

# Friern Barnet *Newsletter*

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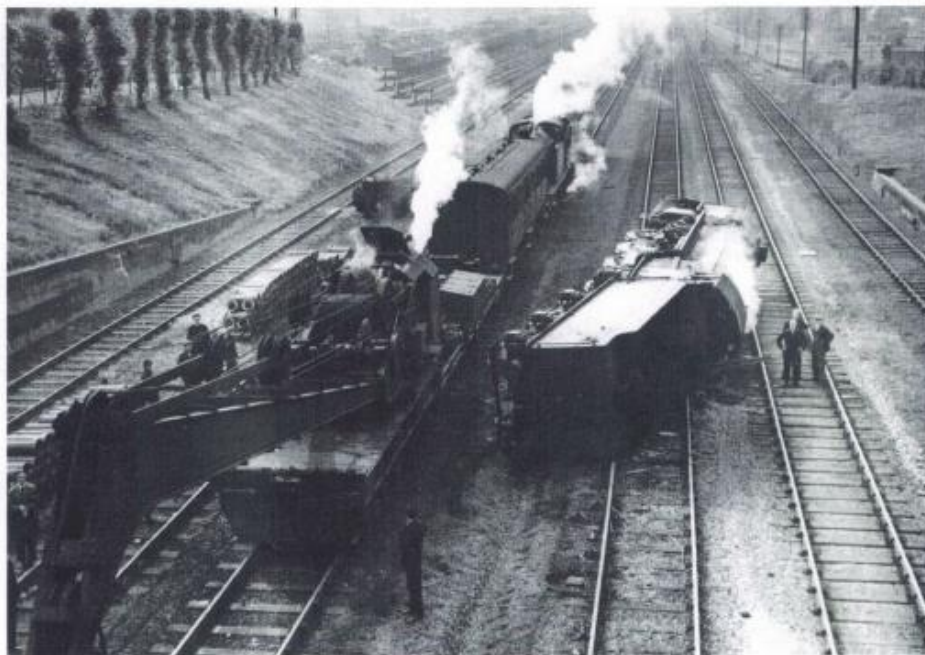
April 2007

## NEW SOUTHGATE TRAIN CRASH

by David Berguer

The Edinburgh – King's Cross express train had left Waverley station at 7.50pm on Friday 16 July 1948 and, hauled by A2 Pacific number 60508 *Duke of Rothesay*, had made steady but unspectacular progress southwards through the night.

The next morning at 6.00am the train was travelling at 70mph through Barnet tunnel, a mere 7½ miles from its destination, when the driver and fireman became aware that the train was suddenly riding roughly and they heard a rattling noise from the front end. The driver immediately applied the brake but as the train emerged from the tunnel and crossed a set of points, the trailing bogie wheels became derailed. Debris began to fly as the track was destroyed for a distance of some 200 yards. The engine heeled over gradually to the right and parted from the carriages but, miraculously, the engine and tender slid along the rails for some 100 yards and through one of the arches of the Oakleigh Road bridge without touching it.



A steam crane attends the stricken *Duke of Rothesay*

(Ken Hoole collection)

The driver, Bill Hoole, was slightly injured when he stepped off the engine as it came to rest but, sadly, the fireman, A. E. Young, was killed as he jumped from the derailed engine and was struck by the following coaches. Only ten passengers were injured in the crash, none of them seriously, and they were initially treated in the medical department at STC alongside the scene of the accident.

The official Report into the accident was published on 23 October 1948 and attributed the cause to poor maintenance of the track in Barnet tunnel, although there had been no reports by drivers of any rough riding at that point. The ganger in charge of track maintenance reported that one joint in the rail was half an inch too high, but he had not worried unduly about it as it was normal practice to allow things to settle, particularly in tunnels where wet conditions applied. The joint had been in that condition for six days, during which time 33 trains hauled by A2 class engines had passed over it without problem. The Railway Inspector reported that the right trailing wheel on the bogie had been lightly loaded and it was the combination of this, plus the condition of the track that had caused the accident. In addition, the driver should only have been doing 60mph through the tunnel but it was difficult to judge speeds accurately as the engines had had their recorders removed during the War.

