

MAY 2008

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

Founded 1971

MAY MEETING

The May meeting will take place in the Drawing Room at Avenue House, East End Road, Finchley N3 at 8.00pm on Thursday 29 May, when Mrs Eileen Kenning will give a talk about The Stephens Collection. Eileen is a teacher who lives locally and is a member of the Stephens Collection.

The film 'Blue Black' is the story of the development of the famous ink and the Stephens Family, and will be shown, with time after, for questions. The credit list is long as so many local people were involved and helped in the making of the DVD.

The film opens with authentic footage of the first woman Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. Interestingly this footage was recorded in the very room in which 'Blue Black' will be shown. The Prime Minister had learned that day, of the birth of her first grandchild and famously pronounced 'We are a grandmother'. Speaking of Stephen's Ink, Margaret Thatcher develops the theme of what she called 'a Lasting Legacy', by saying at the end of the film, 'What we have inherited, I believe, we have added to, so it shall benefit our grandchildren, and beyond.'

Whilst I never shared her politics perhaps on this point she was right, now is the time to take a long term view and celebrate 'the Lasting Legacy' begun with Stephen's Ink which we locals protect. Thanks to the Milly Apthorp Bequest, all Primary Schools in Barnet have been sent a free copy of the DVD, the aim of the Stephen's Collection being to continue 'to benefit our grandchildren and beyond'.

SPIKE MILLIGAN STATUE FUND

The committee were most fortunate to have Joanna Lumley, one of their patrons, to host a fund raising dinner at the home of chairman, Barbara Warren, resulting in a further £820 being added to the Fund.

The last quiz of the season was held at The East Finchley Constitutional Club in April and we are most grateful for the support the club gives by letting us have the venue free of charge. The next quiz will be on 20th September, but in the meantime we will be at various fairs with our Sales Table as we still have plenty of sweatshirts and T-shirts for sale, in all sizes, together with Spike's greeting cards, books and puzzles. See us at the East Finchley Festival on **Sunday 22nd June**, where there will be over 50 charity & craft stalls.

Derek Warren

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Our next informal meeting is at Avenue House on Thursday 22 May at 8 pm and we would be delighted to welcome anyone interested in helping with local history projects.

Margaret Cullen

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General meeting will be held in Avenue House at 8 pm on Thursday 26 June. The agenda accompanies this Newsletter. It includes the election of the President, Officers and Committee members, all of whom are ex-officio Trustees. Candidates for President must have held a responsible position in the Society. Nomination Forms for election are available from Robert Winton, 224 Creighton Avenue, East Finchley, N2 9BD (020 8883 2633), and he must receive completed Forms by not later than June 12. The agenda also includes approval of the 2007/08 accounts. Copies will be available at the AGM or are available from Robert Winton.

Robert Winton, Hon. Secretary

OUTINGS

Members are reminded of the possibility of joining two outings. The first is to Apsley House, the former home of The Duke of Wellington, at Hyde Park Corner on Thursday 15 May, meeting there at 11 am.

The second outing is to Chatham Dockyard on Saturday 19 July an all-day visit; we shall be leaving Finchley at 9 am. There is nothing to pay in advance for either outing.

Let David Smith (8883 4154) know if you wish to join in. Full details were given in the April Newsletter.

RUNNING THE SOCIETY

The Finchley Society is organised and animated by volunteers who enjoy the environment of Finchley and Friern Barnet and want to do something to help conserve it against the background of a local cultural heritage.

We always need new volunteers to continue this work, especially this year when it is being proposed that the number of Executive committee members increases from four to six. We are also keen to recruit new members to the Planning Committee which does so much work vital to the central role of the Society. In fact, it would be accurate to say that every committee would welcome new blood.

So, if you are willing to give up six evenings a year to fill one of these positions then please get in touch with the relevant officer or committee chairman. For election to the Executive please contact Robert Winton. Please do not be shy in coming forward. We will welcome your approach.

David Smith, Chairman

FINCHLEY REMEMBERED

The Society is delighted to learn that the re-creation of our first publication "Finchley Remembered" has met with renewed success and that over 130 copies of the book have been sold in the past few months.

Our thanks go to Stephen Yeo who scanned the original text, to Maggie Ferguson and Helene Davidian, who gathered in the photos, to Stephen Cooper and Carol Halls for scanning the photos and other images, to Lynn Bresler who proof-read and liaised with the printers, and to Tony Roberts who corrected and laid out the text. We are lucky to have such expertise in our midst. It has enabled us to produce a book out of nothing.

We must also pay tribute to Guy and Adele Nevill who have master-minded the sales drive and have clocked up many miles in delivering the books to various outlets, notably Waterstones and Waitrose at North Finchley.

David Smith.

