

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

020 8343 3180

President: Bill Tyler AADipl. ARIBA. IHBC

Founded 1971

## **JUNE 2004**

### **MONTHLY MEETINGS**

Members are warmly invited to the Thursday, **June 24<sup>th</sup>**, meeting in the Drawing Room of Avenue House, East End Road, N3 at **8pm**. This is the **Annual General Meeting**, followed by a talk by John Heathfield on "Wonderful Whetstone", with, he says mysteriously, "a little cabaret". The talk will be illustrated with slides.

John is well known to members through his regular articles on local history in The Hendon Times (with Percy Reboul of course), and through his stewardship of the Barnet Museum.

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Nomination forms for election to the Society Executive Committee 2004/5, as officers or committee members, at the Annual General Meeting on June 24<sup>th</sup>, are available from me at 224, Creighton Avenue, East Finchley, N2 9BD...8883 2633. Completed forms must reach me not later than JUNE 10<sup>th</sup>

*Robert Winton – Hon Secretary*

### **REPORT on the APRIL MEETING**

Mr Bruce Bennet showed us how he had transformed a wilderness into a flourishing garden. The first photo showed us a snowy landscape, later to be planned and planted out like a Ground Force project, but taking longer. The reward for his and his wife's labour was a colourful garden planned to give the finest show in all seasons. The photos of the plants were stunning as was his knowledge of their Latin names.

### **UNVEILING of the PLAQUE in MEMORY of SPIKE MILLIGAN**

On the morning of May 22<sup>nd</sup> people began to arrive for the unveiling of the plaque indicating that Spike Milligan and his family had lived on the site for 19 of his most creative years. Meetings of The Finchley Society had been held there in the early years, until the lovely old houses in Holden Road were gradually pulled down and made into flats. Spike held out as long as he could but he eventually moved out to Hadley and to Sussex.

Behind this event lay a great deal of hard work, with David Smith masterminding the arrangements. This meant issuing invitations; liaison with Charles Normand, the owner of the site, now 14 Brook Meadow, the police and the Council; and arranging the sound system and the refreshments at The Old Finchleians Memorial Ground in nearby Southover. Peter Marsh was responsible for the planning approval, and the design and manufacture. The plaque was constructed by Corporate Graffiti and we are grateful for their setting up of the plaque and the curtains around it (which they will keep for our further enterprises)

While the guests assembled there was much to talk about. The Milligan family met up with neighbours and friends, and many others recounted their experiences with Spike. Among the guests were the Mayor Councillor Wendy Prentice and her escort accompanied by Councillor Brian Coleman GLA, the Representative Deputy Lieutenant for Barnet Major Paddy O'Brien, MPs Sir Sydney Chapman and Dr Rudi Vis, Councillor Victor Lyon, Michael Gerson, Spikes daughters Jane and Silé (with attendant sons), Peter Seller's daughter Sarah, and friends and family of the Milligan family, and Finchley Society members.

The Mayor congratulated the Society for erecting the plaque, referring to Spike's contribution to Finchley and to the Society. Sir Sydney Chapman reminded us that Spike was one of his

constituants and said how much he had enjoyed the humour of Spike's books. David Smith explained the Society's plan to erect a statue of Spike outside Avenue House. Jane Milligan struck a more poignant note by recalling that she had been born and brought up in the house and that beneath the site must lie the bones of many beloved pets, the toys and unread letters to pixies and fairies and other relics of their childhood.

The plaque was unveiled by Jane and Silé with Silé's sons looking on proudly.

Bill Tyler, our President wound up the proceedings by telling us what a happy household Spike's family always was. There was some emotion as we made our way to refreshments at the Old Finchleian Club house, and more memories over a cup of tea provided by Joan Butcher, Janet Ingall and Shirley Avery.

***A poem for Spike, February 27<sup>th</sup> 2002***

A member, Pauline Smith, sent this poem written by her son at the time of Spike's death. He had gone to school with Jane Milligan.

