr & Mrs O Natelson, N12

Sally Underwood, N12

Mari I'Anson, N3

Gary & Wendy Russell Barter, N3

**REPORTS FOR THE APRIL NEWSLETTER  
BY 25 MARCH  
TO BARBARA WARREN  
(8346 5258 or [barwar@waitrose.com](mailto:barwar@waitrose.com))**

***visit our website!***  
**[www.finchleysociety.org.uk](http://www.finchleysociety.org.uk)**

**— we care for Finchley and Friern Barnet —**