

MAY 2007

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

www.finchleysociety.org.uk

President: Bill Tyler AADipl, ARIBA, IHBC

Founded 1971

MONTHLY MEETING: "LONDON PROPERTIES OF THE NATIONAL TRUST"

The May meeting will take place in the Drawing Room at Avenue House on Thursday 31 May 2007 at 8 pm when Mike Watts will speak on "London properties of the National Trust". Before retirement, Mike was an executive engineer, engaged for many years with the work of the Royal Air Force and the British Standards Institution. He is a volunteer speaker for the National Trust and other organisations, and is a guide at the Chelsea Physic Garden.

"London Properties of the National Trust" introduces 13 properties of the National Trust in London including some you are otherwise likely to miss! This talk tells the following stories, and many others:

- Who was concerned about living in Chelsea because it was damp and unwholesome?
- Which young lady encouraged her husband to shoot the servants?
- Whose bed resembles a temple to the fertility goddesses?

A NEW SOCIETY CHAIRMAN

David Smith has accepted our Trustees' invitation, at their meeting on April 19, to serve as Chairman of the society until another Candidate is found. He has effectively been taking on the responsibilities of chairman since the resignation of former chairman Barbara Warren in April 2006.

ELECTION TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND AS A TRUSTEE

Nomination forms for election at the Annual General Meeting on June 28 of Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary or Executive Committee member and as a Trustee 2007/08 are available from Robert Winton, 224 Creighton Avenue, East Finchley, N2 9BD (020 8883 2633). Completed forms must arrive not later than June 14.

ANNUAL DINNER – 4 JULY 2007 – 7.30 PM FOR 8 PM

If you have not already done so, and you intend ordering tickets for the Dinner, on Wednesday 4 July, then please do so by the end of this month, that is 31 May. Full details and an order form accompanied the April Newsletter but we did manage to omit the start time: it is 7.30 for 8 pm.

David Smith

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.

History Projects: The next meeting of the projects group, open to all those working on Finchley local history projects whether members of the Society or not, takes place on 24 May. Contact Margaret Cullen for further information.

The projects group is looking for someone with an interest in North Finchley to help compile one of a series of local history booklets. If you are interested then come along to the meeting and find out more.

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Supermarket Trolleys

Just as graffiti and litter advertise to others that a borough is uncared for so, do supermarket trolleys left in the street. I have had phone calls from members and have been at the receiving end of some fragrant replies to my enquiry as to what the shopper would be doing with the trolley afterwards. Here are 3 phone numbers to ring if one of these articles wanders off, and the management will arrange for the offending trolley to be taken home.

Waitrose, North Finchley – 020 8343 7303

Sainsbury's, North Finchley - 020 8446 2655

Tesco, Church End - 0845 677 9278

Barbara C Warren ...street environment. 020 8346 5256 barwar@waitrose.com

Post Boxes

I am listing the post boxes in the area but have only found two with the royal cipher for King George VI. They are in Ballards Lane by Christ Church Avenue and in Nether Street by the shops at West Finchley. Do you know of any others?

Derek Warren. 020 8346 5258

Walk In the Woods

The woodland cover of England is about 8% and we have some fine woods near us, especially in Hertfordshire.

The Tree Council's "Walk in the Woods" throughout May is to encourage you to benefit your health in an affordable environmentally-friendly way.

I therefore hope that you will be able to join me on Wednesday 16th May for a walk around Gobions Wood at Brookmans Park. The only way to slightly relieve my guilt in getting there by car is to offer you a lift. The entrance is difficult to find so if you wish to make your own way there give me a ring. We will leave Finchley at 9.30am and will take about 2 hours to walk about 2 miles.

There is pasture and a large lake as well as woodland, many plants will be in flower, the birds will be in full song, there are some old elm trees that have survived, and we shall see swallow holes where, when the water level is low the flow goes to the river Lea but when in flood the water ends up in the river Colne.

Derek Warren, 020 8346 5258.

ANOTHER AWARD!

One of our members, Mollie Harris, was presented with a certificate at the Mayor of Barnet's Civic Award ceremony at Hendon Town Hall in February. This was a reward for all her work in connection with three local groups: the Friends of Barnet Borough Libraries; The Finchley Arts Centre Trust and the Friern Barnet Summer Show.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL TREE IN FINCHLEY?

I am no expert on trees but I do know a stunning sight when I see one. The months of March and April have yet again revealed the glories of the blossom trees in our local streets and gardens. We have also marvelled at the brilliant displays of forsythia and magnolia all around. I recall a brilliant display of pyracantha blossom last year in Kitchener Road N2.

However, my nomination for the most beautiful tree in Finchley (in April) is the cherry blossom tree at the junctions of Deansway and Brim Hill in East Finchley. Every year without fail it manages to cover its overarching branches with the purest of white blossom, a truly beautiful herald of Spring?

Do you know of a special tree in Finchley? If so, let the Editor know and we can build up a month by month record of the true beauty of our local trees. We can then publish a list in early 2008 to give you all a chance to see these trees in all their glory!

David Smith

THE SPIKE MILLIGAN STATUE FUND

Our last two Spike Milligan calendars went to a Lady.....yes, a real Lady. Which prompted us to think about where some of the others went. Margaret took one to Australia, Derek posted one to Toronto, Canada, Peter took one to Tallin, the capital of Estonia; and Robina sent one to Johannesburg. Can you tell us of the adventures of others?

