

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

www.finchleysociety.org.uk

President: Bill Tyler AADipl. ARIBA. IHBC

Founded 1971

April 2006

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Members are warmly invited to the meeting on **April 27th** in the drawing room of Avenue House at **8.00pm**. The speaker will be Finchley Society member Helene Davidian who will give us an illustrated talk to tell us of how her life-long interest in antiques and architecture led her to focus on stained glass, how her interest evolved and how she went on to teach the subject. When asked to talk about this great interest Helene decided to compile a localised listing after finding out from the British Society of Master Glass painters that non exists at present.

OUTING TO ELY – May 13th

To follow on from and to complement her talk on stained glass on 27th April, Helene Davidian will be guiding an outing to the Stained Glass museum in Ely, Cambridgeshire. It will be a full day outing by car, commencing 10.30am. The group will have lunch there, perhaps in the Cathedral refectory.

Helene will need to know who is coming by the 27th April at the very latest. To book or enquire about the outing (including likely costs) phone Helene on 020 8444 3669. As some people are without vehicles could people let Helene know if they can offer spare places in their car, and also if they need a place in someone else's car.

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

Annual Dinner – Thursday July 6th.

We hope that members will again support the Annual Dinner, now in its third year. We shall meet in the **Drawing Room at Avenue House at 7.30pm for a formal start at 8.00pm**. It will be a silver service meal and full details of the booking arrangements and the menu will be found on the sheet accompanying this newsletter. The cost per head will still be £25. There is an upper limit of 63 diners, so early application is recommended.

Our Guests of Honour will be Mr and Mrs Richard Selby. Mr Selby may already be known to some members because in an earlier life he was manager of the Ballards Lane Branch of Barclays Bank. He was also much involved in the promotion of College Farm at that time. However, on this occasion, he will be talking to us about his work at the Registration Services at the London Borough of Barnet. .

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. We are very grateful to Dr Rudi Vis MP for yet another gift of £60, earned while participating in the January Parliamentary Panel Survey, and £75 for his participation in a BPRI survey (Bringing Business Intelligence to Research)

During the year we plan to mount a number of fund-raising activities.

The first of these is the **Quiz Evening** on Saturday, **April 8th** at Utopia, a private hall , at 104 Grove Road, North Finchley, N12. The hall faces the end of Stanhope Road which runs alongside Woolworths. The Quizmaster will be Terry McLoughlin. There will be 6 tables of six, refreshments and a raffle. Tickets £5 from David Smith 8883 4154 , Barbara Warren 8346 5258 or Grace Fensome 8445 1808.

The second of these will be a multimedia **SPIKE MILLIGAN TRIBUTE SHOW** . It will be presented, for one night only, in the Pentland Theatre at North Finchley's artsdepot on **Wednesday, May 17th**. This will be our first venture at this site. Please make a note of this unique event in your diary now and help us ensure that every one of those 400 seats will be filled! Details of the programme will be given in the May newsletter.

Our third event will be an open air event in the grounds of Avenue House on Sunday, **June 18th, from 3.00 – 7.00pm** There will be a programme of varied stage entertainment, children's activities, and refreshments. Do start telling your friends and family about this event. There will be something for every age in the programme of entertainment. Programmes that will serve as admission tickets will be on sale towards the end of May. We need volunteers to help run the event. We will also be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to advertise in the printed programme that will be on sale about a month before the event. Let David Smith (8883 4154) know of your interest.

May we remind members that, although the originator and dynamo of the Spike Milligan Fund is The Finchley Society, it is in fact a national appeal. We have so far received donations from all over England and from Wales, Scotland, New Zealand and America. Help us keep them coming.

David Smith

- We will be running a Bring and Buy bookstall at the monthly meetings, with the price at 50p only. There will also be a book stall at 83, Wentworth Avenue, Finchley, N3 1YN **every Wednesday, between 11.00 and 4.00pm**, except on April 26th and May 17th.
- There will be a coffee morning at the Ballards Lane Methodist Church , on **April 22nd** 10.00 to 12.00am. On sale also will be second hand books at 50p, jig saw puzzles and Barry's delicious home baked cakes and biscuits. The last two mornings made nearly £100, but with more members attending we could double that amount.

