

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

020 8343 3180

President: Bill Tyler AADipl.ARIBA.IHBC

Founded 1971

SEPTEMBER 2004

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Members **only** are warmly invited to the Thursday, **September 30th**, meeting in the Drawing Room of Avenue House, East End Road, N3 at **8pm**. The speaker will be Alison Duthie, the Director of the centre, and she will talk on "The Artsdepot and its Role in the Community". She will describe the progress of the project, the facilities, how it is funded and its plans to encourage art groups and attract professionals. We shall not be discussing the architecture. As this is likely to be a sell out only members are asked to attend.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORT

The AGM Chairman, Society President Bill Tyler, explained the Trustees' decision to increase subscriptions from July 1 due to inflation since the last increase in 1995, reduction in reserves, and annually committed expenditure almost equalling income leaving few funds for additional activities. The new rates are: individual - £9; family - £16; under 18/income support - £5.

Presenting her annual report, Society Chairman Barbara Warren said that donations are needed to meet the cost of a statue to Spike Milligan, a Society initiative supported by the Milligan family. Holding meetings in the afternoon in January, February and November has increased attendance. Volunteers are urgently required to act as Hon. Treasurer, Events Secretary and to fill vacancies on the Planning Committee. An answerphone and computer have been installed in the Society office and archive room in the Avenue House basement.

The following were elected: Chairman – Barbara C Warren; Vice Chairman – Maggie Ferguson; Secretary – Robert Winton; Trustees – Roz Avery, Lynn Bresler, Janett Durrant, Stephen Cooper.

Robert Winton presented Bill Tyler with an inscribed gavel and block for use by Society Chairmen.

Robert Winton – Hon Secretary

The meeting ended with a spirited talk by John Heathfield on his much loved and "wonderful Whetstone".

WANTED URGENTLY

- A **TREASURER**. Nigel Doe will be staying on to deal with our insurance.
- A **PROGRAMME SECRETARY to the Administration Committee** who will contact the speakers already planned by the Admin Committee, finding out what they will need at

the monthly meetings and communicating information to the newsletter editor and then back to the Admin Committee.

- **A CHAIRMAN for the Environment and Transport Committee**

This committee deals with wildlife and open spaces, CPZs and street furniture, recycling, trees and vehicle surveys.

Please come forward and offer your services as soon as possible. *Barbara C Warren 020 8346 5258 or barwar@waitrose.com*

NEWS of the FAMILY

Marie Pickering is now at home receiving treatment . Peter Marsh is suffering from the very painful polymyalgia rheumatica, and Carol Halls is recovering from a nasty road accident.

John Bolton, who gave us a huge addition to our archives in the shape of a large number of rare bottles and containers etc from his East Finchley pharmacy, died in June

Our thoughts are with them and their families

We are also sad to read from the Stephens Collection newsletter that due to ill health Norman Burgess has had to step down from his position as Chairman. . They go on to say that “he will be around to give advice and keep an eye on all that goes on” and that applies to us as well. We are indebted to him for his work on our archives and will still call upon his wisdom, advice and knowledge.

PLANNING COMMITTEE – Chairman, Stephen Cooper, 8445 2685

Next meetings, September 13th and November 8th at Avenue House 8.00pm.

Friern Barnet Town Hall

Barratts are now in occupation and the flat conversions are going ahead. Efforts have been made to preserve the WW2 artifacts in the basement, and the Friern Barnet Society have been found a space in the basement of Avenue House for their archives. It appears that the Council Chamber will remain intact though its purpose is unclear.

Sternberg Centre, East End Road

On our behalf Bill Tyler has objected to alterations to the building . He has obtained call-in powers from the Government Office for London. Apart from this there is a problem with an increase in traffic through the narrow main gateway, very close to the busy junction with Manor View.

FINCHLEY LOCAL HISTORY.

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 or e-mail: d.marcus1@ntlworld.com

COLLEGE FARM

You will have read in the local papers, or seen on TV, that grants have been obtained from the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage, to enable a business plan to be put together so that a major grant application can be made for the purchase of the farm and the refurbishment and alteration of the buildings. However it will be at least a year before much happens, so, in the meantime , I am afraid, the farm will remain closed.

The shop remains open where you can buy anything for your pets , together with wild bird food and feeders, and of course everything to do with horses, including clothing. Chris and Jane Ower would love to see you , and you can then look at the Dexter cattle over the fence.

In due course we will need “match funding” when our fund-raising committee will swing into action . If you are interested in helping in any way please let me know.

