

Founded 1971
www.finchleysociety.org.uk

President: Bill Tyler AADipl.ARIBA, IHBC

FEBRUARY 2003

no.2/03

MONTHLY MEETINGS - FEBRUARY 27th 2003

Members are cordially invited to the **February** meeting in the Drawing Room of Avenue House, East End Road, N3 at 2.00 for 2.30pm. This is an **afternoon** meeting with the speaker being Graham Javes on "Barnet in old Photographs". He will illustrate his talk with slides of Barnet from 1860 to the 1950s , from the old market town to the town of today. Mr Javes will cover the history of Barnet to include King John's 1199 grant of a market charter to the Abbot of St Albans monastery .

(Ed: See you there!)

SPIKE

Spike Milligan died on February 21st 2002 and for this anniversary memory we are quoting from the introduction made by The Rev. Nicholas Holtam (with his kind permission) at St Martin-in-the-Fields where hundreds attended his memorial service in June.

--Welcome to all of you, Spike's family, friends, colleagues, fans, admirers and those representing the many causes he espoused. The presence of so many at 10.30 on a Monday morning is testimony to the love and respect people felt for Spike Milligan.

Like almost everyone of my generation I feel as though I grew up with him, and I mean 'grew up' in the sense that he helped me into and through adolescence giving me a capacity both to question and see things differently. He changed the face of Britain, not just of British comedy. Comic genius usually comes at a price and Spike sometimes lived very near life's edge.

Let us give thanks to God for Spike Milligan for his contribution to our national life, his gifts as a writer of scripts and books, poems and children's stories, for his comic genius.

Let us give thanks for his creative energy and chaos, for his love and anger, his wisdom and madness.

Let us give thanks for his capacity to make us laugh, to see the preciousness of life and its absurdities, for his idealism and his longing to make the world anew, for his music and his love of jazz.

Amen.--

“FINCHLEY REMEMBERED”

The book is 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

NEWS of the FAMILY

Congratulations to Nicholas, the brother of Robert, our Secretary, on his knighthood, awarded at the New Year. Sir Nicholas Winton's story of his rescue of hundreds of children from Czechoslovakia at the beginning of WW2 was told in our November newsletter. If you get a chance to see this story in the film "The Power of Good" go and see it.

Congratulations to Peter Clayton, chairman of the Octavia Hill Society, who was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Jubilee Honours list

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

Next meeting March 17th at Avenue House, Balcony Room, 8.00pm

Wildlife

During January two tawny owls were seen snuggling together 30ft up a tree in Avenue House Grounds. Also two waxwings visited a small garden area in East Finchley to feed on the red berries on the bushes. House sparrows were reported squawking in the bushes by the sorting office in Lodge Lane, and redwings came into the garden during the cold spell.

I would like to photograph the 12 most interesting trees in Finchley and Friern Barnet. Have you any suggestions?

Derek Warren 020 8346 5252 barwar@waitrose.com

Calling all gardeners

The Committee is planning a PLANT SALE at the Church End Festival in **May** 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 helpers for the stall. Please call Pat Dunnill on 8349 9825.

The 263 bus service again.

Sadly there has been no overall improvement in timekeeping of the 263 buses since Metroline took over in February last year. On average only around half of 263s still arrive between 5-15 minutes of the last one in the same direction for a 10 minute timetabled interval.

The 57 long waits in 8 months, mostly 18-27 minutes are still occurring too often. People are still complaining to me about the occasional very long waits of 40 minutes to one hour, although fewer than under First National.

If 263s arriving together in pairs, or within one minute of the last one, is the main criterion, Metroline's performance is even worse than that of First National (65 pairs in the first 8 months of First National compared to 78 pairs under Metroline) This is equivalent to 14% of Metroline 263 buses running in pairs.

These results are all off peak and correspond to up to 4½ hours of recording each week, going over 1200 records. It looks as if there will be no improvement in timekeeping until Metroline deal with the practice of running buses in pairs and the resultant leapfrogging.