Like many accidents, a number of small incidents, which in themselves were unremarkable, had combined on that summer day in 1948 to bring drama to New Southgate.

#### **JOHN MILES - A VICTORIAN CHURCHWARDEN**

*by John Philpott*

At a meeting of the Vestry on 20 May 1886, the parishioners of Friern Barnet ".....record their deep sense of loss sustained by this Parish by the death of the late John Miles Esq., who for 35 consecutive years held with great benefit to the parish the office of Rector's churchwarden."

In 1851 John and Sophia Miles moved from Chessington, Surrey with their three young children, to Friern Barnet. Their new home was the manor farm, known (incorrectly) as the Manor House, its land adjoining the churchyard of the parish church of St James. They had only just arrived when the current Rector's churchwarden died, and the Revd. Robert Morris, who had himself come to the parish as Rector only the previous year, asked John to succeed him. So began a partnership that lasted through 31 years and continued for another four years with the next Rector, Frederick Hall. For 20 years, John Miles had as a colleague Edward Wilson, people's churchwarden. On Mr Wilson's death, Robert Gilmour was elected to succeed him. Mr Gilmour seems to have survived his time in office.

In 1861 John and Sophia rebuilt their house, which still stands today as the clubhouse of the North Middlesex Golf Club. Two more children were born after the family's move to Friern Barnet so, by 1861, we have: Sophia (13 years old), Charles (11), Henry (9), Eliza (7) and Amy (4). There were nine servants living in the house: governess, nurse, nursery maid, cook, housemaid, kitchen maid, footman and groom. In the coachman's house lived the coachman and his wife and their two children. The gardener lived in the front lodge with his wife and their three children (5 by 1871). Look at that lodge when next you pass by along Friern Barnet Lane and wonder how they all fitted in.



In the census, John Miles gives his occupation as "Bookseller and publisher". He was also an extensive landowner: as well as the Manor Farm (the present golf course), his land stretched from the other side of Friern Barnet Lane across to what is now named Oakleigh Road North. Furthermore, he was the governor of the New River Company, in which he was a substantial shareholder. The company supplied water to large parts of London and settlements to the north, including Friern Barnet, until the Barnet Gas & Water Co. took over the supply to the parish in 1877.

The churchwarden's accounts reveal something of parish management of the time. There were the routine annual payments: Bates & Son for tuning the organ £4. 4s 0d; Judge for blowing the organ £1; Parish Clerk's salary £10; coals; candles; wine and insurance. The Sexton and his wife were paid a half year's salary of £6. 18s 4d including "washing Surplus 12s, ditto table lines 1s 4d, dressing church at Christmas 5s." Each year the Churchwardens made two journeys to town, the travel expenses for each journey 10s 6d, one to St Paul's for the archdeacon's visitation. The other to Clerkenwell, "for servicing Jury List". There is an annual payment of 4s 2d, the "common fine", to the representatives of the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's, as Lords of the Manor.

Some years there were exceptional payments, such as painting the churchyard fence, replacing the stoves and repairing and removing the organ. In 1878, £15 was paid for "Gas fittings in the Church", and there were gas bills from then on, "Colney Hatch Gas Co. £1 11s 4d". One year there was "Solicitor's charges in the prosecution of 2 men for robbing the church, £9 9s 2d. Repairing box broken by ditto, 5s". These accounts, however, were concerned only with the expenditure of the church rate on the maintenance of the church building and its services, and by no means show the extent of the concerns of the Rector and Churchwardens. There are the statutory responsibilities: Poor Law, sewers and

well as Churchwarden). There is the voluntary giving through church collections and subscriptions, and its expenditure on social work, education and mission, within the parish and beyond. There was the programme of building and rebuilding churches and schools to meet the needs of the growing population, to which John Miles contributed generously in money and land.

In 1882 there were two important events in his life. Firstly, the Revd. Robert Morris retired as Rector. They must surely have been close friends as well as colleagues; they were of similar age (when John first came to the parish, he was 38, Robert 43); their families grew up together; they had worked together on so many projects for the good of the parish. Secondly, their final project came to fruition with the consecration of All Saints' Church and the creation of a new parish out of the northern part of Friern Barnet. John Miles gave the land and financed the building of the church and vicarage and, the following year, of All Saints' School. The Revd. Henry Miles, John's son, who had first come to Friern Barnet 31 years earlier as a 3 month old baby, became the first vicar.