Barbara Warren

SIMPLY SPIKE

Even those who thought they knew everything about Spike Milligan were pleasantly surprised to find more about the comedian famous for his books , radio and TV shows. Friends, fans and admirers gathered in Avenue House, Finchley, on Saturday, February 25th, to celebrate the genius of Spike who died in 2002 aged 83.

Barbara Warren, an organiser of the show, said that Spike was an important member of The Finchley Society. He was concerned about all sorts of things and his involvement was always indispensable. She said, "Spike was very much a hands-on person. He was funny but also very serious about things that mattered to him."

Three performers Laurie Heatherington, Mike and Jenny Sparks read Spike's best poems and lyrics citing the work that the comic had done over the years from "Why there's no monument to porridge?" to "English Teeth." and "Fly on the nose." Mike Sparks recalled how he had first met Milligan at his show. "Spike, unfortunately had to leave after 30 minutes but I hoped it wasn't because of my performance. I mean, nobody else left. Anyway Spike was very nice and explained why he had to go," he said.

During his life Spike wrote more than 80 books. The funniest extracts were from his two most popular publications "Puckoon" and "Adolph Hitler: My Part in his Downfall." Made everyone in the audience laugh. The witty portrayal of a heavy smoker and the description of Spike's early army career were the highlights of the evening.

At the end of the show Mike Sparks talked about Spike being "a musician, fine guitarist and trumpeter." The music throughout the evening was jazz from 1930 and 1940s which Spike would have definitely appreciated. The performance, dedicated to Spike Milligan, has proved that his talent will live on through his books, prose and people who continue to admire the great comic. Simply Spike. Simply Superb.

Iana Tilaite

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE - Chairman: Harry Branchdale

harry@branchdale.co.uk c/o 83, Wentworth Avenue, Finchley, London N3 1YN

Customer Care

Do not forget to ring Barnet's Customer Care on **020 8359 4600** if you see any graffiti, litter, problems with trees or anything else that Barnet Council should be dealing with. With many houses having their front gardens made up into parking spaces, the pavements in Finchley are becoming a hazard from damaged paving. These can become dangerous for blind people, mothers pushing prams and the elderly or infirm. Please report this, wherever you come across it, to the Customer Care number. For problems with pollution of the Dollis or Mutton Brook ring the Environment Agency on 0800 807060

Bird report

I was very interested in the item from Mrs Hiscocks in the February newsletter. Many of the birds she gets in her garden do not come into ours, including sparrows. But we are now seeing a pair of blackcaps, and two goldfinches visited the feeders recently. The remarkable event which has caused me to write is a change in behaviour in the dunnocks which visit us every day. A large conifer on our patio died and had to be cut down, but we retained a tall stump with "arms" from which nutfeeders hang. The very next day after the tree was reduced, we noticed dunnocks hopping up the trunk and getting into the feeders. Over ensuing days and weeks they grew bolder, and now fly directly to them. In the 25 years we have been living here, we had never seen a dunnock feeding other than on the ground, where they spent their time picking up almost invisible objects. I wrote to the RSPB about their changed behaviour, and they confirmed that dunnocks are ground feeders and do not normally go to hanging feeders.

Marian Werner 020 8346 8031

Church End Festival – May 14th

Now is the time to think about the plant stall. This is always a great success and relies on you to start preparing for it now. We will need willing helpers for perhaps hourly intervals on the day. It is always a fun day...the public are so appreciative. Please let Pat know.

Pat Dunnill 020 8349 9825

Light Pollution

From the magazine of the Campaign to Protect Rural England, 'Countryside Voice', there is information that light pollution becomes a statutory nuisance in April. There are of course exclusions, but it is worth reporting any problems from light to the Council. Hopefully there will be better design for lighting in order to throw the light downward instead of up into the sky and obscuring the stars.

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP – Secretary Margaret Cullen, 21 Lyndhurst Gardens N3 1TA,
020 8346 2091 or bcullen@onetel.com

The group feels it is important for all those who are involved in history projects in Finchley (or would like to be) to have the opportunity to compare notes, to ensure that work is not duplicated and to get second opinions. This will take the form of a series of informal get-togethers around a table at Avenue House. The first of these will be in the evening of **11 May** and anyone so involved, or who would like to learn more and perhaps get involved in the Group's projects, is warmly invited to contact Margaret Cullen for details with a view to taking part.