ANNUAL DINNER – 9 JULY

So successful was the last Dinner that the Committee booked this date within days of the 2007 event. The venue for our Annual Dinner will be the South Herts Golf Club, Totteridge. The date is Wednesday, 9 July and guests are invited to arrive at 7.30 p.m. for a prompt start at 8.00 p.m. Our Guest of Honour this year will be Mr Martin Russell, D.L., Deputy Lieutenant for the London Borough of Barnet, who will speak to us at the conclusion of the meal. Martin Russell is "a Finchley man" through and through and was educated at Christ's College.

Members should not be deterred from attending the event because of a lack of transport. Last year we were able to provide lifts for several members and there was also a car sharing scheme amongst those attending thus reducing our carbon footprint for the evening. (For those who like statistics 19 vehicles conveyed 45 guests). It is also possible to reach the club on foot from Totteridge Station.

Fuller details are given on the sheet accompanying this Newsletter. The cost is £25 per head as before.

David Smith

ENVIRONMENT

In "Wild London" the London Wildlife Trust's newsletter, they say that we can all make a difference if we manage our gardens with wildlife and climate change in mind, especially as around one fifth of the capital is made up of gardens. There will be a Wildlife Gardening Fayre in Regent's Park on **21st June** with stalls of wild flowers, books and bird boxes as well as activities for children.

Karl Ruge reports on a sparrow hawk catching a pigeon in his garden near Friary Park N 11, Peter Marsh watched a similar attack in his garden near Victoria Park N3, and the same thing happened in Woodberry Grove N 12. When you see that the birds are about the same size and weight it is no mean feat. They usually go for smaller birds at the garden feeders, and one flew within a few feet of me in my garden as it made an unsuccessful attempt to catch a blue tit.

Many foxes have been seen and like making their den under garden sheds. Karl reports that he has seen them sitting at the side of Friern Barnet Lane watching the traffic go by.

GRANTING OF BOROUGH CHARTER - MEMORIES OF 75 YEARS AGO

Following a detailed and searching inquiry by the Privy Council into all aspects of the Finchley Council's administration, including its amenities, its planning, its industries and its social life, the Privy Council advised King George V that the Charter of Incorporation should be given to Finchley. And so it was on October 5 1933 the Charter of Incorporation was presented to Alderman Vyvyan Wells, the Charter Mayor, by Major-General, the Earl of Athlone, KG. who was accompanied by his wife, H.R.H. Princess Alice of Athlone, and Finchley changed from an Urban District Council to a Municipal Borough.

Mrs. Eileen Parnwell writes to say that although only aged six at the time she remembers the Charter Day well:

In 1930, by immense effort and economy, my mother and father had just bought a newly built house in a small terrace in Hutton Grove, North Finchley, moving from a flat over a shop in Ballards Lane, N3 in 1930. My mother had lived in that very large apartment with her own mother since she was about 16 and before that they were in rooms at the junction of Squires Lane and Long Lane during the First World War.

The cosy little modern house in Hutton Grove was her pride and joy and from there, it was only a step to the shops, trams and St. Alban's RC Church in Nether Street. By October 1933 the family consisted of my parents, my grandmother, my toddler brother aged three, my baby brother a few days before his 1st birthday and I now a schoolgirl at Bow Lane, just turned six.

I remember so clearly as the little ones were changed and dressed up and the baby strapped into a push chair, the big boy of three, warmly dressed in leggings etc. told to stand on the step and I to hold onto the handle and not lag behind or run on ahead. We were to walk up the slight incline to Ballards Lane to watch the Carnival procession pass. Great excitement from me and the barrage of questions remain clear in my mind. 'What *is* a carnival?'; 'Why are all those people dressed up?' and, over & over again. 'But what *is* a borough - what does it mean?' It took me decades to fathom that one out.

The crowds were quite thick and my mother had to manoeuvre the push chair into a space where we could see. The strangely dressed sights passed in a seemingly endless stream in front of us: the details are blurred now, but I well remember a sense of bewilderment at being part of this strange happening, so far removed from anything else in our, I suppose, humdrum life. I think I was shown the pictures in the local paper afterwards but they were in some way detached from that rather bizarre scene of a few days before.

And so, our quiet life, playing in the long garden while our parents struggled to keep things going continued for a while. It was not to be for long, though, as by 1935, the harsh realities of unemployment and the Depression meant that the house of my mother's dreams had to be surrendered as the tiny mortgage repayment and Rates to the newly created Borough became impossible. Back to rented accommodation and on to the five years of another World War and their continued efforts to provide a happy family life. There were not many treats - perhaps that is why I remember the strange afternoon of the procession so vividly.

Eileen Parnwell (then O'Connor)

As we all know, a lot has changed in Finchley since 1933 including the services provided by local authority. You may be surprised to know that in those days the Council was responsible for various utilities including the supply of electricity and this continued until nationalisation in 1948.

Up until 1948 when the National Health Service was established, the authority was also directly involved in the administration of the isolation hospital and ambulance service together with home helps, maternity and child welfare and day nurseries.