Next to the vicarage (now demolished and replaced by houses and flats), John Miles built two pairs of large houses, which still stand at the beginnings of Myddelton Park (the rest being then still a footpath). The road was named after Sir Hugh Myddelton, John's predecessor as founder and first governor of the New River Company in the reign of James I.

From 1882 until his death four years later, John Miles continued to serve as Churchwarden, now not only of St James's but also of All Saints'. Henry, who served as vicar for 50 years, carried on his father's work, not only within his new parish but, working with Rector Frederick Hall, for Friern Barnet as a whole, building new classrooms for the church schools to enable them to meet



government requirements, and then treasurer for the fund raising for the building of St John's Church in Friern Barnet Road. John Miles's memorial in St James's Church is a simple brass plaque, perhaps because his main memorials are in All Saints'; the reredos, given by the parish, and the west windows from the directors of the New River Company.

Saints'; the reredos, given by the parish, and the west windows from the directors of the New River Company.

### **THE SAVOY VAULTS AT NEW SOUTHGATE CEMETERY**

*by Colin Barratt*

On the plan of New Southgate Cemetery there is an area referred to as the Queen Victoria Vaults. This is an area of large flat stones engraved with well over 200 names. They have an interesting history dating back to the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, although the cemetery itself was only opened in 1861. The remains of those in the vaults were re-interred at New Southgate in the 1870s from their original resting place at the German Lutheran Chapel in the Savoy Precinct, in The Strand, and have links with the Royal Hanoverian Court of the 18th and early 19th centuries.

In the 1993 the Anglo-German Family History Society asked two of their members, Lilian Stone and the late Pam Freeman, to find the vaults and record the engraved details. This they were able to do after discovering the much overgrown area and clearing it to reveal the stones.

More recently, I suggested to the cemetery manager that an information board should be erected at the vaults to explain their history to visitors. Eventually this was agreed and I was able to order the board and produce the graphics for it. We informed the Anglo-German FHS of this and an unveiling ceremony was arranged for 9 September 2006. The board was installed at the end of August and the ceremony took place as planned. The event was organised by our Society, with refreshments provided and display material set up.



A group of over 20 was there for the ceremony and a great deal of interest was shown in the vaults and their history. The unveiling of the board was performed by Lilian Stone together with Susan Cooper, a direct descendant of one of those interred, who had died in 1832.

I hope the board will help to show future visitors that this small area of our local cemetery has an interesting story to tell. Incidentally, just three days after the ceremony, the cemetery Manager had an e-mail from a lady enquiring about the location of the graves of several of her ancestors who, she was told, had been re-interred in New Southgate, from the graveyard of the German Lutheran Chapel. This lady was unaware of the vaults, and was just hoping to find some graves she could visit and tidy up, if necessary. She was thrilled when the manager replied and gave all the details of the family from the records we had provided from the vaults.

#### **WHAT'S IN A NAME?**

*by David Berguer*

John Donovan is always at pains to point out that the correct pronunciation of Friern Barnet is *Fry-ern*, not *Free-ern* and an autumnal Sunday afternoon excursion confirmed this.

I went to Forty Hall, in Enfield, a delightful house dating from 1632 and well worth a visit. Amongst the interesting exhibits were a number of old maps of Middlesex. The earliest, by Norden, was dated 1610 and the spelling was *Friarnbarnet*. By 1625 this had been amended to *Fryarn Barnet* and in 1645 John Blake had it as *Fryarn Barnett*. Morden in 1695 had it as *Friarn Barnet*, while Richard Blome preferred *Fryarn Barnet*. Roque's map of 1746 had *Fryan Barnet* and by 1805 Thomas Moore's map showed *Fryern Barnet* and the last map in the collection, by Sydney Hall (1818-1860) also had it as *Fryern Barnet*.

The disparity in spelling is not, of course, surprising as in those times people tended to spell things any way they felt like, but the important point is that the various spellings all reflected the *Fry-ern* pronunciation: there is no trace of any spelling that accorded with *Free-ern*.

