

Avenue House, 17, East End Road, Finchley, N3 3QE.
www.finchleysociety.org.uk

020 8343 3180

President: Bill Tyler AADipl.ARIBA.IHBC

Founded February 11th 1971

APRIL 2004

MONTHLY MEETINGS – *David Smith, 020 8883 4154*

Members are cordially invited to the **April 29th** meeting in the Drawing Room of Avenue House, East End Road, N3 at **8pm.in the evening** . The speaker will be Mr Bruce Bennett and his talk is entitled “Our Garden Through the Seasons.” The talk, illustrated with colour slides, shows how Bruce has developed his Hertfordshire garden from a “green desert” to what it is today. He has recorded for us many of the plants as they flower through the seasons. His other interests include bird-watching: he is an active member of the Potters Bar and Barnet RSPB group, to which the speaker’s fee will be donated.

We were embarrassed by the amazing turn-out at our February meeting to the extent that we reached the capacity for the room, and some members had to be turned away at the door. We apologise to those people who were disappointed and hope that they will not be deterred from attending future meetings – all of which will be at **8.00pm** until November

Is there anybody who would like to play the piano before the meetings ? It is our piano, generously donated by Michael Gerson, and it is such a shame not to use it, and it adds such ambience to the assembly.

joda@cromwellhall@freeserve.co.uk

NEWS of the FAMILY

We were saddened to hear of the news of the death of Karl Ruge’s wife. We send our condolences to him and his daughter on their sad loss.

PLANNING COMMITTEE – Chairman, Stephen Cooper, 8445 2685

Next meetings, May 10th, July 12th, September 13th and November 8th at Avenue House 8.00pm.

Barnet’s UDP revision

The Public Inquiry into Barnet’s Unitary Development Plan began on 3rd March, and The Finchley Society’s objections were taken at a ‘hearing’ on the next day. A hearing is less formal than a full Inquiry, and we sat round a table with the Inspector and the responsible Council Officer, Ros Ward, rather than appearing in the Council Chamber for cross-examination by a barrister. Stephen Cooper, Bill Tyler and Peter Pickering took it in turns to deal with our various objections. After some difficulties at the start – the first room was very small and hot – the hearing went very well, and lasted until late afternoon; some of our points were accepted by the Council, on some they convinced us of their case, and others will be for the Inspector to adjudicate on. The hearing was public, with a reporter from the Hendon and Finchley Times present. We thank those members of the Society who came along for part of it, including our MP, Rudi Vis. We now await the Inspector’s Report.

Peter Pickering – pe.pickering@virgin.net

FINCHLEY LOCAL HISTORY.

Finchley is one of the few London areas that does not have a local dedicated history group. In the past any work done has been done under their own steam. At one time a considerable amount of work was done under the auspices of The Libraries Committee of the old Finchley Borough Council.

It is proposed to bring together a new group within the Society for all enthusiastic researchers, whether professional or amateur, so that original research work can be started up. As last month's newsletter reminded us, we have a very rich local archive, now at Daws Lane, and of course our own Society archives have many unique features waiting to be explored.

Any members who are interested are asked to contact David Marcus at 31, Courthouse Gardens, Finchley, London N3 1PU...phone 020 8346 1734 or 020 8343 3180 (answerphone) or e-mail d.marcus@ntlworld.com

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE – Chairman, David Smith, 8883 4154

On **Saturday May 22** a plaque will be unveiled at 127, Holden Road, the site of the former home of Spike Milligan for 19 years, with the delighted permission of the present owner Mr Charles Normand.. We are very happy that Spike's daughters and other members of the family will be with us, and that Silé and Jane Milligan have kindly agreed to unveil the plaque. All are invited.

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Dollis Brook – 2004

A Wellingtonia, one of the large red-wood trees, has beaten the oaks for size. It is near Rocklands Pond, between the Finchley Golf Course and Gordon Road, N3. It has a girth of 4.45m (14.6ft).

On our surveys and walks we have seen banks of Lesser Celandine, large numbers of Coltsfoot and the violet. Frogspawn arrived late this year but a frog hopped across the path on one occasion. We have observed mandarin ducks and teal, grey wagtails, goldcrests, and kingfishers, and near the viaduct a sparrow-hawk zoomed above us. It was also a delight to hear twittering of the siskins in the trees. A chiffchaff was calling on March 17th.

We have had to report two cases of pollution and three areas of débris to the Environment Agency.

