

Avenue House, 17, East End Road, Finchley, N3 3QE.

www.finchleysociety.org.uk

President: Bill Tyler AADipl. ARIBA. IHBC

Founded 1971

October 2006

MONTHLY MEETING

Members are warmly invited to the monthly meeting on Thursday, **October 26th** at 8.00pm in the drawing room of Avenue House, when the speaker will be **Gerrard Roots**, the Curator of the Church Farmhouse Museum, Hendon, when he will talk on **“Bizarre Barnet”** This is the Jean Scott Memorial Lecture.

“Bizarre Barnet” is based on an exhibition he mounted at Church Farmhouse Museum in 1999, which recounted some of the stranger aspects of our locality over several hundred years. Ghostly donkeys and gurning competitions; assassins and the Abbey Folk Museum; dancing witches and Dracula – all these have connections to the area now covered by the London Borough of Barnet, along with many other stories, comic or curious, horrible or heartbreaking.

But these are not merely quirks or curiosities. Such apparently trivial events and anecdotes, and the contemporary responses to them, reveal the preoccupations of past local residents, and illustrate how much (or how little!) our present day attitudes have changed.

REPORT on SEPTEMBER HISTORY GROUP MEETING –*Robert Winton*

Hugh Petrie described the history of Finchley Common from earliest times to the mid 19th century. Originally it was unused wasteland coming into existence in the 15th century; however it is not in the Domesday Book. Later it produced faggots for burning for brewing and baking, until its use was superseded by Newcastle coal. In the 1620s the Common became known as Finchley Woods, an area of some 1200 acres, and a source of juniper and wart berries used by the well known physician Nicholas Culpeper. By 1815 encroachment had reduced the area to 900 acres. Those responsible for encroachments not granted by the Bishop of London were fined annually, and this became a kind of rent. The area was used by the army in the late 17th and early 18th century.

Of course, the talk could not be complete without a mention of the highwaymen. The Common attracted them because merchants journeying from London carried gold and silver, and the robbers would sometimes be given information on merchants who would be travelling. They departed, not, as often supposed, because the Common became enclosed, but because of the introduction of patrolmen and banknotes; the first banknote owners were recorded, and their notes could not be used by anyone else.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A Newsletter Editor is urgently required. The newsletter is the lifeline of the Society. It cannot operate without one. There will be no newsletter, as is usual, for December, so the November issue will be the last one that Barbara does. See the job description on the last page.

NEWS of the FAMILY

Congratulations to Denys Pegg who will be 90 on September 29th, and to Robert Winton who has kept very quiet that he is 91 and who will be 92 on October 23rd.

Out grateful thanks to Mrs Gladys Davison who has been a much appreciated postman for the Society newsletter for over 20 years and who is now retiring from the job. Thankyou Gladys for all you have done. *Helene Davidian – Newsletter Distribution Manager- 8444 3669*

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE – Chairman, David Smith, 17,Abbotts Gardens, N2 OJG 8883 4154 joda@fsmail.net

The Spike Milligan Statue Fund

If you want your money to go into the Spike Milligan Statue Fund please mark your cheque accordingly. If you just put The Finchley Society it will not get to the Fund. The Fund shares th Society's charity number and the Fund Treasurer will report at the Executive Committee on its financial position and activities.

The **Quiz** on September 9th at Utopia, a Scout Hall at 104 Grove Road, N12. was a great success with keen competition between FinSoc, the Stephens Collection, the Green Party Christ Church and the Scouts. The next one will be at the same venue on **November 25th** at 8.00pm. The Quizmaster will be Terry McLoughlin with a raffle and a sales table.. There will be tables of six, individual or parties. Tickets £5, including tea and coffee and nibbles, but bring your own wine and more nibbles, from Barbara Warren 8346 5258

Christmas party

This will be held at Avenue House on December 14th at 7.30pm .

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE - Chairman: Harry Branchdale
harry@branchdale.co.uk

Please use the following numbers for your problems –

Barnet Customer Care – 020 8359 4600

Environment Agency - 0800 8070 60

Trees – Ann Gallon020 8346 8533

Bird Reports and wildlife – Derek Warren....020 8346 5258....derwar@waitrose.com

Recycling – Stan Spinks....8346 9811

Built Environment – Barbara Warren....020 8346 5258....barwar@waitrose.com

Somehow, wherever workmen have been , and there seems to be such a lot of places recently, they always leave their debris around once they have packed up and gone home. Please let me know where such piles of cones, wooden barriers , notices and rubble are left and I will get them to clear up.

Traffic and transport –Pat Dunnill020 8349 9825, Harry Branchdale020 8445 4281

Front garden paving -David Hollingworth....020 8446 9693-

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP – Secretary Margaret Cullen, 21 Lyndhurst Gardens N3 1TA, 020 8346 2091 or margaretcullen@f2s.com. The History Group is keen to expand its activities, so if you have some time to spare, please contact Margaret to see how you can help.

Projects

The local history group keeps a list of projects about Finchley's history. If you come across any work that they may not be aware of please advise Margaret.