#### **A NEW SOUTHGATE MAN - CONTINUED**

*by David Berguer*

The article by Harry Gould in our issue number 27 of September 2006 prompted Pam Brown to write to us with some recollections of her family, who also lived in New Southgate. The blacksmith mentioned by Harry was Pam's grandfather, Frank Bray, or maybe her great grandfather, William Edwin. The Bray family were wheelwrights and blacksmiths and their workshop was in The Mews, a small turning at the Friern Barnet Road end of The Avenue, on the western side.

William Edwin had come to The Avenue in July 1881 and the family had lived at number 2 The Avenue until 1963. William Edwin died in 1951 and the blacksmiths closed shortly after. The following article in the 21 August 1953 issue of *Muswell Hill Record* vividly recalls the event:

*"Behind green shutters at The Avenue, Friern Barnet, where once horses stamped and fretted, where the ring of hammer on anvil sounded, where clouds of pungent smoke poured from the horses' hooves and red sparks spluttered on cold steel, is now a vast armada of machinery. The old chimney remains, banked up with coal, as in days gone by, iron rings for the bridles are still fixed in the walls, but the place itself is now a springsmith's workshop.*

*Above the old forge live two white-haired sisters – Miss Eleanor Bray and Miss Annie Elizabeth Bray, whose father took over the business in July, 1882, when*

*the younger of the two sisters was seven months old. For a time, William Edwin Bray was the manager of the forge, and then he became the owner. When he died, horses were still coming to be shod from as far away as Finchley, Palmers Green and Wood Green, and the business was taken over by his eldest son, and in later years by his second son, but with the years there was less trade and less iron to make the shoes.*

*Two years ago the last of the brothers died, but the two sisters still live where they always lived – above the green-shuttered forge. Soon it may be theirs no longer. They already rent the forge and may make negotiations for the sale.”*

Incidentally, Pam’s father recalls that the fish man mentioned in Harry’s article used to come round every Sunday lunchtime selling cockles, whelks, shrimps etc, from a straw bag and Pam even remembers him in the 1950s, when she was a child.

### **21st CENTURY STREET FURNITURE**

*by David Berguer*

We have all become used to the telephone masts that the mobile phone companies have been putting up all over the country, in fact they have now become part of the street scene. Despite objections from protestors, who claim they could be injurious to health, these new devices, with their tall masts and accompanying metal cabinets, can now be classified as street furniture.

Because of objections, the mobile phone companies have taken to hiding their masts on the tops of buildings, or disguised as trees. The latest idea is to install them within church spires where they cannot be seen by the public but fulfil the requirement for a high location which provides a stronger signal.

Some of the residents of South Friern have been contesting the proposed installation of a mast within the tower of the Grade II listed St Peter-le-Poer church in Albion Avenue, off Colney Hatch Lane. The local MP, Dr Rudy Vis, in response to letters from parishioners, contacted QS4, a company that is working with the Church of England to help telecommunications operators find mobile phone radio solutions. The reply he received reiterated that there is no evidence to support claims that mobile phone masts are a danger to health and that the siting of masts in church towers reduces their visual impact on the surrounding area.

Any change to a Church of England building requires permission from an independent judge, the Chancellor of the Diocese of London. Planning permission needs to be obtained if there are any external changes to the building and the final decision whether to apply to the Chancellor for permission rests with the Parochial Church Council. Needless to say, at a time when church attendances are declining the offer of a financial reward for the installation of a radio mast is hard to resist and on Sunday 21 January 2007 the Parochial Church Council unanimously agreed to proceed. They did, however, make three stipulations – if central Government decided in future that the radio masts are in any way dangerous, or if Barnet Council decided to remove them from various schools and hospitals in the Borough, or if the Church of England decided that they were dangerous, then theirs would be removed.

So, be prepared; a radio mast may soon be coming to a church near you.

## FRIERN BARNET COURT ROLLS

by John Heathfield

The Friern Barnet records include the Court Rolls, the Latin originals of which are kept in St Paul's Cathedral manuscripts and, fortunately, they are in good condition and are in legible handwriting. They begin in 2 Henry VII when the manor was held by the Prior of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem of Clerkenwell. The Knights Hospitallers were established in England in 1144 and had a priory at Clerkenwell. In 1388 the seven brothers included a preceptor and three chaplains and there were also eleven corrody holders, 13 secular chaplains, five clerks, six officials and sixteen servants.