*These words are written  
only for Spike*

*Written only for  
the Milligan*

*He stood as ever  
proud  
the cheek and the grin*

*Irish like an American  
crossed with a Glaswegian*

*Irish like a song  
His smile  
like a flower  
fragrance and colour*

*"What are we going to do now?"*

*Steve Coughlan*

**WANTED**

We are very much in need of a **TREASURER** and for someone to deal with our insurance. Although Nigel will be with us until the AGM, already his other commitments are making him unavailable, and invoices are being dealt with by Robert Winton. Robert has nobly stepped in with this crisis and has also quietly dealt with the insurance over a number of years though it is not his forté. We cannot allow this state of affairs to continue, for Robert's sake, and a Society of this size should be able to field a Treasurer. Please come forward and offer your services as soon as possible. *Barbara C Warren 020 8346 5258 or barwar@waitrose.com*

**REVIEW of SOCIETY SUBSCRIPTIONS**

The Executive Committee has decided on an increase in the subscriptions from £7 to £9 as from July 1<sup>st</sup>. The last increase was in May 1995. This increase has become necessary as our reserves are being eaten into and the 2004/5 budgeted deficit will eat into them even further.

Individual	£9
Joint/family	£16
Under 18/on income support	£5
Associate/other societies	£18
Corporate	£25

### **NEWS of the FAMILY**

Joanna Smith is recovering at home and it was good to see her out and about at the Church End Festival. Marie Pickering is now at home after an operation and we wish her and Joanna well. Norman Burgess has been fitted with a pacemaker and is now at home. From the number of phone calls I have had, it is certain he is very much in all our thoughts.

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

Next meetings, July 12<sup>th</sup>, September 13<sup>th</sup> and November 8<sup>th</sup> at Avenue House 8.00pm.

Occupying the committee alongside their usual planning concerns is the fate of three houses - Park House – a temporary use for it has been found as accommodation for the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute before the move into the old neurological hospital at East Finchley, but this was felt to be an unworthy occupation of an important site.

Beech Lodge, Hendon Lane – known by the developers and the Council as `Beach` Lodge! is being demolished . But there is hope that the attractive panelling and joinery will be saved.

Grove Lodge, Regents Park Road – A letter has been written to the Council reminding them that it has an obligation under The London Plan to contact the freeholder with the aim of bringing it into better use.

### ***Friern Barnet Town Hall***

Several members went along to the Planning Committee meeting in the Friern Barnet Town Hall to put their views forward on the need to preserve items of high architectural quality as well as those of good craftsmanship evident in the building, and to ensure that the developers would make possible the inclusion of a museum in the basement.

However the committee were less than helpful, and, although permission was granted for the public admittance to the basement it will be for only 12 days in the year. Some items of architectural value will be saved.

Side by side with this is the plight of the 100 Friern Barnet old people who will be turned out of their care centre at the Old Fire Station, adjacent to the Town Hall.

### **FINCHLEY LOCAL HISTORY.**

Finchley is one of the few London areas that does not have a local dedicated history group. 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. Our 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

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

***Our Lady of Lourdes School*** – contacted our educational secretary, Grace Fensome, for a tour of Avenue House and its garden. We have done this before so the 'team' swung into action, with Janett Durrant doing the history and the pond area, Derek Warren doing the birds and the trees, Dot Lindsay at the Bothy, Frank and Mary Derrett at the museum and Maggie Ferguson and the staff investigating the mysteries of the basement and the archives.. The children were well-behaved and interested. The teacher was so impressed that she is coming back for a picnic in the garden with the whole school.

### ***Annual Dinner***

We have close on 40 guests for our Annual Dinner on Thursday, July 8<sup>th</sup> so there is still room for you if you have waited to see whether the event will be taking place. Send your order form to David Smith at 17, Abbots Gardens, Finchley, London, N2 OJG , or, if you have mislaid it,

phone him on 8883 4154 to reserve a place. We look forward to an enjoyable and memorable evening.

## **ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

### ***What are they?***

They cover more than 1 million acres in the UK, they account for about 20% of the total land area in our towns and cities, about 84% of households have one and 67% of adults in Britain feed birds in one.

Yes, they are gardens, the information coming from Broadleaf, the magazine of The Woodland Trust. Help wildlife by avoiding chemicals and pesticides ; make your own or buy peat-free compost.

### ***Walks***

Our walk through Big and Little Woods was very interesting thanks to Barbara Kail, our leader. The bluebells and other wild flowers were attractive to see and smell. Why do some people throw their garden rubbish over the fence and spoil such public amenities?

### ***Kerbside Recycling***

Kerbside recycling will soon be compulsory throughout the Borough of Barnet this year.

As a reminder , your kerbside recycling bin takes –

Paper – newspapers, magazines, junk mail, yellow pages etc. Place in a plastic bag.

Tins and cans – rinse and squash.

Aluminium foil and trays

Car and household batteries.

