

## Annual General Meeting 2009

The Annual General meeting will be held in Avenue House at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday 25 June.

The agenda accompanies this Newsletter. It includes the election of Officers and Committee members, all of whom are ex-officio Trustees. Nomination Forms for election are available attached to the accompanying agenda and completed forms must be received by the Hon. Secretary, Kiran Singh, not later than 1 June. The agenda also includes accounts for 2008/09, copies of which will be available at the AGM.

*Kiran Singh, Hon. Secretary*

## Unveiling of a Plaque at St. Mary's Church

*Members are invited to attend an unveiling ceremony outside St. Mary's Church, Hendon Lane, Church End, on Sunday, 28 June at 11.30 a.m.*

*The plaque is the second in a series that The Finchley Society is erecting to bring the attention of the passer-by to various buildings that are of architectural or historical importance in our area of benefit. The first plaque was unveiled at La Délivrance in September 2007.*

*It is hoped that the unveiling will be carried out by the Mayor of the London Borough of Barnet, Councillor Brian Coleman. The Deputy Lieutenant, Mr Martin Russell, will be invited to be present. The Rector, Rev. Philip Davison will also speak on behalf of the church. Various individuals and organisations will also be invited to attend this event.*

*A lot of work has gone into this project. We must particularly mention the work of our late Secretary, Robert Winton, who made all the initial enquiries and worked with St. Mary's Church and the Diocese of London to bring this project to a conclusion. We must also thank Peter Marsh for the design and installation aspects.*

*If you have never been inside the oldest building in Finchley then now is your chance to do so. The present building dates from Norman times but it is assumed that there was an earlier Saxon building. There are some fine monuments in the church. The Rector invites any of us to attend the Sunday morning service that starts at 10.00 a.m.*

*David Smith*

Page	Content
1	Annual General Meeting St. Mary's Church Plaque Finchley Remembered II
2	Spike Milligan Statue Fund Holy Antiques
3	Robert Winton OBE
4	Annual Dinner John Tiplady Environment Issues
5	Monthly Meetings Planning Issues Membership Matters
6	Letters to the Editor Donations
7	Terry Thomas Grove Lodge
8	Other People's events Forthcoming Events

## Finchley Remembered II

Missed the deadline?

Don't worry, contributions for our next book are still trickling in. So, if you would like to write something, do get in touch with David Smith or Lynn Bresler. The subject matter we leave to you – but do put as much detail as you can. "I remember the Gaumont Cinema" does not say very much but a description of a visit there would be very readable.

## The Finchley Society



Avenue House,  
East End Road, Finchley,  
London, N3  
www.finchleysociety.org.uk  
Reg. Charity No. 266403  
Registered with the Civic Trust.

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## The Spike Milligan Statue fund

There are two fund raising events taking place in June:

**Maureen Lipman** has graciously agreed to lunch at 83 Wentworth Avenue on Thursday afternoon 25 June, 12 noon. If you would like to be one of the seven others there with her, we will be charging £80 for the privilege of conversing with this lively comic actor around a table seating only 8 people. Please contact me as soon as possible - 83, Wentworth Avenue, Finchley, London N3 1YN [barwar@waitrose.com](mailto:barwar@waitrose.com)  
Barbara Warren 020 8346 5258



**Gervase Phinn** Performs Live For Spike - It has been a long time in the planning but at last the Spike Milligan Statue Fund is proud to announce that Gervase Phinn will be performing his one-man show at The Shaw Theatre (near The British Library) on Wednesday 24



June. Full details including how to book seats are on the accompanying flyer. If you have not been to one of Gervase' shows then now is an ideal opportunity. His background is the often hilarious educational scene in Yorkshire where he taught and then became an Inspector of Schools. He has written several books about his experiences, for example, *The Other Side of the Dale*, *Over Hill and Dale*, and has appeared on television and radio. His one-man show is performed all over the English-speaking world so we are extremely fortunate in securing his patronage for the fund.

We do realise that the show is the evening before our AGM but the choice of date was not under our control. We do urge you to make the special effort to attend and secure one of the 400 seats available. He is, quite simply, a very funny entertainer.

*David Smith*

used as doorstops, paper-weights, book-ends or just an unusual ornamental talking point in your living room! The cost is £3.00 (a whole brick) or £2.00 (half- or part-brick).