The records show, *inter alia*, how the inhabitants of Weston, Wheston or Whetstone governed themselves. They appointed their own Clerk or Priest and paid no tithes. They were free of any interference by Pope or Bishop of London; they were their own spiritual and temporal determinators. Their wills were registered at the Priory of Clerkenwell (since destroyed), which is why so few have come to light. They had the right of *Sac* and *Soc*. Medieval legal Latin is full of abbreviations: *Sac* was the right to choose one's own priest. *Soc* is short for *Socage* – the right of a tenant to pass on property to his heirs in exchange for the payment to the Lord of the Manor of a sum of money, usually fixed as a year's rent. *Socage* was distinguished from Knight service, which involved military service. Totteridge, for instance, was assessed at a quarter of a Knight's fee. *Socage* also involved service in kind.

In Friern Barnet in the year 1189 the boon works were recorded as the supply of carts of firewood, fodder and straw for the stables in Clerkenwell and the provision of one mower and one reaper for every five acres held, for the duration of the harvest. The Hospitallers provided beer, bread and cheese to the labourers. Part of the estate was reckoned to be bog (Bethune Park?) and rendered  $\frac{1}{4}$  service. Unfortunately for us the Hospitallers' records of Friern Barnet are subsumed with those of the rest of Middlesex and so details are lacking.

The Knights were organised in seven divisions or *lanones*. Later an eighth was added and shown on their badge. Their more important properties were called *Priories*, the smaller *Bailiwicks* or *Commanders*. By 1338 they had acquired more than 90 manors. Richard Fitzneal also gave the nuns at Clerkenwell some 60 acres near Colney Hatch Lane extending and running south to Muswell Hill; this was later to become the Parish of Clerkenwell Detached.

On 9 June 1544 Henry VIII seized the Manor of Wheston and gave it to the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's. This was a blow to the inhabitants who now had to pay tithes and charges for the transfer of property and it was around this period that Halliwick is described as being in Friern Barnet but not under the control of the Dean & Chapter. The purpose of the lands in England was to finance the Knights in their work of protecting pilgrims in Jerusalem. Because the Hospitallers had lands in one country and incurred expenditure in another, they needed a way of transferring money. They invented banks for that purpose and there is a nice example of this in the Close Rolls at the Public Record Office at Kew:

“Deed of Sale by Brother Leonard de Tibertis, Prior of the Hospital of St John to the Merchants of France (Society of Baradi of Florence) of:-



380 horses, 30 oxen, 872 cows, 137 calves, 1202 pigs, 10,358 sheep, 2620 lambs, and 40 sacks of wool and silver vessels to the weight of marks from various manors including Barnet.

Dated at Clerkenwell 3 July 1333.

Price 2681 marks, 2 shillings and 11 pence.”

The Order was suppressed by Henry VIII in 1540 and the lands sold to St Paul's in 1544.

#### **COMRIE HOUSE SCHOOL – MORE MEMORIES**

We were delighted to receive a letter from a lady in Sidmouth who had been given a copy of our Newsletter Number 25 which contained an article on Comrie House School in Tollington Park. Mrs Joan Morrell (née Legg) had attended Comrie House in the 1920s and she remembers the following:

“It must have been about 1927 that my young sister and I were sent to Comrie House School and we were there approximately 3-4 years. My brother was sent to Friern Barnet Grammar School for boys. At that time Mrs C M Quilliam was the very stern headmistress and her husband taught at Finchley County School, opposite the swimming pool; I believe he was the headmaster. They had a daughter, Monica, and son David (I believe), but they were often away at another school, so we saw very little of them. The Mrs Annie Winterburn mentioned in the article came later and was a teacher there and Maisie, her daughter, came after that and joined the staff as Secretary. In those days she was a very active lady and I'm sad to know that she later had to use a wheelchair.

At that time there were only about 100-120 pupils. The 5th form was on the right of the picture, upstairs, the 6th form being a section near the window, as there were so few in it – when I moved in to the 6th there were only four of us: myself, Ruby Adams, who lived at 25 Summers Lane, Joan Collins and Eileen Gameson, whose father was very senior on the staff at the Council Offices at the Town Hall opposite the *Orange Tree*. Eventually we four were moved to what were called the stables, but they had been tidied up and made comfortable. Teachers came to us for the different lessons but we worked a lot on our own, and we really did work hard.

