

**JANUARY 2008**

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

Founded 1971

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### **A message from the trustees**

The Trustees regret to announce the resignation of the Society's President, Bill Tyler.

This follows the SGM of 21 November, at which a motion of no confidence in him as President of The Finchley Society, relating to the single issue of the dispute between Avenue House Estate Trust and Finchley Arts Centre Trust, was passed by a narrow majority.

This issue should not be allowed to obscure Bill Tyler's enormous contribution to the Society from its inception to the present day.

The trustees ardently hope that members will now put to one side their differences on the issue and work together for the good of the Society and the people of Finchley and Friern Barnet as a whole.

- *As a consequence of his resignation, Bill Tyler relinquishes his position as a trustee*
- *For a report on the SGM see page 2*
- *For a tribute to Bill Tyler see below*

### **BILL TYLER : A TRIBUTE**

You will have read that Bill Tyler has resigned as President and a Trustee of The Finchley Society.

We cannot let his resignation pass without recording some of the many ways he has helped the Society since becoming a founder member in 1971.

In 1970 Spike Milligan and Jean Scott, who was the Finchley representative on the Greater London Council, were alarmed by a proposal to demolish early Victorian cottages in Lodge Lane, North Finchley. Jean then brought together a team of enthusiastic local people, including Bill and Spike, to put forward a modernisation scheme that would save the cottages. Spurred on by this initial campaign, Jean realised that there was a need for a local society to promote the conservation of the many fine buildings still in existence in Finchley and Friern Barnet. Thus was born The Finchley Society in February 1971. Bill's architectural practice eventually managed the refurbishment project for the cottages, which took some ten years to negotiate and complete. Meanwhile Bill was greatly involved in the first major project of the new Society: the appraisal of buildings and natural features contained within the old Borough of Finchley and Urban District of Friern Barnet.

With his architectural expertise Bill spearheaded many other successful campaigns, including The Limes, one of the last Georgian buildings in Whetstone High Road, and Hawthorn Dene, the earliest known example of using cast iron in the construction of a domestic building as a means of fire prevention. In addition, he has been our spokesman at many Appeals and Public Inquiries

- Archway Road widening (twice), the North Circular Road, Henlys Corner, Brent Cross expansion, Barnet's UDP - giving up a great deal of his time to do so.

Bill was Chairman of the Society from 1977 to 1982 and when the Planning Committee was established in 1987 he became its chairman, serving on that committee ever since. As a consequence he has responded to countless local planning consultations and spoken at many meetings of Barnet Council's Planning Committees. His appreciation of the importance of the historic environment and the need to safeguard the most significant of its features led to his proposal for a group to be set up to promote College Farm, subsequently The Friends of College Farm, and which kept the farm going when its future was at a very low ebb. With the benefit of his architectural training and knowledge Bill has given valuable advice to members on many technical matters; we sincerely hope that his advice will still be available to the Society.

He has conducted many architectural and historical walks around the Finchleys, pointing out features of interest which, unless highlighted, might remain unnoticed and unappreciated. Members will doubtless recall the series of articles that appeared in the local press describing the architectural features of many of our most interesting and unusual buildings. He also has spoken about planning issues and local buildings on TV and radio.

Bill helped out on our stalls at various Finchley Carnivals and several times walked the Carnival route, sometimes in fancy dress but always armed with collecting bucket. He was very involved with the exhibition the Society mounted in the old H A Saunders showroom in North Finchley (where Sainsbury's now stands) to celebrate the Queen's silver jubilee and also in mounting Paddy Musgrove's original 1984 Stephens exhibition in 'Inky's' laboratory at Avenue House.

Through his interest in the built environment and the Society's membership of the Civic Trust, Bill became a member of its National Council of Civic Trust Societies and subsequently was appointed Trustee for the London Region from 1999-2004. He was one of the founders of what eventually became the London Forum of Civic & Amenity Societies, which represents over 120 local societies in the GLA region, and is one of its Vice Presidents.