The work of the group falls into two areas

- the recording for posterity of peoples' memories of Finchley life or buildings or other infrastructure under threat.
- research into various aspects of the history of Finchley from various sources.

The end result will usually be some sort of publication available to local residents, electronically or in print.

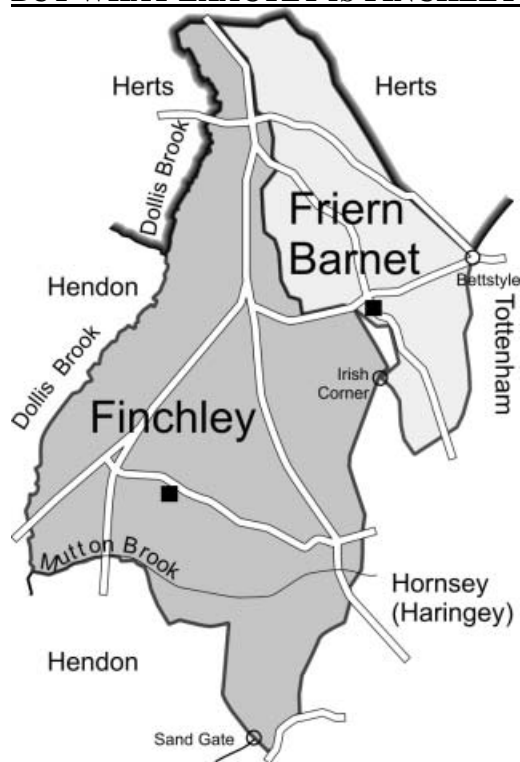
Robert Winton [8883 2633] is tape-recording peoples' recollections with a view to the publication of another book. Many of you will be familiar with *Finchley Remembered*, published in 2002 by The Finchley Society

Helene Davidian [8444 3669] is doing a project on stained glass in the area.

Tony Roberts [8883 5954] is tracing the transfer of land when Finchley common was enclosed and its effect on Finchley. A set of local history pamphlets for sale in libraries is envisaged, as is the posting on the Finchley Society web site of sources of Finchley History.

There are several other projects under consideration.

BUT WHAT EXACTLY IS FINCHLEY?



Finchley started its known existence, probably in late Saxon times, in a parcel of land attached to the Bishops of London's Fulham estates, and exploited by way of the manorial system. In the 1190's the Bishop gave the area to the North East to the religious order of Hospitallers, (hence Friern Barnet), but retained Finchley. The south facing slopes above the Mutton and Dollis Brooks were the most accessible and exploitable, so it was here that the Manor House appeared, the wastes known as Finchley Wood or The Common being to the northeast. Finchley became a parish, then several, then an Urban District, finally a Borough. Local government reorganisation reunited Finchley and Friern Barnet along with neighbouring Hendon into the London Borough of Barnet and Finchley ceased to exist as a single unit.

For most of Finchley's history its most traceable boundary followed the Dollis Brook. Flowing south past aptly named County Gate, the brook separated Whetstone and Finchley in Middlesex

from Totteridge in Herts. After collecting the waters of the Folly Brook it separated Finchley in the Hundred of Ossulstone (Oswald's Stone) from Hendon in the Hundred of Gore.

The boundary then turned up the Mutton Brook for a little while before going cross country south of Little and Big Woods to meet the ancient track way known today as Hampstead Lane. A point below the lane, known as Sand Gate, marked the meeting of Hendon, Hampstead and Finchley.

The Mansfields of Kenwood House had Hampstead Lane rerouted north around his property. The boundary moved to follow it much later. This is the most southerly part of the terrain;

and the boundary makes off cross country again in a sort of arc to cross the Mutton Brook at what is now Cherry Tree Wood. Northward again along the backs of houses on Durham Road the boundary divided Finchley Common from Hornsey common. Both being owned by the Bishop, it wasn't until enclosure that the boundary was formalised. A little piece of Finchley Common appears to have been left in Coldfall Wood... The boundary then takes a straight line for Irish Corner, and at the easternmost point of Finchley turns north to Woodhouse Road then back along the road and north around the grounds of Wood House from where it meanders northward, closing to the High Road at Whetstone.