A Miss Perry ran the 5th and 6th forms and was strict with us which I'm sure paid off and we respected her. I do wonder if she was the lady mentioned in the article; she was young, fair haired and slim and had her hair dressed with a long plait around her head like a halo! We did Junior and Senior Oxford Examinations, and I finally went on to Regent Street Polytechnic for matriculation. My sister and brother both took the eleven plus and went on to Woodhouse School but by then I was too old to take the examination. The other teachers I remember were Miss Eades (Kindergarten), Miss Dunn (Forms 1 and 2, also dancing), Miss Sealy (Form 3, my sister's form) and Miss Kelly (Form 4), who married and became Mrs Hoskins. I still have paintings, verses and signatures of these ladies in my autograph album.

The Kindergarten and Forms 1 and 2 were held in the Annexe, to the right, and we held our annual play and dancing display in there each July. In good weather PT was taken by Miss Kelly on the terrace at the rear. I well remember the brown lino everywhere, which always shone with polish! We had the brass bell rung between classes and we often had to file to different rooms and it was done very in a very orderly way. The girls played tennis and netball in Friary Park,

always walking there in file. They were very strict with our behaviour, and we were proud of our uniform and school. I really enjoyed my school days and am thankful we had such excellent discipline. During this time we were living at 78 Pollard Road and walked to school and even went home for lunch. There were no buses in Friern Barnet Lane in those days, and walking did us good.

I remember the names of the majority of the children and would be happy to pass these on should anyone be interested."

### **FUN AND GAMES IN THE AVENUE**

*by Patricia Richardson*

My paternal grandfather, Harry Hutchings, was a New Southgate policeman but I never met him; he died before I was born. I remember hearing that he was part of a very tough breed of policemen who patrolled New Southgate and The Avenue. I believe The Avenue had a reputation for being a very rough area and to keep people in order the police would use their heavy mackintosh capes as a weapon and when they were rolled up they were very long and could be swung to great effect. My grandfather had a wife and 16 children and I wonder how he managed to feed and clothe them all on a policeman's wage and I can't imagine where they all slept! It is no surprise that his children decided to limit their families to one or two children at the most.

I have fond memories of the area and although it was very poor at the time I knew it, the unruly times had ended and everyone lived a fairly quiet life. I lived in Oakleigh Road South and went to St Paul's Primary School in The Avenue. There were three teachers, Mr Robinson the headmaster, Mrs Brown the Senior Mistress and a young lady teacher who wore a collar and tie and had a shingle haircut which even at my young age I found rather odd. The classes were very small and by the time I left in 1950, the top class only had 10 pupils in it. I remember the teachers organised a game called "tenniquoits", which was played on a court laid out in the playground with a net the height of a badminton net. The procedure was similar to tennis; a rubber ring was skimmed across the net into alternate courts, and scoring was similar to the ball game. The art was to twist the quoit as you threw it so that the receiver could not catch it.

There were quite a lot of shops in The Avenue, a shop on the corner of Holmsdale Road called Moss's had a polished wooden counter and a row of beer pumps and people would take their own jugs here to be filled with ale. I seem to recall there was also a pump on the counter for vinegar. On the other corner of Holmsdale Road there was a shop run by a Mr Lewis, whose wife was unfortunately killed on 23 August 1944 when a doodlebug dropped on STC. On the other side of the road, at the corner of Carlisle Place, there was an off licence called The Brown Jug, so a drink at home with supper must have been a regular occurrence and although people were poor this was a small luxury. Near the school was a sweet shop, which you had to climb three steps to enter, but once inside, what a treasure! Dozens of glass jars filled with boiled sweets were lined up on the shelves and there was a scale on the counter with a large metal scoop into which the sweets were poured to be measured out by the quarter pound; sherbet lemons were my favourites, but they always seemed to get stuck to the paper bag. There were pear drops which never tasted like pears and gobstoppers that kept me quiet for hours. Sherbet fountains, made by Barrett's in Wood Green, came in a tube and had liquorice straw through which the fizzy powder was meant to be sucked, but my saliva always seemed to block it up.