Bill has been a member of the Executive Committee for 36 years and the President for thirteen. He has been a loyal member of The Finchley Society and has worked tirelessly for its success. '

*Carol Halls and David Smith, Vice Presidents*

#### **A REPORT ON THE SGM OF 21 NOVEMBER 2007 AT TRINITY CHURCH, NETHER STREET**

The meeting was called by a petition of members to debate the motion:

*"We, the members of the Finchley Society, believe that Bill Tyler has abused his position as President of the Society in relation to the dispute between Avenue House Estate Trust and Finchley Arts Centre Trust [The Bothy]. Therefore, we have no confidence in him as President of the Society and we call on him to resign."*

In opening in support of the motion, Mike Walsh stated that the motion was concerned with Bill Tyler as Finchley Society President, a position he had abused in two ways. Firstly by taking part in the Society Executive Committee (EC) discussion on whether the society should intervene in the dispute, because non-intervention supported AHET policy. Secondly by calling a meeting in order to persuade Society members that the Society should not intervene, contrary to the Society's constitution which requires the Society to act as a coordinating body and to cooperate with other local charities.

Dennis Pepper, opening against the motion, said that trustees must act solely in the interest of their trust. Bill Tyler is not on AHET as a Finchley Society representative. The EC minutes show that the Chairman, not Bill Tyler, said the Society should not intervene and Bill Tyler made no attempt to influence the decision. Bill Tyler called a meeting because he wanted an opportunity to explain the AHET position, as the press would not give publicity to that position. He made no attempt to influence members' opinions. Bill Tyler acted correctly; the Motion is vindictive and without substance.

There followed a discussion from the floor on a wide range of considerations, some of them heated. These included that the Society was obliged by their constitution to intervene; that the Society did not have the expertise to mediate; that the Trustees should have advised members

which way to vote; that the Trustees had an obligation not to influence the vote; that Bill Tyler was being treated appallingly; that he should have realised he could no longer be in both camps. Various facts were related of the communication between AHET and FACT.

Winding up in support of the motion, Jestyn Phillips recalled how much work FACT had put into the Bothy, the scale of financial contributions, and that the project was nearly completed. The Finchley Society by virtue of its position should have acted positively as a coordinator. Bill Tyler has acted in a partisan fashion and influenced the Society, which has lost confidence and must start afresh.

Winding up against the motion, David Berguer said that the Society logo referred to Conserve, Enhance, Educate, Inform - but not to 'Arbitrate'. It was not equipped or set up for such a role. The criticisms of Bill Tyler were outrageous; he is totally honest and fair. His only contribution to the EC meeting was that it had made the correct decision in deciding not to be involved. Criticism of the meeting that Bill Tyler called does FACT no good at all. The Motion was highly damaging to the Society and to its work in the community.

A vote was then taken by secret ballot. 44 voted in favour of the motion, 41 voted against and there was one spoilt paper.

*A full set of minutes will be issued in advance of the AGM*

### **JANUARY MEETING MY GRANNY HAD ONE THESE, BUT SHE THREW IT AWAY**

The meeting will take place in the Drawing room at Avenue House, East End Road, Finchley London N3 at 2.30pm on 31 January 2008.

Mr Maurice Collins' talk will be interactive with the audience seeing many items, having to guess their use and how they fitted into the fabric of society in their dated period, how the items were marketed and sold, often difficult when only a small proportion of the population could read!



The process of protecting your ideas, how they were patented and brought to market and how so many of them failed

Items such as the clockwork burglar alarm, skirt lifters, vacuum cleaners, the first teasmade, codswallop bottles etc will be shown discussed and examined to see if there is possibilities of having a new life in today's world

It will be fun, interesting and informative!

