

THE FINCHLEY SOCIETY

Registered with the Civic Trust
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Founded 1971
www.finchleysociety.org.uk

President: Bill Tyler AADipl.ARIBA, IHBC

JANUARY 2003

no. 1/03

A happy new year to you all. What does the future hold for us? A positive way forward Avenue House...a possible future for College Farm and Hertford Lodge...and good health, happiness and peace for our families and friends.

MONTHLY MEETINGS -JANUARY 30*2003

Members are cordially invited to the **January** meeting in the Drawing Room of Avenue House, East End Road, N3 at 2.00 for 2.30pm. This is an **afternoon** meeting with Mike Howgate as speaker. His talk is entitled "The Geography of Hertfordshire and Middlesex." Hertfordshire is woodland and farmland, Middlesex is built-over suburbs. But everywhere we can find clues to the underlying rock strata; from church fabric to chalkmines; pub signs to disappearing streams. Norman and Betty will be serving mulled wine!

REPORT of OCTOBER MEETING

Martin Hughes, Manager of the London Borough of Barnet Democratic Services, replaced Leo Boland, LBB Chief Executive, who had been called to an urgent meeting . Society Vice President David Smith reminded us that this was the annual lecture in memory of Jean Scott, founder of our Society.

Martin Hughes exposed the basic LBB structure - the Cabinet which forms the executive, and the Council, and how responsibilities are divided. Certain matters only the Council can deal with; on other matters an individual Cabinet member can take a final decision. The Cabinet Overview Committee can "call in" Cabinet and Council items for scrutiny, and, if they wish can refer them back for further consideration. The number of LBB committees has not been reduced but they can now avoid referring decisions elsewhere and the subsequent delays.

The Finchley Society can be more closely involved by knowing the LBB policies, structure and personalities, and by acting as lobbyists and experts. The more we become involved in this way the more the LBB will listen to us, he said. The public should make much more use of the Local Area Forums as a means of influencing the LBB decisions even before they are taken.

Martin Hughes left the impression that the LBB does wish to consult meaningfully and do the best it can for the public.

REPORT of NOVEMBER MEETING

One of the most informative meetings we have had was the November one when a talk was given by two ladies from Barnet's Trading Standards Office. Amongst other things we learnt

about our rights when purchasing goods and details about warranties; how to deal with door-to-door salesmen. It included information on builders and tradesmen, and what the going rate is for calling out a plumber. It was a pity that this very good session did not have a higher turnout of members, who would have benefited enormously from the information offered.

"FINCHLEY REMEMBERED"

The launch of our book at Waterstone's, North Finchley, on November 21st was attended by over 40 members and friends. It was the prelude to a very successful sales drive which has resulted in the sale of over 500 copies. We have reprinted on two occasions so far as many people saw it as an ideal Christmas present. We have been encouraged by the support received from both the Barnet Press and Finchley Times whose articles caught the essence of the book for their readers

Local school libraries and LBB libraries have purchased copies as well as Dr Rudi Vis, our MP and Dr Hartley Booth our former MP, and Cllr Brian Coleman bought copies for himself and for The Mayor of Barnet. The book has already been sent to many parts of the UK and overseas. It is listed in the national booksellers' computer so that it can be ordered from anywhere. We have fulfilled our legal obligation to supply free copies to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales and the Library of Trinity College, Dublin. The request for these copies tells us that they will become part of the National Published Archive and will be made available to present and future generations.

The book is still available from 17 Abbots Gardens East Finchley London N2 OJG and costs £8.95 plus postage of 76p. What is quite amazing is that people are so enthusiastic about the content of the book that they have already begun to write their own reminiscences for the next edition. Contributions are always welcome and of course everything that is written will be kept in the FinSoc archives.

David Smith

"MENTIONED in DISPATCHES"

Mari I'Anson wrote to tell me that while reading Elizabeth Longford's book "Victoria R" published in 1964 she came across this passage. After a serious case of typhoid in 1836 the young princess was advised by her physician Dr Clark to "take regular drives to Finchley, Hampstead and Harrow ." It says something of the good air of Finchley . We do not know if she ever took his advice, but it's nice to know we were recognised by Kensington Palace.

Marian Werner wrote to tell me about Barnes the donkey mascot which had been won by a member of the 510 Squadron at Hendon in a night-club raffle and was taken to Hendon RAF Aerodrome by tube, and given the rank of Pilot Officer. The Autumn 2002 newsletter of the Donkey Sanctuary, Sidmouth, Devon would like to know what became of him?

