

JUNE 2008

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

Founded 1971

"THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH....."

Since its inception in 1971 The Society has always been proud that it has kept members involved and informed through the monthly Newsletter.

We have been served by remarkably good Editors down the years so that the volumes of issues we now hold in our archives are an accurate account of our work and achievement since the start. They are also a resource for further research. We are proud of the fact that the Newsletter is quoted as a primary source by no less a publication than the Victoria History of the County of Middlesex, volume VI.

What started as a monthly edition of four sides of stencilled typing of variable quality has improved beyond recognition. Now the Newsletter is about to change again: for the better, of course. We have decided to embrace the many advantages of new technology to produce an even better product: better layout, greater clarity, more illustrations, including photographs. In addition, it will be possible to transmit the Newsletter electronically for those members who request it.

The downside is that the Newsletter will appear every two months, that is, six times a year as opposed to the present nine. This will avoid that long gap between early June and early September. So, starting this September, the Newsletter will be published bi-monthly: September, November, January, March, May, July. Those of us who contribute will have to be on our toes to ensure that each edition looks far enough ahead to include all the details of our programme for two months.

We must pay tribute to Tony Gossett of Ballards Lane Methodist Church who has toiled every month, and without complaint, to produce our Newsletter on time. We owe Tony a debt of gratitude for achieving so much on our behalf. We hope to continue to benefit from Tony's co-operation by asking him to produce additional items for us, for example the annual programme card and items to do with the A.G.M.

Finally, it must be said that our Newsletter is not written by the Editor but by the members! We shall need new correspondents to contribute articles of interest and relevance to the local scene. The deadline is August 15th: plenty of time to get those ideas on paper!

David Smith

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General meeting will take place at 8 pm on 26 June 2008 in the Drawing Room at Avenue House.

This will be followed by a talk given by Roz Avery on the Kruger National Park. Roz is already very well known to most of you having been a member of The Finchley Society almost all her life!

Roz says of her talk: "No packing required, I plan to take you all on a "virtual safari" whilst in the comfort of Avenue House! After my "ONCE in a lifetime" trip in March 2006 my fourth trip

for this September is booked! I would like to give you a glimpse of this place I have fallen in love with and show you the huge array of amazing birds and animals that inhabit this 20,000sq km of wild South Africa.

Hope to see you there... "

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Where exactly was the Finchley cage?

I was fascinated to read the following from the vestry minutes of 1860.

"The Vestry ordered the cage to be destroyed but Sir Richard Mayne wrote to the Vestry Clerk stating that the superintendent of the division reported that the Finchley cage was required for police purposes, it being the only lock-up within three and a half miles; that within the last five years 143 persons had been locked up and that it was now required more than ever.

The Vestry submitted to Sir R. Mayne that the cage was a nuisance; that the noise and foul language of the prisoners was detrimental to the school children who had to pass it to church, and earnestly hoped he would conclude it expedient that the lock-up should be destroyed."

Clearly the cage was somewhere between the old St Mary's School and the Church itself, but, although it apparently survived till 1880, I have seen no photographs or other mention of it. As I walk past the quiet parade of shops and the library in Hendon Lane I find myself wondering exactly where all that swearing and nuisance took place, how the church-going children reacted, what the cage looked like and why it was needed more than ever in 1860...

Margaret Cullen

ENVIRONMENT

At the last meeting of the Environment & Transport Committee, Councillor Marina Yannakoudakis gave a very interesting talk on the Council's policy with regard to trees in the Borough.

The Highways department were proactive, regularly checking trees along the roads and in the parks. A healthy tree would only be removed in special circumstances but then a replacement tree would be planted nearby. The main problem arose where tree roots were causing damage to house foundations. However, more trees were planted than felled in the borough.

The planning department have a more difficult job as most of the trees that they deal with are on private property, and unless they have a tree preservation order on them, or they are in a conservation area, they are out of their control.

Other matters discussed were: the compromise put forward for the development of the Stanley Road Playing Field; the open space left after the Finchley Memorial Hospital is extended onto the Bow Lane Playing Field; Natural England's challenge for Local Authorities to have green areas within 300m of every home; the use of plastic bags and that the supermarkets say that all their bags will soon be bio-degradable; the difficulty of access to the platforms at East Finchley station where it would be helpful to have a lift or escalator; the problem of a lack of a bus stop opposite Waitrose at North Finchley – when the Council and London Buses were approached, they each put the onus on the other; the experiment with low energy street lighting where Moat Crescent is to be one of the first roads to use light emitting diodes (LEDs).

