

Founded 1971

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

President: Bill Tyler ARIBA, IHBC

50p

FREE TO MEMBERS

June 2003

No. 06/03

### ***Annual General Meeting and Monthly Meeting – 26<sup>th</sup> June***

Members are invited to attend the Society's Annual General Meeting, which will be held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June at 8.00 p.m. at Avenue House, East End Road, Finchley N3. The agenda for the AGM, the minutes of the previous AGM and the Chairman's Report are enclosed with this newsletter.

The AGM will be followed by a talk by Laurie Chivers on "Trading – Small Businesses in East Finchley and the Effects of Supermarkets". Mr Chivers is the founder of the East Finchley Traders Association.

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

### ***The September Coach Trip – Saturday, 20 September 2003***

In the morning we will visit the beautiful historic town of Maldon, the site of a celebrated battle in 991 between the Danes and the Saxons. We will see the mediaeval houses, 13<sup>th</sup> century churches (one with a unique triangular tower, tipped by a hexagonal spire), sailing barges at the Hythe, etc. There are plenty of eating places for lunch, and Saturday is a market day.

In the afternoon (shh... ) we are off to the Secret Bunker at Kelvedon Hatch, which was built during the cold war, in 1952, to house the devolved Central Government in the event of nuclear war. It is on three levels (no lifts, but with wide shallow stairs). We hope to have tea in the canteen. A booking form is enclosed with this newsletter. For more information, call Shirley Avery on 020 8346 8484.

*See also*

*[www.basinsites.co.uk/maldon00.htm](http://www.basinsites.co.uk/maldon00.htm)*

*[www.ukcoldwar.org.uk/kelvedonhatchbunker.html](http://www.ukcoldwar.org.uk/kelvedonhatchbunker.html)*

### ***The History of Post Boxes in the Finchley Area***

In an interesting and amusing talk by Stephen R. Krause at the April monthly meeting we learnt that there are 150 types of pillar boxes in the UK, and they are one of the oldest pieces of street furniture. Anthony Trollope "invented" the pillar box: prior to this letters had to be posted at post offices.

Boxes were trialled in Jersey, so if they were a flop, no one would know. Originally they were green but were changed to red in 1874 to be more visible. Initially they had an aperture in the lid, but this design had to be revised as it let in the rain!

In 1883 it was realized there was no Royal Standard, or "Post Office" sign on the boxes, and some members of the public were unsure if they were official! There are several without such identification in Finchley – one in Nether Street. Post box recycling also happens – many people have decommissioned ones in their gardens. Someone in Cornwall has a wall-mounted one on their front door as their own letter box.

Roz Avery

### ***The President writes ...***

My planned trek In the Andes was thrown into disarray as the result of a quite severe respiratory infection I developed at the end of March - no, not SARS! It destroyed weeks of fitness training and left insufficient time to start over again for departure in mid-May.

I have attached myself, however, to another group aiming for Maccu Picchu in early September and I hope I can be at peak fitness by then. Having raised the staggering figure of over £10,700 (including my own donation to cover travel costs and more) I can't let the side down now! Again, my thanks to all those FinSoc members who have donated so generously.

Bill Tyler

### ***Roz's Raffle***

Those of you who attended the May meeting will know that we are now holding a mini-raffle in aid of Avenue House at the monthly meetings. Tickets are 50p a strip, so please bring some money along to the June meeting and support a worthy cause.

### ***The Borough of Finchley***

In October we will be celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Charter creating the Borough of Finchley. We would like to hear from anyone who was present at the event in Avenue House Grounds in 1933, when the Earl of Athlone presented the charter to the Charter Mayor Councillor Vyvyan Wells. Please contact Norman Burgess on 020 8346 6337.

### ***Church End Festival***

A big thank you to all the members who helped Pat Dunnill and Miranda Dunn raise £267 at the plant stall at the Church End Festival. This money has been given to the Avenue House Estate management to help improve the house and grounds.