We shall be at the Farmers Markets on the first Sunday of every month in the playground of "The Sacred Heart School, Oakleigh Road North.

Barbara Warren

THE FINCHLEY TRIANGLE

The reason why some gardeners in Finchley break backs and garden tools in the effort to find some semblance of soil amongst the heavy clay, while others delight in softer, manageable earth is best explained by the British Geological Survey Map.

Opening the map your attention is caught by a light blue triangle, the Finchley triangle, sitting in the midst of the surrounding brown clay. Fortis Green, East End Road and Ballards Lane run along southern and north-western sides of this triangle at a fairly regular height of 90 to 95 metres but the triangle dips down toward the north east, to where the High Roads of East and North Finchley meet the North Circular Road.

The light blue represents a unique surface layer of chalky, sandy clay, pushed down from the north and deposited when the icecap melted. Under this clay, in a hollow in the base clay of the region, lies a "filling" of Dollis Hill gravel, probably deposited by a major tributary flowing north to join the Thames, then flowing through Watford. The ice cap blocked these northern routes, forming enormous lakes, and diverted the Thames through London on its current course.

The gravel "filling" has acted as a reservoir ever since, excess rain water flowing over the join between gravel and clay in numerous streams, noticeably to the north east, to join Pymm's Brook and the River Lea. The steep southern and north western sides drain

westward, the Dollis Brook and Mutton Brook joining to form the Brent Brook which flows backward along the earlier river course.

The topography of this triangle has played a key part in the history and development of Finchley.

This article first appeared in The Archer Newspaper in 1998

Tony Roberts

BILL TYLER WALKS 780KM FOR TREEHOUSE AND NORTH LONDON HOSPICE

Our 73-year-old President, Bill Tyler, is walking the Camino de Santiago in aid of TreeHouse, the national charity for autism education, and the North London Hospice. Bill will be setting off on the 780km trek on 4 June 2007, and aims to be in Santiago de Compostela 30 days later!

A message from Bill: 'A recent newspaper article on walking the 500 miles of the Camino seemed a dream challenge – what else after completing the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu and raising almost £14,000 for the National Autistic Society in 2004? Do please give as generous support as you are able to – my legs will need it!'

If you would like to sponsor Bill, please visit his justgiving page: www.justgiving.com/billtyler.

Or for more information, or to make a donation to sponsor Bill, please contact: TreeHouse – Claire Palmer, 020 8815 5433 or cpalmer@treehouse.org.uk; North London Hospice – Nicola Moore, 020 8446 2288 or nmoore@northlondonhospice.co.uk.

REDUCING HOME HEATING COSTS

Did you know that up to half the heat from wall mounted radiators could be wasted by heating up the local wall and window above the radiators? This is because the wall behind the radiator loses between 2 and 4 times as much heat per square foot as the rest of the outside wall, while the warm air rising from the radiators greatly increases the heat loss through the window above the radiators.

It is necessary to measure the local wall temperatures as I have now done at home, with over 100 measurements. A limited check on our church radiators gives similar results. You could halve the heat loss behind each radiator by fitting ½" thickness of insulation on that wall and attaching shiny aluminium foil (cooking foil) on the insulation but not touching the radiator. Use of cooking foil alone should save your domestic heating bill by about 10%.

You would need wooden battens to hold the insulation plus foil against the wall. Polystyrene fibreglass or rockwool are suitable insulations. There is also a propriety product of insulated foil available to stick on the wall behind radiators.

Modern radiators are sometimes fitted straight on to outside walls or with only a 1" gap. Therefore to avoid wasting heat, radiators should be fitted only to inside walls, or at least 2" from outside walls so that even thicker insulation can be installed there.

This analysis applies only to solid outside walls in older houses. Use of insulation etc, would produce much smaller savings on cavity walls.

P.J.W. Crockford

MEMBERSHIP

Membership Secretary, Tony Roberts, 32a, Sedgemere Avenue, East Finchley, London, N2 0SX 020 8883 5954 e-mail: membership@finchleysociety.org.uk

Donations

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

Mr & Mrs P.S. Bagwell N3

Mr J D S & Mrs J V Bumpus N3

Mr N. & Mrs C. Corre N3

Charlotte Hume N3

Tony Roberts – 020 8883 5954

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

NEWS FROM OTHERS

Church End Library

Wednesday 16 May 10.30 am to 11.30 am David Keen will be giving a talk on the RAF Museum

Friern Barnet Library

Monday 21 May a talk will be given by a member of the Fire Services on Fire Safety in the Home - and the work of the Fire Service. The talk starts at 8 pm for 8.15 pm.

London Transport Museum

The Museum unveiled its new shop for London at the end of March. The Museum's shop returns to the main site in Covent Garden ahead of the main Museum reopening in October 2007.

The Civic Trust

The Trust requires help with the Civic Awards Archives. If you are able to assist please e-mail to jsieh@civictrust.org.uk with the subject: Assistant for the Civic Awards Trust, or write to BE-Net Archive assistant c/o Louie Sieh, the Civic Trust, Essex Hall, London WC2R 3HU.

**We welcome letters, articles and photographs for inclusion
in future Newsletters**

ARTICLES FOR THE JUNE NEWSLETTER TO THE EDITOR BY 15 MAY 2007

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Visit our website!

www.finchleysociety.org.uk