Although unconnected to timekeeping, Metroline's route labelling is worse than under First National eg 158 cases of a missing rear route number in 8 months out of 219 labelling defects.

The 219 total includes 17 cases of different route numbers to front and rear and 53 cases of no final destination at the front.

However, in mitigation. Metroline's 263 performance appears to be about average for many London bus routes, while some bus services are certainly much worse, including a few of Metroline's other routes where a quarter of Metroline buses are running in pairs and even in threes.

P.J.W.Crockford

House numbers

Can the emergency professionals find your house without driving up and down the road looking for it? Please check that your house number is clearly visible. Is it hiding behind overgrown shrubbery, is it at the end of a long drive, is it clearly visible at night? Numbers that are 4ins high are recommended.

WEB SITE INFORMATION

Andrew Emmerson wondered if we know where the BBC Emergency News HQ was situated in Finchley during the Second World War. Nigel followed this up and was rewarded with this note from Mr Emmerson.

During WW2 the BBC took all manner of precautions to ensure it could continue broadcasting even if Broadcasting House itself was hit. A number of basement premises in central London were taken over as studios and a 'complete broadcasting station in miniature' was built underground at the rear of Broadcasting House in Duchess Street (known as 'The Stronghold'). It was linked to transmitters at Brookman's Park and Daventry, and also had a landline to a facility called Emergency News HQ. Not a lot is known about ENH but the archive centre states it was located at a private residence by the name of Kelvedon in Woodside Avenue, Finchley, N12. According to local gossip, it had never been used in earnest and its wartime use was completely forgotten until its basement was uncovered for building work. It was afterwards dismantled to make room for a patio or something similar – unless you know better.

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that almost one million military men from Britain and the Empire were killed during the First World War, and the very first of these was a man from Finchley. Private John Parr of the 4th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment was killed on Friday, August 21st, at Mons, Belgium. Aged just 20 he was the son of Edward and Alice Parr of 52 Lodge Lane, North Finchley.

Tony McTeare

WHAT'S in a NAME?

That's an unusual name, remarked a friend who was perusing a document for me. Imagine a small boy at school at the beginning of term with the master wanting full names for the register...titters, how do you spell it? In early school days one is not strong enough to cope with non-conformity – even in a name.

How did I get the P part of my initials? Do you remember the story of Charles 2 hiding in a tree. A nearby yeoman with 5 sons helped their king remain hidden from Cromwell's soldiers and helped him flee the country. Charles promised to remember them on his return, which he did, ten years later, and William came to London to be employed in the Royal household. The name of the family?...Pendrill. I am descended by marriage to them

Now for the H in my initials. Why did they not call me after the thoroughly English names of the original Pendrill brothers. But my parents wanted something classical ...Horatio! Horace!

And even the doctor's name of Maurice was suggested. But Horace it was. As the years went by Horace became Horry and then inevitably Harry. H.P.S... who am I?

THE DAY I HATED HITLER!

It was in 1943. My mother took me on the trolley bus to the Open Air Swimming Pool in the High Road. I was really looking forward to it. When we reached the gate we were turned away because there had been a 'dog-fight' overhead, and parts of a German fighter plane had fallen into the paddling pool. We were allowed to see the scene; dark, menacing twists of metal on the bottom of our beloved pool. It was all Hitler's fault that I was cheated out of my fun!

Many of us will have happier memories of the Pool and I would like to share with other members a picture of those happy days that came to my attention at the Finchley Art Society Annual Show. Rosanna Taylor has produced a painting entitled "Finchley Lido 1938" showing a busy poolside scene with those unforgettable arches in the background. She can supply copies, unframed at £3 for A5 size, £5 for A4, and £8 for A3. Rosanna will be pleased to take orders on 020 8346 0890 if you are interested in this aspect of bygone Finchley.

David Smith

MEMBERS

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

We welcome the following member to our Society and ask her to make herself known at the monthly meeting.

Barbara Kail, NW11

DONATIONS

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

We thank the following for their generous donations –

Mr A J Gorrett, N20

Mrs G Williams, 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

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

We care for Finchley and Friern Barnet