If you would like to become the proud owner of one of these very Limited Edition antiques, please get in touch with Tony McTeare (8346 1268) or Andrea Whittaker (8346 7325).

## Holy Antiques

"Would you like to buy a brick?" - a somewhat odd question being asked of the members and friends of East Finchley Methodist Church. Regular passers-by will have been aware of scaffolding around the front of the church, but may not have noticed that the church now has a slightly altered profile: the top of the steeple tower has gone.

The tower was in urgent need of repair. Unfortunately, the cost of repairing it was such that the church had to settle for the less expensive, but still costly, option of removing it. However, they managed to salvage quite a lot of the bricks from the tower and a small team has been busy scraping, washing, varnishing and labelling them to sell as souvenirs of this 110-year old East Finchley landmark.

A brick makes an unusual gift for a friend, relative or former member of the congregation. Their possible uses are limited only by your imagination! They can be incorporated into garden walls, patios or barbeque fireplaces. Half bricks or part-bricks can be

## Robert Winton OBE

I do not propose to add to the tribute I paid Robert in the November issue of the Newsletter. I feel it adequately expressed our appreciation of all he did for the Society. However, I was privileged to be able to speak at Robert's funeral on 10 March and will happily supply a copy if requested.

Robert very generously requested that donations in his memory should be sent to The Finchley Society in lieu of flowers. A number of Robert's friends, from within the Society and beyond, have made donations already and the fund has reached £725 at the time of writing. If members wish to make a donation it is not too late to do so. Please send cheques payable to "The Finchley Society" to Tony Roberts, our membership secretary at 32a Sedgemere Avenue, East Finchley, London N2 0SX.

The Winton family thank all those who attended Robert's funeral especially those who volunteered to act as ushers on the day.

We thank Andrew Winton for the following biography of his father.

*David Smith*

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My father Robert Winton was well-known to the members of The Finchley Society for many years, and this was only one of the numerous organisations that he supported during his life.

Born at the family home in Cleve Road, West Hampstead in 1914, Robert went first to The Hall school and then to Stowe Public School in Buckinghamshire. It was here that he first developed an interest in fencing, which was to become a life-long love. From Stowe he moved on to complete an engineering degree at Imperial College in 1935. Robert applied for jobs at GEC, Siemens and Mullard, and it was Mullard that wrote back in early August to offer him a job. He started the following week, and spent his entire working life there until he took early retirement in 1975. During this time, he answered the call of his country and joined the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1940. He spent most of the war in Egypt, working on gun-laying, which was the fore-runner of radar. In 1943 he moved to Sicily and then into Italy following the Allied invasion. He was awarded the Africa Star and the Italy Star for his service.

After the War, Robert returned to Mullard, where he met his wife-to-be Heather in 1950. They were married at Hampstead Parish Church in September 1952 and moved to Creighton Avenue in East Finchley where their children were born first Peter, followed by Andrew (1956) and Carol (1958).

As well as his 9-to-5 job, Robert continued his interest in fencing. Together with brother Nicky, he introduced The Winton Trophy, a team competition. While no longer actually fencing, he moved into the administrative side of the sport. He was awarded the MBE for his services in the 1987 New Year's Honours List.

Through his work, Robert became involved with The Institute of Electrical Engineers. He gave talks and became involved in Region 8, the European section of the organisation. In 1986 he was presented with The Haraden Pratt Award in recognition of his work.

Robert was a prolific writer. He spent many evenings at home producing articles for magazines. But as well as this he wrote many pieces for the entertainment of friends and family.

Many good causes benefited from Robert's time and knowledge. Help The Aged and Oxfam were two charities he supported, and he spent many years as a steward at The Globe, retiring at the age of 90. As recently as 2006 he donated a prize for outstanding achievement to The Martin School, where all three of his children had started their education.

Whatever Robert turned his hand to, he gave it his full commitment. In later years he became Heather's carer, and threw himself - although not literally - into his cooking. He was always keen to find new recipes, and emerged from his stay in The Whittington Hospital in January armed with lots of new ideas.

Sadly, Robert was only to spend three weeks at home after his discharge. Even during this short time, he approached everything in his usual methodical way. Some friends and relatives thought he had a premonition of his end because he called them a day or so before. But no, Robert had simply made a list of all those that had sent him Christmas and Get Well cards, and was working his way through it.

