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

President: Bill Tyler AADipl.ARIBA.IHBC

## **NOVEMBER 2003**

### **MONTHLY MEETING**

Members are cordially invited to the **November 27<sup>th</sup>** meeting in the Drawing Room of Avenue House, East End Road, N3 at **2.30pm for 3.00pm**. The speaker will be Mr Frank Kelsall and the title of his talk will be 'Architectural Heroes of Finchley.' Mr Kelsall will talk to us about four people – Robert Burford, James Frost, Anthony Salvin and George Jack – all of whom lived in Finchley and were prominent figures in their world of architecture and building.

- Please note that the **November**, January and February meetings will be in the **afternoon**.

### **CHRISTMAS PARTY**

This will be held at Avenue House on **Thursday December 11<sup>th</sup>** at 7.30pm for 8.00pm. Members will remember the wonderful decorations at the house last year and Janett will be doing the same this year, invoking days past. For the first time in three years there will be a large decorated Christmas tree outside the house. There will be the usual formula of good food, drink and conversation. Joan Butcher would love to hear from you with offers of help with food before and on the day. Please ring her on 8364 9314.

### **FRIERN BARNET TOWN HALL – Dr Oliver Natelson, 83612496**

Friern Barnet Town Hall was built during the early years of WW11, its basement being constructed with aerial war in mind and which had a shelter for 600 people, a machine to provide fresh air filtered free from poison gas, a rest room for staff with wall boards depicting Churchill, firemen fighting a blazing building "somewhere" in Friern Barnet, a wartime stretcher, a faded Union flag and a portrait of President Roosevelt. All this has survived six decades of war and peace.

The basement "nerve centre" is bereft of wartime furniture, however, air-tight rubber seals on the steel doors and an escape tunnel leading out to a point "somewhere" in Friern Barnet add to the mystery and suspense.

Councillors in the present administration view the idea of a new museum in a positive light, whilst meetings with Planning Officers are on-going and hopefully before long the doors will be open to school parties, tourists and members of the public.

The rest of the building? The developers, Barratts, have sought planning permission to install flats on the ground, first and second floors, with a row of flats in the loft, but only showing their dormer windows at the rear. The front and side elevations will remain as now.

**ENVIRONMENT and TRANSPORT** – Chairman, Miranda Dunn, 8371 9744.

Next meeting at Avenue House 8.00pm is on November 17th

*Trees*

This is the time of the year when Ann Gallon needs information from you about the state of the trees in your road. This is especially important this year when many trees have suffered from the dry summer Please contact her on 020 8346 8533.

*Graffiti.*

Rob Russell, Graffiti Co-ordinator LBB, 020 8359 7499, met up with Derek and I in order to show us how to use the graffiti kit. Miranda and we now have one of these each and know how to use it for the benefit of any members.

*Post Box*

I cannot count the number of times that I have driven along Regents Park Road without noticing the post box opposite Arden Road. It is usually hidden by parked vehicles. To my surprise it is a Victorian post box, which brings the total to 5 that I have seen in Finchley.

*Derek Warren*

*“How to Make Soil and Save the earth” by Allan Shepherd.*

This diminutive book appealingly explains how anyone can compost without expense or effort. It is presented in a modern black and white text with pictures, some perhaps not so attractive to those who do not like creepie-crawlies.

It presents a sound argument for composting , the drawbacks of landfill being danger and death for the gulls, the creation of a breeding ground for rats and the production of large amounts of methane gas. As well as suggesting DIY ways to compost, it reviews 15 different compost bins and includes a directory of bin retailers, composting organisations and eco-friendly compost to buy.

Despite being predominately about composting I found the Recycling Directory in the back the most useful part. This lists 22 organisations and their contact details for recycling anything from vegetable oil to inkjet cartridges, furniture to bicycles.

It is available from The Centre for Alternative Technology £4.99...01654 705890. Their website may also be of interest: [www.cat.org.uk](http://www.cat.org.uk)

*Review by Roz Avery*

*Allotments* – Peter Pickering [pe.pickering@virgin.net](mailto:pe.pickering@virgin.net)

John Prescott has commissioned Richard Wilshire, a geography lecturer, to carry out an audit of the nation’s allotments prior to a review of the 1908 law governing their ownership and use. It is estimated that there are 330,000 allotments in the UK ,with women accounting for 20% of tenants keen to grow chemical free food for their children.. Plots are under threat from local authorities looking for land for supermarkets, car-parks and housing.

Revised laws might include statutory protection or even the creation of new plots, which could be used by community groups as neighbourhood gardens or orchards and could be used for teaching about wildlife and food production.

The first allotments date back to the outbreak of war with France in 1793!!! and was prompted by severe food shortages. In the 1830s machinery in agriculture brought massive unemployment in rural areas and allotments were given as compensation.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE** – Chairman, Stephen Cooper, 8445 2685

Next meetings, November 10<sup>th</sup> at Avenue House 8.00pm. Why not visit and see what goes on. Let Stephen know so that the right number of coffee cups are available!

*Friern Barnet Town Hall and Friary House*

The former is to be converted into flats, the plans for which look reasonable and do not seem to be a matter for concern. But, as the sale of Friary House is not now to be proceeded with, it is proposed to house The Old Peoples' Day Centre there, with potentially serious problems with car access and parking.