In April we have two survey mornings, also a 'litter-pick' and flower walk at Windsor Open Space and a spider search through all sections.

Do not forget to let us know what you have seen walking along the brook and remember to take your camera, as there will be a photo competition at the end of the year.

May 1st....Bluebell walk through Little and Big Woods. Meet 10.30am at junction between Addison Way, Oakwood Road and Falloden Way, NW11.

May 2nd....Dawn Chorus at Brook Farm Open Space. Meet by the pavilion at 4.00am!

Derek Warren, 020 8346 5258...barwar@waitrose.com.

Church End Festival – Sunday, May 9th

This will be held in the Avenue House garden and is always a very successful occasion for charities to earn money. We are organising a plant stall and Pat Dunnill, the driving force behind this, wishes to remind all FinSoc gardeners to grow seedlings, plants and cuttings in preparation. As with many other of our members Pat wears another hat for Save-the-Children, so we will want help on the day from mid-day to 5.00pm. to operate the stalls for just an hour

or two. Contact her at 020 8349 9825. She recommends that it would be good to use a peat-free multi-purpose compost which she buys from a Base near you.

FRIERN BARNET

There is still no positive news regarding the Friern Barnet Day Centre (the Old Fire Station) This building serves over 100 old people but it has been sold to Barretts. A proposed move to Friary House in Friary Park has brought about objections from residents to the amount of traffic through the park that this will generate. Through Age Concern Barnet the management are trying to find out what the intentions of the Social Services are. The council seem unprepared to discuss contracts or to put anything in writing. Whatever funding they are prepared to give it will be woefully short and the management will be responsible for huge amounts of fund raising to survive as a unit.

ARCHIVES – Maggie Ferguson – Archive Custodian, 8349 4283

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

We could do with an old table roughly 6 foot in length and not too wide for working on, and another one about 3 foot in length and not too wide to house our “office” furniture.

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Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Captain Scott

The response to our plea for more information on Captain Scott’s visits to Finchley have been most rewarding. Stephen Yeo reminded us that if we access the FinSoc web-site and press “google” and ask for Scott, as well as getting information about Jean Scott our founder (no relation) there is the result of a similar exercise undertaken by Mary Hodgkinson in 1985.

Similarly Percy Reboul has come across a tape he made of an the recollections of old man, David Moffatt, who remembered his father working on the “mechanical sledges with caterpillar tractors”.

Grahame Pope has sent me some wonderful old photos of his grandfather’s garage (where Tesco now is) including the workshops where Scott’s sledges were probably made. Mrs Winchester (a Plowman) phoned to say that he visited Plowman’s the wood store as well.

David Smith/Barbara Warren.

THE GIFT

1

An ancient place
a field called Temple Croft,
haunted by wolves and wild boar.

Owned by a bishop,
and Knights Templars,
Taken by Henry.

11

A modern place
in a Borough called Barnet,
home to societies and university.

‘Discovered’ by my children,
its gardens a refuge.
Gifted by Henry.

Epilogue

Two Henrys:
one crowned,
the other, 'the uncrowned King of Finchley.'

Copyright *Dennis Evans 2003*

Dennis, a Finchley Society member, sent this lovely poem to us in memory of 'Inky Stephens' who bequeathed Avenue House and its garden to the people of Finchley in 1918.

WHATS ON

Church Farmhouse Museum

An exhibition from **28th February to May 16th** entitled "Past Views, Past Voices". Past Views show us the early 20th century post cards when a card posted within London in the morning would be delivered in the city at noon. Through postcards and photographs the exhibition traces the development of Finchley from village to Borough. Past Voices let us hear 11 different interviews carried out by Percy Reboul in the 1870, and 1980s, bringing alive the work of such people as a postmen, tram drivers, nursing and men digging the Tube tunnels.

Our "Finchley Remembered" book is represented.

MEMBERS

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

We welcome the following new members and ask them to make themselves known at our monthly meetings-

Barbara Lay,NW4

Miss M Kilby,N3

Margaret O'Neill,N2

Gardi Vaswani, N12

We are grateful to the following who have made generous donations –

Miss M Kilby, N3

Michael Holton,N2

Mrs Dorothy Fox

Dr and Mrs O Natelson, N2

Peter Clayton, Wisbech

TREASURER

Nigel Doe will not be standing for re-election at the AGM. If anyone interested please contact Robert Winton 8883 2633. 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

Copy for the **MAY** newsletter to be sent to me by **April 15**