Robert had many phrases and sayings. One of them was "Everything changes". But the love, respect and gratitude felt by those who knew him will remain forever.

## The Annual Dinner

The Society's Annual Dinner is again being held at the South Herts Golf Club in Totteridge. We thank Percy Reboul for making this possible through his membership of the Club. If you have not been to the Dinner at this venue we do urge you to join us this year: the arrangements and the menu provided by the Club are excellent, the views through the picture windows are stunning and the company is, of course, incomparable.

The date is Wednesday 15 July. The time is 7.30 p.m. for a formal start at 8.00 p.m. Our Guests of Honour this year are Mr and Mrs Tony Gotlop. Tony is a long-standing Finchley resident whom many will remember as a portrait painter at the College Farm Open Days. However, his main claim to fame is as a couturier and he will use his experiences in the world of fashion and tailoring to entertain us at the conclusion of the dinner.

The cost will be the usual one of £25.00. We are again asking members to reduce our carbon footprint by using public transport (Totteridge and Whetstone Station is five minutes away) or by offering lifts to other members from their area: (see the application form enclosed). Non-Society guests are welcome.

Applications for tickets should be returned to David Smith as soon as possible, and should be accompanied by a cheque to cover the full cost. Please note that no refunds can be made after 4 July. Refer any queries to David Smith on 8883 4154.

This year we will be without the genial presence of Robert Winton who always organised at least two full tables at the Dinner. So may we ask for volunteers to host a table so that no one feels left out?

*David Smith*

## John Tiplady, O.B.E. 1922-2009

We regret to record the death, on 20 March of another founder member of the Society.

John was part of the steering committee that drew up our first constitution and helped launch the first membership drive. Because of his role as a Councillor on the London Borough of Barnet he did not take up any official position within the Society but was always extremely helpful to us especially in our approach to the Council over planning matters.

We appreciated his genial presence at our meetings and his great concern for all aspects of our local environment.

We send our sympathy to his family.

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## Environment Issues

In Boston, USA, the council offer to plant a tree in front of the house or business of anyone who asks. So let us see how Barnet react by contacting the Arboricultural Officer on 020 8359 7838. They usually replace trees that have been removed, although they often need reminding.

May is the Tree Council's "Walk in the Woods" month so try and make a visit. It will improve your health and well-being and if it is hot it will cool you down. I will be leading a wildlife walk by the trees along the Dollis Brook on Wednesday 13 May, meeting outside Totteridge station at 10.00 a.m. and ending in Tillingham Way, near Woodside Park station, at about 11.30 a.m.

Do try and make a visit to Big

and Little Woods in Hampstead Garden Suburb, you might just catch the bluebells. One event that is always interesting to visit, especially for children, is the Woodland Festival organised by Oliver Natelson at Coppetts Wood. There will be plants and wildflower seeds for sale, a treasure hunt, wildlife quizzes, refreshments and much more. This is on Sunday 10 May from 2-4 p.m. Further information from ollie.natelson@talktalk.net or 020 8361 2496.

"Tree News" tells us that the world's oldest recorded tree is a Spruce in Sweden at 9,550 years old. Don't ask me how they know. The tallest tree in Britain, which was measured by someone climbing it last year, is a Douglas fir in Scotland at 63.79 metres high. That's just

over 209 feet. Where are the oldest and tallest trees in Finchley & Friern Barnet?

I have mentioned before how wonderful it is for children to climb trees, and from The Wildlife Trusts "Naturalworld" I read that in 2006/7, 1067 children were admitted to casualty after falling out of trees, BUT 2,532 were admitted for falling out of bed.

Other dates:

Sunday 14 June. Avenue House Fun Day to celebrate their 150th anniversary. 8346 7812.

Sunday 21 June. East Finchley Festival at Cherry Tree Wood, opposite East Finchley Station. Many charity and craft stalls, music and refreshments.

Derek Warren 020 8346 5258

## Monthly Meetings

Members are warmly invited to the following meetings, which will take place in the Drawing room at Avenue House, East End Road, Finchley, London N3 starting at 8.00 p.m.