### **NOVEMBER MEETING**

**APOLOGY:** We are extremely sorry that the time of the November meeting was incorrectly stated as 8 pm instead of 2.30 pm in the last Newsletter. Despite strenuous efforts being made to advise members of the error we were not able to contact everyone and unfortunately several people arrived for an evening meeting. We apologise to them for the inconvenience caused.

### **REVELATIONS ABOUT THE STATUE OF "LA DÉLIVRANCE"**

Everything you did not know about the statue of La Délivrance and so never asked. Louise Curzon could not have been the model as she claimed, the statue is not a copy, La Délivrance is really the name of the sword not the statue, and why the first battle of the Marne in 1914 meant much more to the French than just a victory. Martin Bolton revealed all this and more in a fascinating talk to the Finchley Society on November 29, based on his work in co-operation with John Rickard, both amateur researchers.

Louise Curzon could not have been the model because she was born in 1905 and the statue was started in 1914, when she would have been only nine years old. Also Emile Guillaume was a distinguished sculptor who would never have made a statue using only photographs, and is much more likely to have used a French rather than an English model. So who is the model? "I don't know," said Martin Bolton, "but I believe that the statue was inspired by Marianne, the

symbol of the French revolution in 1792, and who was shown with an upraised sword, and again, naked, on a medal commemorating the battle of the Marne.

Is the statue a copy or the original? A number of statues were cast from the original clay model which Emile Guillaume created, so that all of them can be regarded originals.

The special significance of deliverance for the French was that in 1871 Paris was besieged by the Germans and they feared a repeat in 1914, from which the battle of the Marne delivered them.

"Délivrance" is written on the hilt of the Finchley statue, and probably this was originally intended as the name of the sword but became attached to the whole statue. Martin Bolton described the statue as an extremely important example of the first *art deco* style and a remarkable work of art, perfect in its portrayal of the human form.

Finchley Society information from [www.finchleysociety.org.uk](http://www.finchleysociety.org.uk) or 8883 2633.

Further information from: Martin Bolton - 020 8883 4196 John Rickard - 01483 764 413

### **LOCAL HISTORY GROUP**

The end of 2007 has offered considerable interest to the local historian. First St Margaret's Church in Victoria Avenue staged an interesting exhibition to mark their centenary. As the church is situated on what were once the Church Fields I asked if the protests about the selling of the land for housing as reported in the 1906 St Mary's Church magazine and reprinted in the October newsletter also applied to the building of a church. Apparently it did! I also learnt the present church was originally intended as the church hall and the planned church had a tower which would have changed the skyline of Church End. On the subject of towers, for Christ's college quinqucentenary we were allowed into their old building, now Pardes House School, where, again, there was an interesting exhibition, and also an opportunity to climb the tower which is such a landmark in Finchley and provides a different view of St Mary's tower. I believe The Finchley Memorial Hospital has an anniversary soon and I hope there will be another exhibition – though probably no tower real or intended.

If these exhibitions have encouraged your interest in local history we would be delighted to welcome you at our informal meeting in the Gallery Room at Avenue House on Thursday 24 January.

*Margaret Cullen*

### **FINCHLEY SOCIETY BOOK: "FINCHLEY REMEMBERED"**

To meet continuing demand, the Finchley Society has reprinted its book "Finchley Remembered", which contains the recollections of Finchley residents of life in Finchley, including memories of childhoods, schools, the countryside, war, transport, shops and events.

The book costing £10.95, can be obtained from Derek and Barbara Warren, 83 Wentworth Avenue, Finchley N3 1YN. Cheques should be made payable to "The Finchley Society". Further information can be obtained from Derek or Barbara on 020 8346 5258.

### **FRIERN BARNET LIBRARY COFFEE MORNING**

The next coffee morning talk will be "The Victorian Home" given by Gerrard Roots on Wednesday 23rd January at 10.30 - 11.30.

