

Information Plaque at St Mary-At-Finchley

The sun shone on us after morning service at St. Mary's on 28 June when we had the pleasure of welcoming The Mayor and Mayoress of Barnet, Councillor Brian Coleman and Mrs. Coleman, to unveil a plaque outlining the history of the church. Also present were the Deputy Lieutenant - Mr. Martin Russell; The Rector - Father Philip Davison; Mr. Mark Wells and Mr. Sam Wells - nephews



of the late Peggy Wells whose bequest to The Society has contributed to the cost of installation; many Society members and even more members of the congregation of the church who made us feel very welcome.

David Smith - Chairman, explained the Society's long-term ambition to erect similar

plaques wherever there was a significant building of architectural or historical interest in Finchley and Friern Barnet. He paid tribute to the preparatory work carried out by the late Robert Winton and thanked Peter Marsh for overseeing the design, construction, and installation of the plaque. The Mayor and the Rector both spoke of the significance of St. Mary's at the heart of Finchley's development and thanked the Society for its initiative. We are grateful to St. Mary's for their contribution of £200 towards the cost of the plaque.



John Cartwright And Thomas Reader White Memorials

The Society has become involved in an attempt to restore the grave of the Rev. Thomas Reader White, sometime Rector of St. Mary's and Founder of Christ's College in 1857. It lies adjacent to the memorial to Major John Cartwright, social reformer, that is at present boarded up for safety reasons.

It is hoped that a Heritage Lottery Grant might be available for the Cartwright memorial and that Christ's College and The Old Finchleians' Club might contribute to a fund to restore the Thomas Reader White Memorial. We have had excellent co-operation already from English Heritage and from The London Borough of Barnet.

Page	Contents
1	St. Mary's Plaque Memorials
2	Annual General Meeting Finchley Remembered Historic Walk in East Finchley
3	Monthly Meetings Society Displays Public Relations New Members wanted Hampstead Garden Institute The Right Time Bus Days Out
4	Raffle Proceeds Annual Dinner Octavia Hill Society Planning Matters Identifying Finds Congratulations Barnet
5	Letters to the Editor Obituaries Wildlife
6	Spike Milligan Fund Membership Matters New Members Donations
7	Environment & Transport Position Vacant Other Days, Other Rules Dates Light Pollution
8	Other People's events Forthcoming Events

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The Annual General Meeting

At the A.G.M. on 25 June the following were elected to office for the current year:

Vice-Presidents: Carol Halls and David Smith,
Chairman: David Smith. Vice-Chairman: Maggie Ferguson,
Secretary: Kiran Singh. Treasurer: Mollie Harris.
Committee: Harry Branchdale, Margaret Cullen, Peter Marsh,
Stan Spinks.

Our Constitution allows for six Committee members so there are two vacancies. The Executive Committee has the power to fill these during the year. Members who would be interested in filling these posts are asked to contact any of the Officers to discuss the work involved. All that is required is an enthusiasm for Finchley and Friern Barnet and a commitment to at least one aspect of the local environment.

We should like to thank Mike Dawson for his time on the Executive Committee. He has often initiated thought-provoking discussion and has shown a deep commitment to the well-being of the Finchley area. We are delighted that he is continuing in his role as Secretary to the Planning Committee.

We also thank Charlotte Hume who had been co-opted last year to oversee the change of Honorary Treasurer. Her valuable financial advice has been much appreciated. Charlotte is one of those backroom Society workers without whose efforts we would find progress difficult. For example, in July she handed in a cheque for £870 from HMRC in respect of Gift Aid: a very welcome sum of money!

Alan Scrine, our Independent Examiner of Accounts, is also standing down. We thank him for his careful auditing of our accounts for the past few years and for his helpful comments. We were not able to appoint a new Examiner at the AGM so if anyone is qualified, and willing, to take on this role (it is a once-a-year job) then please contact our Treasurer or Secretary.