### Thursday 28 May 2009

'Not just a pretty place' - The National Trust and how it works" - Mike Watts will give a talk which explains what the National Trust is and how it developed, and gives a brief picture of the wide range and complexity of work, money and people needed to maintain its many responsibilities. It also explains the Trust's current strategy.

Before retirement, Mike was an executive engineer, engaged for many years with the work of the Royal Air Force, the British Standards Institution and the International Electro-technical Commission. He is a lecturer for the National Trust, for the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and for Plantlife International, and is a guide at the Chelsea Physic Garden.

### Thursday 25 June 2009 8.30 p.m. approx.

Following the Annual General Meeting, a talk will be given by Tony Roberts on East Finchley's history through maps. Tony has been a member of the Finchley Society for ten years and is currently the Society's Membership Secretary and Web Site maintainer. He lives in East Finchley and has been fascinated by maps since a very early age and has an abiding interest in the history of his local surroundings. He wishes it to be known, however, that he is not a local historian and expresses his gratitude to those who have researched and published the books on local history that have given him a lot of pleasure and made this talk possible. This 30 minute talk will look at how and why East Finchley has evolved as a thriving suburban community, from the mists of time to the present day. The information has been gleaned from local history publications and will be illustrated by maps both ancient and modern.

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## Planning Issues

Most of you will remember the bad old days in the eighties and nineties when estate agents' boards blighted our streets. Despite the current recession, the blight is returning. There is one big difference this time round. Under Class 3A, Schedule 3, Part 1 of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 only the display of 'For Sale' and 'To Let' boards benefits from deemed consent. This means that 'Let By' and 'Let & Managed By' boards do not benefit from deemed consent, so should not be displayed. There is a time limit of two weeks for the display of 'Sold' and 'To Let' boards, from the time the sale is completed or property let.

The Office of Fair Trading, Ombudsman for Estate Agents approved code, section 4e, states "When you put up a board you must by law comply with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 as amended." It seems that many estate agents are flouting both this code and the 1992 Regulations they refer to.

In my area of Finchley I have noticed a big increase in the number of estate agent boards displaying 'Sold' many weeks after the sale has been completed. Similarly, 'Let By' and 'Managed By' boards are now a familiar sight, both of which are not permitted.

It was time to act! I e-mailed a list of estate agent boards,

## Membership Matters

**IMPORTANT** As a result of the increase in subscription rates, members who pay by standing order are receiving a standing order revision form about two months before their next subscription is due. **Please return these to me without delay** so that there is sufficient time for me to process the form, send on to the bank and for the bank to make the necessary changes before the next payment is due. **There is no time for me to issue a second reminder.** If you need assistance with completing the form please contact me.

*Tony Roberts*

## New members

We offer a warm welcome to the following new members:

Szilvia Cseko & Gabor Csaszai N2

which I had confirmed flouted Class 3A regulations, to Darren Grynberg, a Barnet Council Enforcement Officer, giving him details of the estate agent concerned, the wording and where the board was displayed. Mr Grynberg has been very helpful and successfully had all the boards removed.

If you are concerned about estate agent boards in your area that are breaching regulations Darren is happy to receive details. Don't worry, Darren will not have to process all complaints, as complaints are dealt with by the Enforcement Officer covering the area concerned.

(Darren.Grynberg@barnet.gov.uk)

*Mike Dawson*

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

In the current issue of the Newsletter, Tony Roberts voiced an interesting point in wondering why anyone should ever wish to object to the conversion of a family dwelling into a substantial number of smaller units.

The answer is: it depends on the particular circumstances.

Maybe a road has preserved its historical, uniform character of family dwellings, which would be gravely upset by the introduction of flats.

Maybe, vehicular access and parking priorities are already overstretched. There could be a number of reasons why, in particular circumstances, a particular change could seem drastic and detrimental to residents. The pros and cons are carefully considered before opposing an application (which is normally at the request of residents and members); and we would always bear in mind that the decision is made by Members of the Barnet Planning Committee who, in turn, are constantly aware of the rights of applications to appeal against the Council's decision.

For these reasons, nobody is likely to oppose an application, unless there were weighty and generally acceptable grounds for any objection.

*Karl E. Ruge*

Dear Editor,

Might I be permitted a further comment in the vexed question of Finchley tube stations nomenclature? Totteridge & Whetstone, being actually situated in Whetstone (east of Dollis Brook), should surely be renamed Whetstone & Totteridge.