### **SOCIETY WINS PRESTIGIOUS AWARD**

The Finchley Society's website, "[www.finchleysociety.org.uk](http://www.finchleysociety.org.uk)", received a commendation at the prestigious London Forum Walter Bor Media Awards ceremony on Tuesday 13 November. The biennial awards are given by the London Forum of Amenity & Civic Societies in memory of their founding President Walter Bor, a world-renowned town planner, for outstanding achievements by civic and amenity societies in promoting their activities through printed and other media.

The awards cover newsletters, one-off publications, websites and campaigns through the media and are judged according to overall presentation, usefulness of content, readability and layout, design and use of illustrations and, where appropriate, frequency and cost of production. Bill Tyler, a Vice President of the London Forum, was one of the judges, but not able to vote for the

Society's entry, said: "Since the Bor Awards were first made in 2001 the standard of entries has risen markedly as have the number of entries in all categories. Societies can see the value of and are increasingly making use of the media to get across the importance of issues in their communities."

The Award Certificate was accepted on behalf of the Finchley Society from Peter Murray, Chairman of New London Architecture, by Stephen Yeo who had designed the initial version of the website. He told the audience that producing a website was no longer difficult and even a simple design could get across a message. There were many tools now readily available to construct sites and he paid tribute to Tony Roberts, the Society's Membership Secretary and Webmaster, for the excellent and professional design of the site as it is now.

*Bill Tyler*

### **ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

You are invited to join the Environment and Transport Committee for the first part of their meeting on Monday 28th January, when there will be a talk by Chris Hall from London Buses. Please let me know if you are coming.

The London Transport Museum reopened last November and Harry Beck's original artwork for the world famous 1930's Underground map is on public display for the first time ever.

It is some time since we checked the condition of the Church End Conservation Area, so we will be carrying out an Audit on Saturday 2nd February 2008 at 11am, meeting by the Victorian post box in Hendon Lane, at the top of Gravel Hill, N3. Do come and help look at the condition of the trees, the pavements, and any other problems that the Barnet Council should know about. We will take about an hour or so but you can leave, or join us, whenever you like.

At Long Lane Pasture the new pond is looking good and on a frosty morning a water boatman could be seen swimming beneath the ice. The grey wagtail used it as a feeding station for a few weeks in the autumn and the sparrow hawk has put in a few appearances. On lifting one of the sheets of corrugated iron that has been put down to attract reptiles, there were 5 wood mice running around. There are work parties most Saturday mornings between 10 am and midday; the entrance is off the footpath that starts in the small roadway opposite the Fire station. Even if you are unable to help do come and walk around to see how exciting the project is developing.

Occasionally I walk around the lake at The Pentland Centre in Squires Lane, and when I receive an e-mail from them they have printed at the bottom: "Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail". I can imagine many business' printing everything that comes through, when much of it can be inwardly digested and then deleted, thereby saving tons of paper.

*Derek Warren, secretary of E & T Committee. 020 8346 5258 [derwar@waitrose.com](mailto:derwar@waitrose.com)*

### **LONDON FORUM OPEN MEETING FLOODING IN LONDON AND TE2100**

Thursday January 10th 2008 in the Gallery 70 Cowcross Street, EC1 (near to Farringdon station)  
6pm for a 6:30 pm start

Flooding in London has become a serious problem and intense rainfall and extreme stormy conditions are likely to increase in future. Recently, six boroughs in London received Government funds after flooding. The Environment Agency publishes maps of areas likely to be flooded that cover considerable areas of London. The current flood defences are getting older and more costly to maintain.

Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) is a project the Environment Agency is conducting to develop a management plan to prevent flooding along the tidal Thames this century. Consultation commenced in November 2007. At our event on January 10th Rachael Hill of the Environment Agency will explain the risk of flooding in London and the options being considered This will be a full update to the report of April 2007 available on the EA web site at

[http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/commodata/acrobat/item07te2100\\_1767613.pdf](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/commodata/acrobat/item07te2100_1767613.pdf)

## DENYS CHARLES SAMUEL PEGG

29th September 1916 - 27th October 2007

Denys was a true stalwart of the Finchley Society from its very early days. He joined the Committee in 1973, serving as Vice-Chairman from 1978 to 1982 and as Chairman for the year 1982/3. Our newsletters are full of references to him - and to his famous lavender!