In recent times the boundary has been adjusted, taking in the rest of Cherry Tree Wood, Finchley Golf Course, rerouting in the Suburb being examples.

From north to south the area measures 7.7km but its width never exceeds 3.75 k

Tony Roberts

THE STEPHENS COLLECTION

The whole purpose of the Museum is to allow the public to visit us and to appreciate the marvellous legacy that "Inky" Stephens left to the people of Finchley. In order to do this we have a gallant band of stewards who give two and a half hours of their time each month in order to be there when the public call in to see for themselves.

Over the last twelve months the number of stewards has reduced. If this trend continues then we would be forced to close, depriving the public, many of whom include children, from learning more of their local history. We therefore ask whether you know of anyone who would be willing to become a steward, someone recently retired perhaps.

We can offer training and support. Come and see what is involved on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 2.00 – 4.30pm. It is also possible to swap your afternoon session if inconvenient. Please contact Charlotte Hume, our rota organiser, whose telephone number is 020 8346 2722

Peter Marsh

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.

The Archives would welcome the assistance of someone with basic IT skills to assist in the computerisation of their inventory. If you have a working knowledge of Microsoft Office running on a windows based PC and might be interested, please contact Archive Custodian Maggie Ferguson.

We are grateful to Kurt Weinberg for his gift of a copy of the Borough of Finchley's Official Souvenir, issued on the occasion of the granting of a Charter of Incorporation on the 5th October 1933, in a leather book beautifully bound by Kurt himself.

FROM THE WEB

"My grandmother's name was Lilian Beatrice Thomas, born 1920, and my grandfather was David Howell Thomas (Dai), a welshman born in 1888. They owned or ran a café somewhere in Finchley. They had left the area by the late 1960s. They had 2 children, Sally and John. Sally was born in Barnet, 1953 and John a couple of years later. If you have any information about the shop or the people mentioned then I would be most grateful."

jjames@tesco.net

CHURCH FARMHOUSE SUMMER EXHIBITION – April 5 – September 10.

“The Sounds of the Suburbs” looks at the many connections of Barnet Borough with the development of popular music in Britain since the 1950s. As well as covering significant venues in the area ,like the Torrington Arms in North Finchley, which presented rock, blues and jazz for over 40 years until its sad demise last year, and the Refectory in Golders Green, where Jimi Hendrix and Eric Clapton played some of their earliest gigs, the exhibition looks at individual bands and artists.

Some were born in the area – George Michael, Helen Shapiro, Toyah Willcox ; many have lived here – the Bee Gees, the Spice Girls, Cliff Richard, Long John Baldry; some are even buried here – Billy Fury and Marc Bolan.

It’s a wide-ranging story and will cover new bands and musicians playing today as well as figures from the past. We hope to have some live music in the Museum Garden and at local venues during June and July.

If you think you might have something to offer please get in touch with Gerrard Roots at 020 8203 0130 or gerrard.roots@barnet.gov.uk

EVENTS SECRETARY

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

e-mail: sakjetha@btinternet.com

If you hear of good and interesting speakers please let her know.

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:info@tonylondon.fsnet.co.uk

New members

Ann Bronkhorst, N2 Stanley and Robina Spinks, N2 Mrs Norma Vitali, N3

You are all very welcome. Please make yourself known at the monthly meetings.

Donations

Mrs Cecilia Brain, N2 Mr and Mrs Bumpus, N3 Mrs Chloe Gardner, EN5

June James,N2

Mrs J Mitchell, N2

Rosanna Taylor,N3

Stanley and Robina Spinks,N2 S Underwood and J Szablowski, N12

Changed your address or e-mail? Let Tony Roberts know so that you can continue to get your newsletters and renewal forms on time.

The Gift Aid declaration enables the Society to claim from the government 28p for every £1 received. Thus a £9 subscription becomes worth £11.52 and a £16 one is worth £20.48, without the member having to contribute an extra penny.

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 May newsletter to **Barbara Warren** by April 15th please. 83, Wentworth Avenue, N3 1YN 020 8346 5258...barwar@waitrose.com
The Society will need a new editor by the end of the year.