The meeting was followed by a talk "East Finchley's History Through Maps", given by Tony Roberts. Tony's many maps, shown through our new computer projector, revealed how much information lies at the end of painstaking research. It also revealed how much more information there is at one's fingertips these days in terms of primary source material.

"Finchley Remembered"

J G Bryson, Printers in East Finchley, have recently delivered a new stock of our book and these are now available, as before, from Guy and Adele Nevill on 8445 5502 or from Waterstones or Waitrose, both at North Finchley.

Needless to say, it is a great relief that we have been able to resurrect the book a second time. Again, many thanks to Tony Roberts and Lynn Bresler for their electronic expertise.

History Walk in East Finchley.

This long-awaited event, led by Hugh Petrie, will take place on Sunday 4 October. No prior booking is required and no cost to members is involved. The meeting point will be the forecourt of East Finchley Station and the time will be 2.30 p.m. The walk will conclude at about 4.30 p.m. Hugh, who is Borough Heritage Officer and "an East Finchley lad" as well, promises "a fascinating walk, full of really interesting stories". Do join us.

Monthly meetings

Members are warmly invited to the following meetings which will be held in the Drawing Room at Avenue House, East End Road, Finchley N3, starting at 8.00 p.m.

24 September 2009 - The speaker at this meeting will be Susette Palmer. Susette, who has an MA in ancient civilisations and is a Liberal Democrat Barnet Councillor, will be giving a talk entitled 'They all laughed at Christopher Columbus'. Most of you will know the end of the quotation ('because he said the earth was round). The Greeks were well aware of this.....why then does the earth on the medieval maps look so flat? It all depends what you want to show! This talk explores the theories and times behind the maps and the discoveries that led to changing the way maps were presented. It starts with Homer's Iliad and ends with the 20th century exploring how philosophies of the 3 dimensional universe were portrayed in 2 dimensions.

29 October 2009 - The Jean Scott Memorial Lecture; This year's Lecture will be given by Jane Blackburn and is entitled 'Hampstead Garden Suburb - Place and People'. Jane, who is an architect with extensive experience of working in places which are special to people, including Stratford upon Avon and London's Covent Garden, has been the manager of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust since 2005. The Trust is the body charged with the conservation of the Suburb and the talk will explain the origins of the Suburb, its unique blend of landscape and architecture, how it is maintained and something about the people who live there.

Society Displays at Summer Events

We are most grateful to those members who helped out on our publicity stalls at the East Finchley Community Festival on 21 June and at the Pentland Finchley Community Festival on 11 July, in particular Szilvia Czeko, Gabor Csaszi, Verity Smith, Ken Carter, Roger Enskat, and Betty Burgess. Regular Committee members were also there supporting our efforts to recruit new members.

Public Relations Officer

We are really pleased to announce that Stan Spinks has agreed to become our Public Relations Officer.

Stan has lots of ideas for the Society and we look forward to hearing of these in the future.

Help The Society Gain New Members

We invite all members to do their best to increase our membership by giving or posting the enclosed leaflet to someone whom you think might be interested in joining us.

Please do not leave it on the shelf - it costs money!

Let's try to recruit 200 members by the end of this year. If you can use more leaflets please contact the Chairman

'The Right Time'

'The Right Time' is the title of a new book of poetry by Dennis Evans, a member of our Society.

Dennis, who is the great grandson of the Welsh poet and singer Martha Davies, set up the East Finchley Poetry Writing Workshop in 1990. He has also had his dance-poems performed at Sadler's Wells Lillian Baylis Theatre.

The book can be bought for £10 - further details from Dennis on 020 8346 9528.

Sullivan Buses Days Out

We have just discovered this local company who do all sorts of day outings to the places you always meant to go to.

They pick up at local bus stops all the way from East Finchley Station via East End Road, Regents Park Road, Ballards Lane, the High Road, and all the way up the A1000 to High Barnet.