To the barricades!

*Robert Hogan*

Dear Editor,

In answer to the query about objecting to redevelopments, converting a single dwelling into two separate dwellings (a house converted internally to be 2 flats) does not cause much difference as a large family compared to two smaller families can create as much noise and have as many vehicles. The major problems occur when a single dwelling (or two as a semi-detached property) is pulled down and replaced with a block of flats. This increases the noise from radios, TVs etc. It causes problems with parking (the legal requirement for parking spaces is woefully low) which affects the whole neighbourhood. Also the services can be greatly affected: a large number of people accessing the water main together can reduce pressure; the sewers were designed for the estate as built and all the extra waste can cause problems and usually flats also cover the house's garden and this then affects the rainwater sewers likewise.

If you want to go further there is the question of the local schools and doctors. One block of flats won't change things that much I hear you say - and I agree. However, these developments do not always stop at one. Once a precedent has been set they take off in all directions. Want an example? Look at Station Road in New Barnet: One large dwelling was removed and replaced by a block of flats, this has now become three or four. If you want to go further this particular area also has a number of office blocks converted to flats with all the additional waste generated. Usually these developers are not interested in the surrounding infrastructure.

*David Coates*

## 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:

Mrs Shirley Avery	N3
Mrs P.S. Bagwell	N3
Mr L.H. Beltran	GU27
Miss V.M. Costello	N12
Miss G.M. Costello	N12
Mr C. R. Coombs	BH2
Mr N. & Mrs C. Corre	N3
Barry & Margaret Cullen	N3
Mr Ian Dunbar	N3
Mr R.R. Fantoni	N2
Ms E. Margaret Ferguson	N3
Mrs J.H. Hodges	N12
Charlotte Hume	N3
Mrs M. l'Anson	N3
Ms Barbara Kail	NW11
Miss M. Kilby	N3
Mr & Mrs P. Marsh	N3
Mr Tony McTeare	N3
Kenneth J. Munter	N12
Patrick & Una O'Brien	N12
Miss Margaret Pacey	N2
A. Roberts & S Baines	N2
Mr K.E. and Yvonne Ruge	N20
Mr Donald Sawyer	TN39
Clare Sleep	N3
Mr David Smith	N2
John Sparrow	N2
Mr Martin Summers	N3
Ms Rosanna Taylor	N3
Mr K.W. Weinberg	NW11

## Terry Thomas

Tony McTeare's "Did you know?" column in the March Newsletter is very interesting. Thanks to my late mother I can add some more about Terry Thomas. He later wrote more about his early days, but I think his first stab at autobiography was "filling the Gap" published in 1959, (the gap being his famous toothy-gap smile!), including his attendance at what he called: "A co-ed prep school near home in Finchley run by a wonderful woman called Norah Pratt, who did her best to teach me something. She encouraged me to act; she was one of the few warm people I remember from my early days. She loved kids and knew how to handle them. I would have gone to the end of the world for her. (then about Highgate)" Eleanor - always called Nora

(no 'h') Pratt, later Mrs. Eric Pugh, was my mother. Before beginning her trained schoolteacher career in the 1920's she was able, by the kindness of her mother, to teach a few local children in the family home and garden. My older cousins remember this fondly – and clearly so did young Tommy Stephens, as he then was.

When he died in 1990 several newspapers had articles about him and his acting career in which, as Tony McTeare wrote: "he usually portrayed a cad, bounder or absolute rotter...." A long semi-obituary in "the Daily Mail" (9 January 1990) was entitled "The most noble cad of them all" and, I think particularly as it had much about his long, sad, last illness, prompted my mother (by then aged 88) to write to the

journalist –  
"... in case you may be interested to hear something about his boyhood. He was my "star" pupil at the age of nine, in the concerts in my small "prep" school in my home in Finchley. The 'gap' was real; he was always smiling and cheerful so it showed! He recited "The boy stood on the burning deck" with tremendous gusto and also the chief characters in our "parents' day" concerts. He was not clever academically, but had a talent for illustrating his written work with small pictures... always good-tempered but sometimes "naughty" on purpose. When he grew up and started his acting career he took the trouble to visit me and talk about his hopes and ambitions."  
*Gillian Lunn*

## Grove Lodge

Grove Lodge in Regents Park Road has finally been restored to its original glory. There were a number of houses in Ballards Lane during the 18th and late 19th century. Of these only the 18th century Cornwall House in Cornwall Avenue, and Grove Lodge, in front of Pardes School, now remain.