FINCHLEY'S LOST BRIDGES

Did you know that there are less bridges across the railway now than there were in previous times? As you travel north from East Finchley Tube Station you pass under four original bridges and shortly before arriving at the North Circular Road (the only new bridge) you pass the remains of the Green Lane bridge (complete with modern graffiti). Green Lane connected

East End Road to Long Lane near modern day Chamberlain Road. The bridge was demolished when the North Circular Road was built, as Green Lane was considered unnecessary duplication. Now that there is no NCR interconnection with East End Road or Long Lane that reasoning is no longer valid. A footbridge located almost on the spot where the NCR is today carried a footpath that led from the intersection of Long Lane and Green Lane diagonally across fields towards Avenue House. A little further north from Squires Lane, Oakfield Road extended westwards through the middle of the nurseries to link with Station Road across a narrow bridge, perhaps a private road.

Continuing northwards and rounding the corner from Finchley Central towards High Barnet the old map shows a bridge just north of Lovers Walk footbridge, which may have been just for cattle, linking as it did two fields. Only a slight rise in the cable ducts alongside the track hints at the position

All these old bridges are marked on the 1894-6 Ordnance Survey map (Godfrey Edition), available from libraries or viewable at The Finchley Society Archives. Derek Warren and myself are cataloguing the maps in the Archive and hope to post a list on the Finchley Society web site soon.

Tony Roberts

WHAT'S ON

- All are invited to an illustrated talk by Paul Forecast , an RSPB manager. The meeting, organised by the NWLondon Group of the RSPB is on **Tuesday, October 24th** at the Mill Hill Public School on The Ridgeway, Mill Hill, NW7. It will be held in the Lecture Theatre, entrance opposite St Paul's School, at 7.45 for 8.00pm prompt. Admission free. For further information contact Derek Warren 020 8346 5258.
- "Remembered Glories" a celebration of songs and musicals of the early 20th century performed by the Manor Light Opera at St Mary's Church Hall, Hendon Lane, N3 on **Saturday, November 18th**. Tickets from John Lewis (020 7328 7846)£10 to include light refreshments.
- Members are invited to the Northern Heights Probus Club's two course lunches at £12 held at 12.15 at the Sparta Restaurant 225-227 Regents Park Road (a short distance from College Farm) on the third Wednesday of each month (except the second Wednesday in December) There is a talk at each lunch – contact John Hajdu 020 8883 8114
- Dennis Evans, one of our members, has published his poems "Bubbles for Peace" and has kindly stated that he will donate £3 out of the £7.95 which members pay, to The Finchley Society. Contact him on 020 8346 9528

ARCHIVES

Maggie Ferguson – Archive Custodian, 36, Oakfield Road, Finchley, N3 2HT
8349 4283...emfmr@hotmail.co.uk.

The archive team meet on most Monday mornings between 10.00am and 1.00pm. with coffee at 11.30am.

- You will be delighted to know that Sergeant Tooley was a well known Finchley resident and that his delightful account of his nine days leave in Cairo in 1918 will rest securely in the archives.

Barbara Warren

- Where is the highest point in Finchley?

The highest point within the old Borough of Finchley is at the Spaniards Inn in Hampstead Lane, being 431 ft above sea level. In the garden of this inn is a boundary stone marked FP (Finchley Parish) 1799.

Along Ballards Lane, near the Police Station, is the highest point for Church End, Finchley at 300 ft. In front of the Tally Ho pub it is 287 ft rising to 311 ft in the High Road near B and Q . Then a little way along Oakley Road North we get to the height of 317 ft.

Outside the old Friern Barnet Town Hall it is 216 ft above sea level, and along the North Circular Road , near the railway bridges is the lowest point at 120ft.

But excluding the Hampstead area, East Finchley beats all others with the highest point along Fortis Green at the boundary near Twyford Avenue, being 318ft above sea level.

You might be interested to know that the height at the top of Barnet Hill, in front of the church, is 425ft

Derek Warren.

EVENTS SECRETARY

Mrs Sakina Jetha, 2, Templars Crescent, Finchley, London , N3 3QS 020 8346 2286

e-mail: jetha@uk2.net

The list of speakers for 2007 has been approved .

TREASURER

Aziz Jetha, 2, Templars Crescent, N3 3QS 020 8346 2286.

MEMBERS

Membership Secretary, Tony Roberts, 32a, Sedgemere Avenue, East Finchley, London,

N2 0SX 020 8883 5954 e-mail: membership@finchleysociety.org.uk.

If there are any changes to your membership or contact details please let Tony know.

Donations

We would like to thank the following members for their recent donations:

Mrs Hilda Clark ,Somerset

Miss E.F. Pearce ,N12

Mr & Mrs V.L. Sainsbury, W3

Probus Club of Finchley

We are supported entirely by subscription and without our membership and their generosity the aims of the society could not be met. Some donations are quite substantial and on a regular basis.

EDITOR –Please note.....contributions to the November newsletter to **Barbara Warren** by **October 15th** please, to 83, Wentworth Avenue, Finchley, N3 1YN020 8346 5258....barwar@waitrose.com

There will be no newsletter in December

As yet no one has applied to be the next editor when I give up in November, after ten years, and having given a year's notice. The newsletter practically writes itself and all that is needed is a few hours at the keyboard each month, except July, August and December. Each Committee Chairman sends in their report, Sakina sends in details of the next month's meeting, Tony sends in membership details , other Societies send in advertising, and members send in articles according to their interests. The typed copy goes to Tony Gossett to be printed at the Ballards Lane Methodist Church at the junction with Essex Park., and Helene Davidian and her team takes over at this point for delivery. Your work is done. There is an Assistant Editor for when you are ill or on holiday, and others who will be prepared to have a go if Stephen is not available.