Derek Warren – Trustee 020 8346 5258

AVENUE HOUSE

Two occasions at Avenue House, giving great pleasure, show what a versatile venue it is becoming. July 16th saw your rather surprised Chairman in line with Bill Tyler, as the Chairman of Avenue House Estate Management, and Henry and Felicity Edmunds, great grandson of Inky Stephens as honoured guests, waiting in line to receive HRH the Duke of Gloucester at the door. When I was introduced he asked about The Finchley Society (gulp) I hoped I gave an intelligent answer! He was there to present Hanan Ibrahim with an award for her services to the Somali Family Support Group. He went on to charm everyone in the room. The event was as happy and informal as it can only be at Avenue House. On the way in he had noticed with some surprise the black cattle at College Farm. We were then lucky enough to be wined and dined at the Officers Mess, standing on a hill overlooking Finchley, at Inglis Barracks.

The other event was the opening of the children’s playground. Chicken Shed performed, the CBeebies were enthusiastic and a cloud of beautiful balloons floated away before the excited children poured in to their favourite part of the Estate. Hot and cold drinks were available in the house with lots of cakes. It was a lovely day, full of sunshine and laughter.

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE – Chairman, David Smith, 8883 4154

Annual Dinner

When our Administration Committee labelled the Society Dinner at Avenue House on July 8th as the First Annual Dinner they did so in the hope that this step into the unknown would be sufficiently successful to make it an annual event. And annual it now certainly should be.

51 guests gathered in the Drawing Room. Each of the 6 tables was decorated with a floral centrepiece, which was raffled to one of the ladies at the table when the dinner was over. The first half hour was given up to mixing and chatting. The place names on the table included details of the dishes ordered to remind each individual guest and to guide the serving staff.

David Smith, our imperturbable Master of Ceremonies, introduced Dr. Rudi Vis, MP and Mrs Vis, the guests of honour. At the end of the meal Society President Bill Tyler spoke of the arduous of his recent sponsored walk in Peru.

Rudi Vis made a brief reference to Parliament (“It’s a job to which you take no previous experience”), and then spoke of his varied life, from Rotterdam University to various countries and a great variety of jobs. He praised the improvements in Avenue House, and The Finchley Society for its work for the community.

The whole occasion went so well that the planning remained hidden, especially the tremendous contribution from David Smith. I sensed that all the guests will want to come again and I think that those who were there will wish to be at the Second Annual Dinner.

Robert Winton

St Mary’s C of E School visit

Once again our Education team went into action, this time for the benefit of 60 8 year olds from St Mary’s, for the morning only. The teacher had asked that we include a handwriting exercise with quill pens and Pat and Peter Marsh were pressed into service from the Stephens Museum. Thus we had 6 groups of 10 experiencing the Stephens museum, handwriting, the Bothy, trees and birds, owl pellets, archives and basement, and finishing with a talk about the house to all of them from Janett..

Much of this was due to be undertaken in the Grounds, BUT, the heavens opened and with the mighty co-operation of Janett we managed it all, but the Bothy, in the ground floor rooms of the house and in the basement. Lunchtime came and Janett rose nobly to the occasion again and 60 children sat on the lovely carpet in the dining room and ate 60 packed lunches. When they left there was not a crumb on the floor.

Teachers, helpers and members worked hard to keep the children interested and moving efficiently from one item to another, but it speaks well for the house that it can keep such young children interested on a dull rainy day. The rain eventually stopped in time for the children to have a run around in the gardens before embarking on the long walk back to school.

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Nature Notes

Bats have been located at several places along Dollis Brook, including under the viaduct in Dollis Road. They have also been seen in Avenue House Grounds and Long Lane Pasture. They have all been the common pipistrelle except at Long Lane Pasture when a soprano pipistrelle was detected. Members have also observed them flying over their gardens in Leicester Road, Cavendish Avenue and Wentworth Avenue.

Three tawny owls fly around Avenue House Grounds and kingfishers and grey wagtails have been regulars along Dollis Brook.

During June the RSPB had a viewing station in Regents Park to look at a family of peregrine falcons which had nested on top of a tall building nearby. They are having a "Feed the Birds Day" on October 30th when the NWLondon Group invite you to come and have a look at the feeders hanging in Avenue House Grounds.

There have been large numbers of butterflies this summer, and over 20 gatekeepers at a time could be seen along Dollis Brook. 12 different species have been recorded at Long Lane Pasture

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

ARCHIVES – Maggie Ferguson – Archive Custodian, 8349 4283

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

Going through Andrew Forsyth's collection we have found some documents relating to societies other than that of The Finchley Society. At Andrew's behest these have been sent out, and we have received some really nice thankyou letters.

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 –

Wallace Curtis, N12

Ian Murphy, N12

Harry Branchdale, N20

Miss Shelley Sanders, N2

L K Farmer, N3

Mrs T A Akpabo, N20

TREASURER

Charlotte Hume at 62, Church Crescent, Finchley, N3 IBJ. will be handling our finances as a book-keeper, with all invoices still going to Robert Winton, until a Treasurer has been found.

EDITOR – Barbara C Warren, 83 Wentworth Avenue, Finchley, London N3 1YN...020 8346 5258...e-mail: barwar@waitrose.com. Contributions for the **October** newsletter to me by **September 15th**