Stephen Cooper, when on our Planning Committee, had spent more than two years trying to get this historic building

repaired after years of neglect. The building was derelict, with doors boarded-up and pigeons would be seen flying out from within broken windows. Stephen was successful in getting a Section 215 order made to restore the building. Rather sadly, Barnet Council enforcement officers would not 'enforce' the order!

For some time it looked like Grove Lodge would be left to decay. Last year a planning

application was made to Barnet Council to both restore Grove Lodge and build new houses behind it. The work on restoring Grove Lodge is now complete, so if you are passing please take the time to stand and admire this fine building. It will be a long time before the memory of seeing pigeons flying out from an upstairs window of Grove Lodge fades from my memory!

*Mike Gee*



## Other People's Events

### **Greenacre Bicycle Rally - 11.00 a.m. on Sunday 14 June Artsdepot, North Finchley**

Last June saw the first Greenacre Bicycle Rally, when 138 cyclists took to the streets of Finchley in a display of massed cycles never before witnessed in this borough. It was a great success and everyone had a fun day out.

This year the event promises to be bigger and more spectacular. Picture the scene: 100s of bicycles, fancy dress and entertainment. And every cyclist earns a free juice and muesli bar. The Greenacre Bicycle Rally is the perfect opportunity for anyone who is a bit 'rusty' to get back to cycling. A 3½ miles circuit at a leisurely pace with an escort of trained stewards and Police cyclists - totally suitable for families, children and older riders alike. Dr. Bike is available on the day from 9.30 onwards for routine repairs and adjustments. If you have an old bike needing more work please phone Mike Gee who can give advice on 020 8346 5503

**Barnet and District Local History Society** - all lectures are held in Church House, Wood Street Barnet (opposite the Museum) on Monday afternoons starting at 3.00 p.m.

Monday 11 May 2009 - "Hell upon water: The infamous prison ships of England 1793 - 1815" - Paul Chamberlain (author)

Monday 8 June - "Foul deeds and suspicious deaths in Barnet, Finchley and Hendon" - Nick Papadimitriou (author)

**Hornsey Historical Society** - All talks are held at 8.00 p.m. in the Union Church Community Centre at corner of Ferme Park Road and Weston Park

Wednesday 13 May - "From Crouch Hall to Gin Lane" - Ruth Hazeldine

Wednesday 10 June - "The History of Churchyards" - Dr. Michael Worms

**Friern Barnet & District Local History Society** - All meetings will take place in St. John's Church Hall, Friern Barnet Lane Start 7.45 p.m. £2 for non-members.

Wednesday 27 May - "RAF Museum" - David Keen (Preceded by the AGM)

Wednesday 24 June - "History of Holiday Fellowship" - Colin Liversidge

**Friern Barnet coffee Morning Talks** at 10.30am in Friern Barnet Library

Wednesday 20 May: "Another Dip into Nostalgia" a talk by Terence Atkins from the Barnet Society.

Wednesday 17 June: "Amy Johnson" a talk by David Keen from the RAF Museum.

## Forthcoming Events

(see inside for details)

May	Page
10 Woodland Festival	4
11 "Hell upon Water"	8
13 Wildlife walk	4
13 "Crouch Hall to Gin Lane"	8
28 Monthly meeting	5
<b>June</b>	
1 Nomination forms date	1
8 "History of Churchyards"	8
10 "Foul Deeds & Deaths"	8
14 Greenacre Bicycle Rally	8
14 Avenue House Fun Day	4
21 East Finchley Festival	4
24 Gervase Phinn performs	2
25 Maureen Lipman lunch	2
25 Annual General Meeting	1
25 Monthly meeting	5
28 St. Mary's Church plaque	1
<b>July</b>	
4 Last 'Dinner booking' date	4
15 Annual Dinner	4

**ARTICLES FOR THE JULY/AUGUST NEWSLETTER TO THE EDITOR BY 10 JUNE 2009**

finsoceditor@supanet.com