He was the first Chairman of the Friends of College Farm, which was established as a sub-committee of the Finchley Society. Though he resigned when he became Chairman of the main Society, he remained very active with the Friends throughout the 1980s, for instance with the planting of the trees along the centre driveway.

He was energetic in supporting Avenue House, both before and after the disastrous fire of 1989. He helped establish the Stephens Collection, as a member of its Committee, as a steward and in arranging its insurance.

Among the many society projects with which he was vigorously involved were the plaque to commemorate the tollgate that used to be near the corner of Gravel Hill and Regent's Park Road, and the transformation of wood from a 200-year-old oak that had stood in Avenue House grounds into a memorial to Alfred Pike.

He was for several years a representative of the Finchley Society on the Historic Buildings and Conservation Committee of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, and so helping in the consideration of planning applications relating to listed buildings throughout the Middlesex area. This tied in with his membership of the London Topographical Society.

He was born in Hornsey, and living on a hillside remembered watching Crystal Palace burning on the other side of London in 1936. He married Joan in 1940, and had a son, Ian, and two grandchildren.

He spent his working life with Pearl Insurance and was a Fellow of the Chartered Insurance Institute. When he retired he became the Company's archivist, collecting much material and organising displays, and was closely involved in the production of an illustrated history of the Pearl. He had the honour of receiving the President's Award.

As a conscientious objector during the war he did service as ambulance driver in the Hendon district, also helping with emergency feeding in the East End.

He did many other things locally which were not connected with the Finchley Society. As a strong supporter of the United Nations he had been treasurer and chairman of the local group. He was a member of Finchley Probus. For over 20 years he was a trustee of the Finchley Charities. He was a member of the Ballards Lane Methodist Church. He had been active in scouting with his wife Joan when she was Akela and he was a Group Scout Master. A keen gardener, at one time he had two allotments. A great collector of many things, everything he did had to be done correctly and in order.

We much regret his death.

*Peter Pickering*

## HARRY SHARPE

It is with sadness that I report the death of Harry Sharpe, a long standing member who gave 14 years' active service to the Society. In July 1986 he joined the Society Committee which was then the Society's only committee. Subsequently he was a member of the Planning Committee until January 2000, his speciality being monitoring that house agents' 'To Let' boards kept to the regulations of only one per house and were removed when the house was sold.

His daughter-in-law Ruth Sharpe writes "Harry Sharpe died in Bristol on October 24, aged 93. He was a much loved and respected headteacher of Queenswell Junior, Whetstone, retiring in 1979. He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Barbara, and their two sons."

*Robert Winton*

## MEMBERSHIP

We extend a warm welcome to our new members:

Harriet Copperman (OBE) N2	Michael Freer N3	Mike Gee N3
Marie-Christine O'Callaghan N2	Verity Smith N10	Mrs Betty Vines NW11

## 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:

Harriet Copperman (OBE) N2	Mrs Coral D'Eon N3	Miss N.C. Fletcher N3
Mr E.A. Green EN7	Mr Gilbert Frank Hill N3	Mrs S. Jackson N12
Mr David Janner-Klausner N2	Marie-Christine O'Callaghan N2	Mr S. Ross N3
Mr David Smith N2	Mrs A. Sharland N12	Mrs E. Terry N3
Ms B.J. Thornhill N2	Mr & Mrs A.E.J. Toms N3	Mr C. & Mrs R.M. Wilson N3

## CONTACTS

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE - [www.finchleysociety.org.uk](http://www.finchleysociety.org.uk)

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSLETTER IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO KEEP IT  
OR PASS IT ON TO A FRIEND!!