You pay the driver on boarding. The bus then drives to South Mimms where passengers transfer to the one or two buses that drive you to your destination.

Some interesting outings this Autumn include Chatham Dockyard on 20 September (a 1940's themed weekend), Duxford Airfield (Imperial War Museum) on 27 September, Banbury Canal Festival on 4 October, and Hastings on 11 October.

If you are interested it is a good idea to ask for your own copy of the brochure. Phone Steve on 07982 234 698 or go to the website www.sullivanbuses.com.

Of course, next year, it may be possible to organise a Finchley Society outing using this means of transport. Watch this space!

The Institute Centenary Walk

The Institute, previously based at Henrietta Barnett School, and now firmly established next door to East Finchley Station, is organising a Centenary Walk on Sunday 18 October. Its aim is to raise funds for the Institute Centenary Fund. The route covers about 10 miles and goes from Toynbee Hall in the East End to East Finchley, taking in Regent's Canal, Camden Market and Hampstead Heath. Anyone over the age of 11 may take part. Entry forms may be had by phoning 020 8829 4141.

Raffle Proceeds

Question: What happens to the money members give through Roz Avery's monthly raffles?

Answer: It goes to deserving causes. We have recently sent money to the Spike Milligan Statue Fund, to The Stephens Collection, and to Long Lane Pasture. This year, from April, the money will be devoted to help fund more planting in The Bothy Garden at Avenue House. (This work is being done by a group of volunteers - so our donation of funds should not be construed as support for any party involved in the 2006/7 dispute over the tenancy of The Bothy.)

Annual Dinner

On 15 July nearly 40 members of The Society enjoyed a splendid dinner at the South Herts Golf Club when our Guests of Honour were Mr. & Mrs. Tony Gotlop, long standing members of the Society.



Tony gave a very entertaining talk on his career as a couturier in New Molton Street, London and recounted many amusing events that took place during his long and illustrious career.

Congratulations!

The London Borough of Barnet has really done us proud this year with a wonderful display of bedding plants at the main entrance to Victoria Park in Ballards Lane. This site is always well-cared for but this year it looks like a Chelsea winner.

Identifying Finds

I was outside Shakespeare's *Globe* with my grandson. Road works were in progress. We naturally inspected the spoil heaps and found the inevitable clay pipe piece and some shards of pottery. One of them was worthy of follow-up so we arranged an appointment with the lady who deals with all finds at the Museum of London, Kate Sumnell. She told us that it was a piece of 18th century London Delft Ware, part of a serving dish made and hand-painted in Rotherhithe. Perhaps we should not walk past a pile of extracted earth without giving it at least a cursory glance. We never know what might be awaiting discovery!

David Smith

The Octavia Hill Society

Many of you know that in her youth Octavia Hill lived at Brownswell Cottages in High Road, N2, the site being just south of the feeder road onto the North Circular Road. She was a pioneer of Social Housing, co-founder of the National Trust, pioneer of the housing management profession, campaigner for Open Spaces, pioneer of social casework, co-founder of the Kyrle Society which was the first civic amenity society, and founder of the Army Cadet movement. Phew!

A number of members of the Finchley Society are also members of the Octavia Hill Society and have visited her birth place at Wisbech, Cambridgeshire. The OHS has an annual coach outing to visit places associated with Octavia and in August they called in at Long Lane Pasture which is only 500 metres from where she lived. They are presenting a tree to the Pasture Trust to be planted during National Tree Week in November.

Planning Matters

Developers' plans for North Finchley are back on the agenda. Amended proposals for the Police Depot and Furnitureland sites have been made, the Police Depot site being linked to that of Kingsgate House, which is just off the North Circular in N3.

We consider all these developments to be too large in scale with too high a density for the residential units, plus traffic management issues regarding access/egress from the underground car parks. With regard to scale of the buildings in North Finchley, we are concerned that proposed increase in height will 'canyonise' the high road. If a precedent is set for the increased height for the Police Depot and Furnitureland future developments could cite these as a reason to build to that scale.