Fire prevention and fire fighting was also the responsibility of the Council at that time and one of the first things the new Charter Council did was to buy a new fire engine! Work also started on building the new Finchley Fire Station at the junction of the North Circular Road and Long Lane and this was completed in 1936. However, mid-way through the war the brigade was transferred to the National Fire Service and after the war was handed back not as expected to Finchley but to Middlesex County Council.

Rosemary Coates

OBITUARY

FRANK DERRETT 1st January 1934 - 24th March 2008

Frank had been a member of the society for many years and was one of our postmen. He took pride in his road always picking up litter, reporting problems to the council and helping neighbours. He was a great one for the outdoors having an allotment, and was the secretary of Pointalls Allotments in Squires Lane and on the committee of Barnet's Federation of Allotments. He had trained at Swanley Horticultural College in Kent before doing his National Service, after which he worked for 35 years at Lucas Industries in Finchley. He did so much for Long Lane Pasture, working there most Saturday mornings, as well as being a Trustee. He was also a Trustee of The Stephens Collection, taking his turn to man the museum at Avenue House. A supporter of Avenue House Grounds giving them many plants from his allotment, and a green keeper at the local Bowls Club. As you can see it will take 5 or 6 people to take on the tasks that he performed with great skill and dedication.

Our sympathy goes to his wife Mary, his two daughters and three grandchildren.

OTHER PEOPLES' EVENTS

Coppetts Wood - There will be a Woodland Festival for all the family at Coppetts Wood N 12 on **Sunday 11th May 2-4 pm**. For further information ring Ollie Natelson 020 8361 2496

North Finchley Walk: Ollie will also be leading a walk around North Finchley on **Sunday 1st June at 2pm**.

Friern Barnet Library - Coffee morning on 14 May – 10.30 am – 11.30 am. A talk will be given by Oliver Natelson on Colney Hatch Asylum

London Natural History Society is looking for spiders in Coldfall Woods on **Sunday 18 May**. The Leader will be Edward Milner. Meet at 10.30 am at East Finchley Station. It is suggested you bring hand lens, kneeling pad and lunch.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

New Members

We offer a warm welcome the following new members

Mrs Alana Kucera N3

Michael Sabel NW4

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 J D S & Mrs J V Bumpus N3

Mr N. & Mrs C. CorreN3

Helene Ann Davidian N2

Mrs Pauline Dawson N3

Charlotte Hume N3

Miss M. Kilby N3

Mr Tony McTeare N3

Mrs Patricia Perkin N3

Mr Martin Summers N3

Ms Rosanna Taylor N3

We are also indebted to all those members, without whose help, freely given, we would not exist. If any other members find they have some regular time to spare then we'd appreciate their help too. Just contact Helene Davidian on 8444 3669 or approach her at the monthly meeting to discuss ways in which you might help. No experience is necessary.

Tony Roberts Membership Secretary

CONTACTS

<p>Admin. Committee</p> <p>David Smith (Chairman) 17 Abbots Gardens N2 0JG 020 8883 4154 joda@fsmail.net</p>	<p>Hon. Secretary:</p> <p>Robert Winton 224 Creighton Avenue N2 9BD 020 8883 2633</p>	<p>Treasurer:</p> <p>Aziz Jetha 2 Templars Crescent, N3 3QS 020 8346 2286</p>
<p>Planning Committee:</p> <p>Mike Dawson (Secretary)</p> <p>020 8346 4232 mkdawson4@yahoo.co.uk</p>	<p>Local History Group:</p> <p>Margaret Cullen (Secretary) 21 Lyndhurst Gardens, N3 1TA 020 8346 2091 margaretcullen@f2s.com</p>	<p>Archives:</p> <p>Maggie Ferguson (Custodian) 36 Oakfield Road, N3 2HT 020 8349 4283 emfmr@hotmail.co.uk</p>
<p>Environment & Transport Committee</p> <p>Derek Warren (Secretary) 83 Wentworth Avenue, N3 1YN 020 8346 5258 derwar@waitrose.com</p>	<p>Spike Milligan Statue Fund</p> <p>Barbara Warren (Chairman) 83 Wentworth Avenue, N3 1YN 020 8346 4232</p>	<p>Newsletter Distribution Manager:</p> <p>Helene Davidian 57 Elmshurst Crescent N2 0LN 020 8444 3669 <i>(If you do not receive your Newsletter please let Helene know)</i></p>
<p>Membership Secretary:</p> <p>Tony Roberts 32a Sedgemere Avenue, East Finchley, London N2 0SX 020 8883 5954 membership@finchleysociety.org.uk</p> <p style="text-align: right;">If there are any changes to your membership or contact details please let Tony know</p>		
<p>Newsletter Editor:</p> <p>Rosemary Coates 38 Lyndhurst Avenue, London N12 0LU 020 8368 1620 rosemary.finsoc@waitrose.com</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ARTICLES FOR THE JUNE NEWSLETTER TO THE EDITOR BY 15 MAY 2008</p>		

VISIT OUR WEBSITE - www.finchleysociety.org.uk

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