Engine oil – upright in a sealed container

Shoes – tied together in pairs.

Textiles – clothes, blankets and material.

*Roz Avery*

### ***Dollis Brook – 2004***

On our walks surveying Dollis Brook , many wild flowers are seen and on the stretch between the viaduct and Fursby Avenue we counted over 5,000 square metres of ramsons- the wild garlic. Unfortunately over 15 square metres of wood anenome had been mown down by the council contractors. However a phone call produced the response that this would not happen again. Roz Avery was lucky to see a pied flycatcher passing through on its way, perhaps, to the Lake District.

Once again there are so-called gardeners who throw their rubbish over the fence. This is seen in most sections along the brook.

Future events are –

June 3- a moth survey at Brook Farm Open Space at 9.00pm

June 21 – a bat survey at Rocklands Pond, meeting at bottom of Eversleigh Road at 9.00pm

July 4 – a butterfly walk at Windsor Open Space

July – a walk to the source of Dollis Brook .

Let me know if you would like to join us on our usual survey walks...just a pleasant 2 hour walk along a section of the brook.

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

### ***Committee members***

We would very much like to have a few new members. The Environment and Transport committee deal with wildlife, open spaces, CPZs, street furniture, recycling, vehicle surveys and trees. We meet every 2 months at Avenue House and we are all nice people.

### ***Church End Festival – Sunday, May 9<sup>th</sup>***

We had plenty of plants and plenty of people to sell them. Thanks to everyone. But where were our members? In spite of an overcast morning we raised £200 for the Avenue House Estate Management, who indicated that the money would go towards the new playground.

### **LONG LANE PASTURE GROUP**

At last some headway is being made to secure this area of greenspace for the benefit of wildlife and the community. The Group has been granted a 12 month licence which will now permit entry to the site to identify features of interest and to make a start on litter clearance..

In the longer term, plans for the future will be drawn up and basic wildlife surveys undertaken. Help is urgently needed to carry out this initial work ,essential if we are to protect the Pasture for the future.

We have come a long way since 1998 when the battle to save the Pasture from ‘development’ was joined. It is by no means over and we really do need your support either by enrolling as a Friend and/or making a donation which would be gratefully appreciated. See details on the enclosed form.

*Frank Derrett*

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

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

We could do with an old table roughly 6 foot in length and not too wide for working on.

We have found out that the computer will not take the discs for the internet so e-mails will continue to be received by the addresses on our web-site. We get several calls a month. Likewise the fax does not work so they can be sent via Robert Winton. But our answerphone is in business.

A long-time member, Andrew Forsyth, is now in a home in Woodside Park Road, so has to dispose of his wonderful collection of maps, photos, reports and magazines concerning Finchley, and over 2000 slides that are well captioned and dated. He has kindly donated this very important collection to The Finchley Society and they are now in our archives. Thank you Andrew.

### **ARE YOU GOING TO FRANCE?**

If you are going to France and are in or near Paris, could you please help in getting background information on the La Délivrance statue which stands near the North Circular/Regents Park Road junction. John Rickard, who has been investigating the history of the statue on behalf of The Finchley Society for some years, says that there is reported to be a replica in the Senate in Paris, and another in Cheroy (see below). He would be very grateful to anyone visiting France who can track these down, record their inscriptions and the height head to toe, and find out anything known about them locally.

If anyone who gets more details passes them on to me I shall forward them on to John Rickard. If you are able to help he can give more information on where to look and what to look for – ring him on 01483 764 413 .

Chery is a small town south east of Paris, between Nemours and Sens, on the D225 and not far off the A6, Autoroute du Sud.

*Robert Winton 020 8883 2633*

## **WHATS ON**

*Friern Barnet and District Local History Society*

July 4 – tour of North Finchley. Meet at United Services Club 2.00pm corner of Dale Grove and Ballards Lane. £1

July 18 – Friern Hospital Tour. Meet forecourt of New Southgate Station 2.00pm

*Friends of Barnet Libraries*

Monday, July 19 – “Take a Musical Tour , in words and music” , presented by Maurice Peckman

## **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 member and ask her to make herself known at our monthly meet,ings- Mrs M L G Morais,NW4

We are grateful to the following who have made generous donations –  
Kurt Weinberg, N3                      Robert and Heather Winton, N2

## **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

Please note that there will be no newsletter during July and August.

Copy for the **SEPTEMBER** newsletter to be sent to me by **August 15**

# **HAPPY HOLIDAYS**