If you would like to know more then come to our next meeting on 21st July.

Derek Warren

MIDDLESEX COUNTY COUNCIL

Robert Hogan writes to say that his main interests in the history of Finchley are centred around the north-western corner of what used to be Finchley Common, and it was in connection with this that he came across a brilliant (if idiosyncratic) website, which he thinks should be more widely known:

Middlesex County Council no longer exists (alas?!), so there were not going to be any legal problems when 'psycho-geographer' Nick Dimitriou registered his website as www.middlesexcountycouncil.org.uk, thereby helping to ensure that the ancient name is kept alive. The Home Page gives an account of some of the difficulties Dimitriou has run into furthering the cause of Middlesex loyalism.

If you click on its 'riverun' link, however, you reach a page providing links to accounts of some twenty expeditions in search of what he calls the 'deep topography' of the "rivers and streams of a London Borough" (Barnet).

His 'Swan Lane and Beyond' link should be of particular interest to any student of the north-western corner of old Finchley Common. Dimitriou demonstrates a correspondence between a trio of dips in Naylor and Birley Roads and covered-over streams flowing through Whetstone Stray into Dollis Brook. One of them originates from the lake beside the Woodside Home in Baxendale (near Barnet House, the Council offices in Whetstone High Road). Another is a spring that rises near the pond in Swan Lane Open Space. Their existence, like that of the whole Dollis Valley, is all part and parcel of Finchley's glacial legacy from the last Ice Age.

ANNUAL DINNER - WEDNESDAY 9 JULY 2008

Do order your tickets for the annual dinner as soon as possible. Full details and the booking form were in the May Newsletter. If you require another form, please contact David Smith. A letter acknowledging receipt of ticket order and giving any last minute details will be sent out in late June. A good evening is guaranteed.

David Smith – 8883 4154

OUTING TO CHATHAM DOCKYARD - SATURDAY 19 JULY 2008

Currently, four members have signed up for this trip so it will take place! Let David Smith know if you would like to go on this day-long outing. A second-car driver would be especially welcome. Passengers would, of course, contribute to the cost of travel on a voluntary basis. A 9.30 am start is envisaged with a return to Finchley at about 7.30 pm. Pick up points will be suited to members' needs.

David Smith – 8883 4154

OTHER PEOPLES' EVENTS

Finchley Memorial Hospital Fete - Sunday 8th June all afternoon

North Finchley Environment Fayre at the Arts Depot - 15th June 11am - 3pm

The Green Acre Bicycle Rally - Sunday 15 June. The first ever London Borough of Barnet Bicycle Rally is taking place in conjunction with the Environment Fayre at the Arts Depot, North Finchley. The cyclists will be leaving the Arts Depot at 12 noon and will take a three mile circular route to Friern Barnet, on up to Whetstone and back to North Finchley. Those taking part include cycling groups, police riders and children entertainers.

Glebelands Nature Reserve Tour - 15th June at 3.30 pm. Meet at Summers Lane at the junction with Upway, N12. 020 8361 2496

East Finchley Festival Sunday 22nd June - All afternoon there is wonderful entertainment, food and games, as well as many craft and charity stalls. Entrance is free to **Cherry Tree Wood** opposite East Finchley Station. Do come and buy a Spike Milligan T-shirt!

Coppetts Wood Local Nature Reserve Tour - 29th June 10.30am. Colney Hatch Lane entrance. 020 8361 2496

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

New Members

We offer a warm welcome to the following new members

Michael Lassman N12

Mrs Pearl Mitsides N12

Richard Golland N3

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:

Andy Astle N3

Mr Richard S. Buchanan N3

Mr & Mrs P.S. Bagwell N3

Mrs Eva Frean N3

Mrs H. Hatchett N3

Mr J. Karet N3

Mrs M. O'Brien N12

Patrick & Una O'Brien N12

Mrs R.M. Rees NW11

Mr J. Segal N12

Keith, Carol & John Wakefield N10

Mr & Mrs R.C. Winton N2

Tony Roberts Membership Secretary

CONTACTS

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<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 SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER TO THE EDITOR BY 15 AUGUST 2008 (This will cover any events up to early November)</p>		

VISIT OUR WEBSITE - www.finchleysociety.org.uk

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSLETTER IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO KEEP IT

OR PASS IT ON TO A FRIEND!!