## ***Harry Beck***

The designer of the London Underground map, a classic design of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, lived at 60 Court House Road between 1936 and 1960. We have arranged for Paul Godier, head of London Underground Limited, to unveil a commemorative plaque on Thursday June 19<sup>th</sup> at 10.30am. Everyone is welcome.

*See also*

*[www.thetube.com/content/history/map.asp](http://www.thetube.com/content/history/map.asp)  
[www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/alabaster/A673517](http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/alabaster/A673517)*

## **Note – the November Monthly Meeting**

This has been changed from the evening to the afternoon – at 2.00 for 2.30 p.m. on Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> November.

## ***New Members***

Our membership secretary is Lynn Bresler, 30 Birkbeck Road, North Finchley, London N12 8DZ (02 8446 6249). We are happy to welcome as new members:

- Hazel Bigg, Barnet
- Michael Trapp & Nicola Devlin, N12

## ***Donations***

Our Treasurer is Nigel Doe. This month, we received donations from:

- Robert Hogan, SW5
- Robert Winton, N2

Nigel has moved: his new address is 87 Welbeck Road, East Barnet, London, EN4 8RY; and his new phone number is 020 8440 3545.

## ***Friern Barnet & District Local History Society Conducted Walks***

### ***Sunday, 22 June – Colney Hatch***

A circular tour with Oliver Natelson, lasting 1-2 hours.  
Meet 2 p.m. at the forecourt of Friern Barnet Town Hall.  
Cost £1 per adult

You will see: the Grade II listed Town Hall building and its spectacular architecture (outside only) with its bronze, copper, unusual brickwork, fine limestone, foundation stone and gold (no kidding); the local shopping parade and old houses tell their own story; St John's Church where you will be given a splendid welcome and tour by local and international architect John Phillips RIBA who will relate the history and architecture of this 1890s building.

<p><b><i>Sunday 29 June – New Southgate</i></b></p> <p>A circular tour with Colin Barratt, lasting about 2 hours. Meet 2 p.m. at the entrance to Homebase, Station Road. Cost £1 per adult</p>	<p>You will see: the 90 year old gas holder — an engineering marvel; the Millennium Green (the only one in Enfield Borough); the remnant of the once bustling High Road, now just a footpath!; a former cattle byre and dairy; the 100 year old postal sorting office and Edward VII post box; the North London Sikh temple, formerly a Methodist Church built in 1898; early Victorian grand houses; Arnos Grove tube station, a Grade II listed building; the patchwork of changes visible along Bowes Road and Palmers Road.</p>
<p><b><i>Sunday 13 July – North Finchley</i></b></p> <p>A linear walk with Oliver Natelson, lasting about 2 hours. Meet 2 p.m. at the corner of Dale Grove and Ballards Lane. Cost £1 per adult</p>	<p>You will see: the site of the new Arts Depot; the oldest roads in Finchley; the oldest, newest, smallest, largest shops in Finchley; Torrington Park with its houses dating back to the 1840s; ancient hedges from the 1780s; houses of the famous.</p>
<p><b><i>Sunday 14 September – Friern Hospital</i></b></p> <p>A linear tour with Oliver Natelson lasting about 2 hours. Meet 2 p.m. in the forecourt of New Southgate Station, Station Road. Cost £1 per adult</p>	<p>You will see: the ancient parish boundary; how the railway line was built and served the old asylum; a tour of the grounds to see the Gatehouse, old cemetery, covered reservoir; what the asylum was like; weird tales – not for the squeamish.</p>

The History Society holds monthly meetings at 7.45 p.m. on the last Tuesday of the month, at the Old Fire Station, next to the Old Town Hall, Friern Barnet Lane. For details of membership ring 020 8444 3089 or 01707 642 886.

**REPORTS FOR THE SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER  
BY 15<sup>th</sup> AUGUST  
TO BARBARA WARREN  
020 8346 5258 or [barwar@waitrose.com](mailto:barwar@waitrose.com)  
(There is no newsletter in July or August)**

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

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