As there was no traffic up and down The Avenue we played street games continually. During the day there was skipping with a very long rope stretched across the road and sometimes as many as ten very expert "skippers" darting in and out with the two "turners" having to make huge swings on the rope. Hopscotch squares were permanently marked out on the pavement in chalk and if we wanted a quiet moment we would sit on the kerb and play "five stones" or "dabbers".



*Oakleigh Road South at the corner of The Avenue in the 1950s*

Little girls were very fond of doing hand stands up the wall, and with skirts tucked into navy blue knickers they threw themselves upside down, a practice that would be frowned upon today. Later in the evening, when it got dark, games of racing round the block would be organised and these were very competitive. Two kids would start out from the same lamp post in Oakleigh Road South and run in opposite directions. When they met halfway round the block they would pause for a breath and then simultaneously set off again to complete the circuit. The fun would come as we approached the starting point from different directions, urged on by our friends, and the first one to reach the lamppost was the winner. *Knock down ginger* was another game, and involved knocking on someone's door and running away – a game that was very popular with us but maybe not with the householders! On one occasion an old man opened the door before I could run down the path so I hid in his garden. He saw me and tapped me on the back, which scared me stiff. There was a bomb site at the bottom of the road, near Oakleigh Road South, and we were able to go through a bent railing and on to the railway embankment. Old frayed ropes were tied in trees and we spent hours swinging out from the embankment over spiked railings. It's a miracle we all survived unharmed.

After I left St. Paul's and went to Woodhouse School I not only became involved with new friends, but I also had several hours of homework to complete, and after

school activities kept me busy so I never returned to the games in The Avenue although I still remember them today with affection.

**MARTIN GLADMAN 24 DECEMBER 1955 – 25 FEBRUARY 2007**

*by Ollie Natelson*

With great sadness, I announce the death, in tragic circumstances, of our friend Martin Gladman. Martin was generous, highly intelligent, a most socially-aware person. As you know, most of his life revolved around his long passion for books. As a young man he grew up reading, collecting and wanting to sell books. He took over the History Bookshop in Friern Barnet, then transferred the stock to a corner shop in a small parade in Nether Street, close to West Finchley Underground station. As you entered his shop, you'd be warmly welcomed with: "Tea or coffee?" and then he'd motion you to an armchair in the corner and enjoy an intellectual chat. You were never under any pressure to buy anything at all. If you'd ask for a book on even the remotest subject, Martin could tell you book titles, dates of publication, publishers and even quote information from the books to boot. He was amazingly well-read.

Martin was fascinated by people and their lives and would ask what subjects you were interested in, and some months later phone you up with a pile of books in your specialism, and – you were under no obligation to purchase! Then you'd go to the shop and notice not one, but several piles of books behind the counter – reserved for his many clients on all subjects in the universe. He was interested in everything his customers were. I am into wildlife, climate change, medicine, pharmacy, local and national history, herbalism, ghost-spirits, architecture and so on. Martin was well-read in all of them – astonishing. He would put others in touch with me and vice-versa, rediscovering old friends, making new ones. He introduced people to each other and, who knows, he may even have arranged marriages! If you hadn't enough money for the books: "Take them and pay me next time" he'd offer. Or, he would deliver them in his car to your doorstep – what amazing kindness.

He was so interested in everything, even ghosts. When I was giving slide show lectures, he and Susan came with me to Oakhill Park at midnight just after Christmas to find some ghosts, but all we got was cold and wet! He remains in my heart as a generous and thoughtful man and one whose humanity found its deepest and most profound expression in service to others. His wishes were for a quiet funeral without ceremony. Although Martin's wishes must be respected, it is felt that those in the community may want to hold a meeting this summer to remember a Gladman who brought Gladness into our lives.

Farewell Martin. *Requiescat in pace.*

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**Friern Barnet & District  
Local History Society ©**

President: John Donovan  
01707 642 886  
Chairman: David Berguer  
**020 8292 7328**

**Please note new phone number**

Website: [www.friernbarnethistory.org.uk](http://www.friernbarnethistory.org.uk)

email: [friernbarnethistory@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:friernbarnethistory@hotmail.co.uk)