*Professional Development Centre(Finchley County School)*

Flats will be built there and, unfortunately, the school war memorial cannot be saved as it is part of a wall which will be demolished with the building. The memorial has been photographed.

**ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE** – Chairman, David Smith, 8883 4154

*Finchley Remembered.*

No, not the book, but the reception on October 4<sup>th</sup> at Avenue House to commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Charter Day when Finchley became a Borough in October 1933. The archives were raided and the Finchley Mayors, photographed by Amy Milner, were on display, fixed to an ingenious panel. Council minutes, photographs of events with dignified ladies in their long floral dresses and reminders of the war years to come were on display in the dining room in the afternoon and later at the reception. Maggie, Derek and Peter were responsible for this particular part of the celebrations.

Betty provided food, Kurt presided over the drinks and the evening ended with the film taken on the actual day by The Finchley Ciné Society. The people came out in their hundreds lining the streets during the carnival and at Avenue House when the Charter was handed over by the Earl of Athlone to Alderman Pike, fondly remembered to this day. His grandson, Nicholas, came, full of pride, to loan us the gilded box containing the Freedom of the Borough. The Mayor came wearing the Finchley chain and bearing the Finchley regalia

I missed the original event by 2 months as I was born in December. Norman Burgess however was there with his mother and it was he who masterminded the present day celebrations and is to be hugely congratulated.

We have since had calls from members and others with their appreciation of the event. Robert Hogan e-mailed me his delight and has sent some recollections of his impressions. He has recently joined us, but rarely attends the monthly meetings. He felt that the Charter exhibition called for a special effort and he was not disappointed. He was particularly intrigued by the scale of the 1933 celebrations!

**ARCHIVES** – Maggie Ferguson – Archive Custodian, 8349 4283

Archive work mornings on most **Mondays 10.30 – 12.30am.**

*Are you Replacing your Computer?*

If you are replacing your computer you might be able to let the Society have your old model.

The Archive Group are gradually putting our archive material in order, and a computer on which to store the archive records would be a tremendous help. If you can offer anything please send details to Robert Winton, 224, Creighton Avenue, E Finchley, N7 9BD, 020 8883 2633

*Additions*

We are greatly indebted to Mrs Daphne Hart, widow of Alderman Bill Hart, who was the Mayor of Finchley and of Barnet, for her gift of two Mayoral pendants, given to Mayors on completing the year of office; and two albums that cover important events in the area history, including visits by Her Majesty the Queen and the former Prime Minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher. These came to us on the celebration of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Finchley Borough in 1933, that took place at Avenue House on October 4<sup>th</sup> 2003. Norman and

Betty Burgess have visited Daphne and thanked her for her invaluable addition to the archives.

#### WHATS ON

- *The New End Theatre, Hampstead Village 020 7472 5803.*

**November 11 – December 21.** “Take a Chance” by Roger Hall . £17

Established in 1974 this 84 seat theatre has just undergone a theatre refurbishment to include new and comfortable individual seats with improved leg space.

- *The Church Farmhouse Museum*

**October – February**...an exhibition about Spike Milligan- comedian, author, Goon, former Finchley resident and Patron of The Finchley Society.

- *Finchley, Friern Barnet and Golders Green Scout District*

**Saturday November 8<sup>th</sup>** .Fireworks at Frith Lane, Mill Hill, NW7. Bonfire to be lit at 6.45pm, food and stalls, fireworks at 7.15pm. £4 , children £2.50.

#### EVENTS SECRETARY

Unfortunately Josie Robertson has indicated her wish to retire as events organiser and this position is now vacant. Although she has completed the talks programme for next year (and this is always done with a small committee) we are in urgent need of someone to take this on.

#### MEMBERS

Membership Secretary...Lynn Bresler, 30, Birkbeck Road, N Finchley, N12 8DZ...020 8446 6249, e-mail :lynnbresler@aol.com

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

Dr Kenneth Dodds,N3

Mrs Sally Stuart,NW11

Denise L Palmer,N8

#### DONATIONS

Treasurer...Nigel Doe, **020 8440 3545**...e-mail: [nigel@trakka.co.uk](mailto:nigel@trakka.co.uk)

Please note Nigel's new telephone number and change the entry on the green paper prepared by Carol and listing committee information.

We thank the following for their generous donations –

Mr and Mrs Lyall,N3

Simon and Christa Dimont, N3

Councillor Leslie Sussman,N3

Mr and Mrs V L Sainsbury, W3

Mrs M Pond,N3

Nocholas Pike.

Alan Cohen

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

**EDITOR** – Barbara C Warren, 83 Wentworth Avenue, Finchley, London N3 1YN...020 8346 5258...e-mail: [barwar@waitrose.com](mailto:barwar@waitrose.com)

Copy for the **JANUARY** newsletter to be sent to Stephen Yeo at 2, Torrington Grove, Finchley, London N12 9NA or e- mail: [JSYeo@compuserve.com](mailto:JSYeo@compuserve.com) by **December 15<sup>th</sup>**.

**HAPPY CHRISTMAS**

*We care for Finchley and Friern Barnet*