At a Barnet Council Planning Committee meeting on 21 July the Police Depot application was refused, while the Kingsgate House application was deferred to allow the developer to amend the application.

It is proposed to relocate the North Finchley Library, to have a GP's surgery plus retail space within the Furnitureland site, yet only three parking places are proposed for all these facilities. This provision is inadequate for any one of these facilities, let alone all three. We have objected to this application.

If any of you have contacted Darren Grynberg Darren.Grynberg@barnet.gov.uk about the inappropriate display of Estate Agents' boards it would be good to hear from you.

Mike Dawson 8346 4232

Obituaries

We regret to report the deaths of the following members of the Society:

Professor Peter Dunnill, OBE

We are sad to report the death of Peter Dunnill who has been a member of the society for many years. His wife, Pat, sits on both our Environment and Transport committee and the Planning committee.

Peter headed the biochemical engineering department at University College London and the Times reports his academic prowess stretched from stem cells and regenerative medicine to pandemic planning the future of the biotech industry. He spoke about pandemic flu on Radio 4 a few weeks ago and he contributed to the Tamiflu beginner's guide. The Times reporter says that Peter was a passionate and patient communicator, and a man who enriched the lives of friends and colleagues, scientists and journalists, on many subjects to which he put his mind. Surely he will be missed by many, but we have Pat in our thoughts at this time and send her our deepest sympathy.

Evelyn Roberts

We are also sad to report the death of Evelyn Roberts, a member for many years and a keen supporter of our coach trips. Evelyn had written a touching account of her close friendship with the local robin - it liked cheddar cheese but not Cheshire! - which was read at her funeral. Evelyn was an educated and widely travelled lady who will be greatly missed in her Cromwell Close community.

Sheila Watson

We are also sorry to announce the death of Sheila Watson. Both Sheila and her husband, Neil, were members of The Society and she was also very active in her local community, running the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme until prevented by illness. Sheila and Neil were also very musical: Sheila taught music at Haberdashers and played in a variety of ensembles, and Neil was first violinist of the London Symphony Orchestra. We send our condolences to Neil.

Wildlife

These days you don't see hedgehogs crossing the road to see their flatmate, so I was pleased to hear of at least 2 of them in a Holden Road garden.

It was nice to watch 4 fox cubs playing on Long Lane Pasture and also to see a bank vole with 4 young under one of the sheets of corrugated iron, where there was also a young toad taking refuge.

Many butterflies have been recorded, including Common blue, Essex skipper, Small skipper, Small copper, Green-veined white and there was an exciting sighting of a White-letter hairstreak. Painted ladies have of course been everywhere.

Several family groups of house sparrows have been reported. An owl regularly calls along the

Dollis brook and in the gardens around West Finchley station. In this same area a nuthatch has been visiting a bird feeder, and a sparrow hawk was seen swooping on a small bird, which was definitely not a sparrow.

I am always keen to hear of your wildlife sightings, even of the common species, as it's nice to know that Finchley & Friern Barnet is one big nature reserve.

Do try and keep a wild area in your garden; at least do not cut plants down until the spring. They may make the garden look untidy but think of the insects they harbour that are at the beginning of the food chain.

Derek Warren. 020 8346 5258
derwar@waitrose.com

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

While it is common knowledge that Finchley Manor House still exists (as the Sternberg Centre), I can find no trace of the Lordship itself.

Is it still extant? If so, who currently holds it? If it is defunct, could it be revived?

My curiosity in this matter is not wholly idle. The Totteridge Society collectively holds the lordship of Totteridge Manor, having bought it up some years ago: and actually finds it of practical value as regards planning. Might it not be possible for the Finchley Society to achieve similar?

Apologies if this is an old chestnut to members of longer standing than.....