NEWS of the FAMILY

"Birds of Brent Reservoir" a 240 page illustrated book detailing the birdlife of Brent Reservoir is now for sale £12 plus £2 p&p from 65, York Way, Friern Barnet, N20 ODF. One of the editors is **John Colmans** of The Finchley Society.



Our President, **Bill Tyler**, is to undertake a walk along the Inca Trail in support of Autism. He needs sponsorship and a leaflet is enclosed with this newsletter.

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT.- Miranda Dunn, 8371 9744, Chairman
Next meeting January 20th at Avenue House, Balcony Room, 8.00pm

Wildlife

In London you can find smooth hound, blue-mouth rockling, bib, dory, and another 115 species of fish in the Thames. These are all recorded in "The London Naturalist", the journal

of the London Natural History Society. A run of salmon has been recorded at the Molesey and Sudbury fish traps every year since 1994.

The LNHS has just published "The Breeding Birds of the London Area (£30). Further information from **Derek Warren** 020 8346 5258

Calling all gardeners

The Committee is planning a PLANT SALE in **April** in aid of Avenue House. We would like to ask all members (all of whom are, we are sure, gardeners) to remember this when growing or ordering seeds or plants. Just a few extra will help our stall.

We also need plant pots, preferably 4" to 5"; yoghurt pots (larger size ie 500ml) would also be very useful. Please call Pat Dunnill on 8349 9825.

FOR SALE....Otley Hall!

The Finchley Society coach trippers will have fond memories of visiting Otley Hall, Suffolk, in September 2001.

Otley is a Grade 1 listed building described by Pevsner in his "Buildings of England" series as one of the most interesting 15th and 16th century houses in Suffolk. Sadly the Hall was put up for sale in September with offers in excess of £2.5million and may have already changed hands.

The owners, the Haggars, had lovingly restored Otley and its gardens but are selling in order to be closer to their family and the schools they own in Essex. Mr Haggar wants to concentrate on writing more books

It has a fascinating history and we can only hope that this beautiful building will not be lost to the public, and that the new owners will continue to welcome people like us into their home.

WEB SITE INFORMATION

Our Society is not into providing archive information but from time to time visitors to our web site ask us questions which we cannot always answer although we do if we can. Can anyone help us with these two?

Andrew Emmerson wonders if we know where the BBC Emergency News HQ was situated in Finchley during the Second World War.

Louise Finer lives in East Finchley and would like to know about Nazareth House and Fairacres (previously The White House).

WHATS ON ?

Friends of the Library

Mon. 17th February

The Life of a Toastmaster

David Baker

Mon. 17th March

Brahms to Broadway

Maurice Peckman

MEMBERS

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

We welcome the following to our Society and ask them to make themselves known at the monthly meeting.

Anthea H Gray, N20

Mrs D T Brooks, N12

Mrs Grace Fensome, N12

Michael Holton, N2

DONATIONS

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

We thank the following for their generous donations -

Denys Pegg, N3

Misses J and A Canning, N3

Peter, Pat and Helen Marsh, N3

Anthea H Gray, N20

Mr and Mrs A E J Toms, N3

Mr S F Fassett, N20

Barbara and Derek Warren, N3

Ron Wilson, N3

Michael Holton, N2

Anthont Roberts and Stuart Baines, N2

Mrs Coral D'Eon, N3

We urge members who have not yet completed a Gift Aid form to do so. Forms are available from Charlotte at 62, Church Crescent, Finchley, N3 IBJ. This way, we can increase our funds and it does not cost you anything!

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Events Secretary...Josie Robinson, 46 Burleigh Gardens, Southgate, N14 5AG

020 8368 4387

If you know of, or have heard a good speaker, please let Josie know

CHRISTMAS PARTY

The wonderful green decorations straight from the garden and woven into the staircase, by Audrey Baker and her helpers, the smell of mulled wine and the gentle sound of Christmas carols and songs greeted our members as they entered Avenue House for our party this year. A wonderful way to celebrate under the new management and emphasising the feeling that we have now, that Avenue House once again belongs to the people. The food, under the direction of Joan Butcher, was again tasty and plentiful, the wine flowed and the conversation, enlivened by a Finchley Quiz compiled by David Smith and the "Unusual Objects" by Noel Lynch, was lively. The two Christmas trees and the cut-out stars from St Mary's School set the scene to perfection.

EDITOR - Barbara C Warren

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Copy for the **February** newsletter to reach me by **January 15th 2003**

We care for Finchley and Friern Barnet