Robert Hogan

SPIKE MILLIGAN STATUE FUND

John Somerville, a Finchley boy, has held numerous exhibitions of his work over the years and on several occasions his sculptures have been on display at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. He knew Spike and his daughters personally, and is thrilled to have the opportunity to create this statue, which he is doing with great joy and enthusiasm.

At his studio in Barnet he has formed the main figure of the proposed statue of Spike Milligan, but is still deliberating on the head, and part of the bench. So far we have paid him £7,800 out of the £28,000 raised to date.

We continue to fund raise and our next quiz is at the Martin School, next to the East Finchley library, on Saturday 26 September. It is difficult to raise money for a statue when there are so many other worthy causes in the public domain.

There has been good support from a number of our patrons with Joanna Lumley hosting a fundraising dinner and Maureen Lipman a lunch. Terry Gilliam gave us Monty Python items to sell, (see our website www.spikemilliganstatue.org.uk), we have had autographed books from Michael Palin, Sir Ranulph Fiennes, Bill Wyman and Roger McGough, and both Silé and Jane Milligan have signed copies of their father's books. Others have given money, with the greatest supporter being our local patron Michael Gerson.

Spike was a great conservationist helping The Finchley Society to save several buildings including Hawthorne Dene at Strawberry Vale. He served on our Executive Committee, holding several meetings at his house in Holden Road, was a great campaigner, hosted events for The Society, and was passionate about College Farm. He was our first President and later became Patron, the position he held until his death in February 2002.

Barbara Warren felt that The Finchley Society should do something to remember Spike and thought of a statue to which some members concurred. So a committee was formed, and after five years we continue to raise funds with enthusiasm, determined to achieve the aim of a Spike Milligan Statue.



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.

New members

We offer a warm welcome to the following new members:

Cindy & John Fried N3
Ross Houston N12
Richard Martin N2

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:

Ms Ann Gallon &
Richard Hughes N3
Michael C. Chauveau PA
Mr Robert Hogan, SW5
Ian Murphy N12
Mrs R.M. Rees, NW11
Andy Astle N3
Mr Richard S. Buchanan N3
Mr L.N. Heatherington N3
Mr F & Mrs D Kelsall N3
Ruth Jane Lea N3
Mrs H. Moss N3
Pamela Walker N3
Mr & Mrs D. Tofield N12

*Tony Roberts,
Membership Secretary*

Environment & Transport Committee

At the Environment and Transport Committee meeting in July, Councillor Andrew Harper spoke to us about Waste and Recycling, the Street Scene and the Carbon Footprint.

Barnet is a growth Borough with over 330,000 inhabitants but he assured us that the green belt was safe. He is proud of our recycling record as everything collected is sold into the market, much of this being due to the sorting into the right compartments when it is put into the lorry, and most of the material is recycled within this country.

Unfortunately there is no market for certain material and this has to go to landfill. Some residents are still poor at recycling, so they are going into schools to educate the children hoping that in turn they will encourage their parents.

With regard to the carbon footprint there is a target to reach by 2011. There is now a new fleet of lorries, and the Town Hall at Hendon has been refurbished to be much more energy efficient.

Other matters were raised with Andrew, including the so called improvements for Henley's Corner, and the provision of cycle lanes where the road is very wide between North Finchley and Whetstone.

Andrew was thanked for a very interesting talk.

We then followed with our meeting's agenda where, amongst other subjects, we discussed open spaces and Barnet's paper on "Open Spaces, sports & recreational facilities needs assessment"; parking on pavements and the neighbourhood management scheme, branches overhanging pavements, recycling at the East Finchley Festival and the Greenacre Cycle ride where there were 150 participants travelling around North Finchley, Friern Barnet and Whetstone.

A member had written in about the aircraft noise that occurs at different times throughout the night and, although there is probably little that we can do, our chairman's enquiries have so far discovered that planes that fly into Stansted should be at 15,000 feet when over Finchley.

Our next meeting is on Monday 19 October when we hope to have someone talking about green spaces. If you would like to come along please let me know as seating is limited.

Derek Warren. 020 8346 5258.

Position still vacant!

We are still looking for a Newsletter Distribution Manager to take over from Helene Davidian when she stands down early next year.

If you would like to know more of what the job entails, please contact Helene on 020 8444 3669, who will be more than happy to help the new Manager settle in.

Light Pollution

There appears to be a problem emerging from the new street lighting that is being installed around the area and there always seems to be excessive lighting at sports venues. Would any member like to follow up this problem for the society? *Derek Warren.*

Dates for your diaries

Saturday 19 September. A guided tour around Long Lane Pasture and, weather permitting, a view of moths caught in the trap overnight. Meet opposite the Fire Station at 10.00 a.m.

Saturday 26 September. Quiz Night for the Spike Milligan Statue Fund at Martin's School, next to the East Finchley Library, High Road, N2. Open 7.30 for start at 8.00 p.m. Make up a table of 6 or come and join in with others. Tickets £5, bring your own refreshment. Bring money for the raffle and other goods on sale! *Barbara Warren. 020 8346 5258.*

Saturday 10 October. Walk along the Folly Brook that used to be the boundary between Hertfordshire & Middlesex, to Darlands Lake and back. About 2 miles in 2 hours. Meet at bottom of Woodside Park Road, N12 in front of the station at 2.00 p.m. If wet it will be very muddy. 020 8346 5258

Monday 19 October. Environment & Transport Committee meeting at Avenue House, East End Road, N3. 8.00 p.m. 020 8346 5258.

Other Days, Other Rules:

Connie Grocott on hearing of ungentlemanly behaviour in a football match reminisced that in the 1930s she used to attend the Annual Dinner of Finchley Football Club held at the King Edward Hall. Her father, Sidney Burgess, was Chairman for many years. Always printed on the menu cards were the immortal words of Grantland Rice:

*For when the One Great Scorer comes
To write against your name,
He marks not that you won or lost
But how you played the game.*

Other People's Events

We apologise that some of the information about events given in the last Newsletter was incorrect (corrected below)

Friern Barnet coffee Morning Talks at 10.30 a.m. in Friern Barnet Library.

Wednesday 16 September - Stress Reduction - A talk by Kate Connell

Wednesday 14 October - Clear the clutter - a talk by Carol Holden

Wednesday 11 November – Illustrated Victorian Envelopes - a Talk by John Bohn

Barnet and District Local History Society - all lectures are held in Church House, Wood Street Barnet (opposite the Museum) on Monday afternoons starting at 2.00 p.m.

Monday 14 September: A talk will be given by Pamela Wright on 'The development of the English county house from medieval to the 20th century based on National Trust properties'.

Monday 12 October: 'Medieval Marriage' - a talk by Dr. Rosemary Horrox.

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 9 September: 'The Tottenham Outrage' a talk by Mrs. Patricia Collier

Wednesday 14 October: 'A.V. Rose the first Flight over Walthamstow Marshes' a talk by Dr. Neil Houghton

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 23 September: Daphne Glick will give a talk on 'London Garden Squares'.

Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association - Meetings will be held at 8.00 p.m. At Northbank, Pages Lane, N10

Wednesday 21 October: Mark Evison & Paul Braybroeke will be talking about Alexandra Palace and Park.

Forthcoming Events

(see inside for details)

	Page
September	
4 History Walk	2
19 Long Lane Pasture Tour	7
20 Chatham Dockyard bus	3
24 Monthly Meeting	3
26 Spike Milligan Quiz Night	6
27 Duxford Airfield bus	3
October	
4 Banbury Canal bus	3
10 Folly Brook Walk	7
11 Hastings bus	3
18 Institute Centenary Walk	3
19 E & T Committee	7
29 Monthly Meeting	3

ARTICLES FOR THE NOVEMBER/DECEMBER NEWSLETTER TO THE EDITOR BY 10 OCTOBER 2009

finsoceditor@supanet.com