

# Friern Barnet *Newsletter*

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## **BIRTH OF AN INDUSTRY**

*by David Berguer*

Many of you will have heard of the name Cosworth and know of its importance in the world of motor racing. What you may not know is that Friern Barnet played a part in its birth. Two men were involved in the company – Keith Duckworth, who was born on 10 August 1933 in Blackburn and Mike Costin who was born on 8 June 1920. A third man was also involved – Colin Chapman who founded Lotus Engineering behind *The Railway Hotel* in Hornsey in 1952.

Racing driver Graham Hill had worked for Lotus and when he left, Chapman appointed Duckworth as gearbox development engineer at Hornsey. He eventually told Chapman that “he was not prepared to waste his life developing something that will never work.” Duckworth had met Mike Costin in 1957 and a year later they formed Cosworth, the name being formed from their two surnames.

Initially they rented premises in Shaftesbury Mews, Kensington but then moved to what was described as “larger but down at heel and rat infested premises in Friern Barnet.” These were in fact a dilapidated stable alongside *The Railway Hotel* (*The Turrets*) in Friern Barnet Road.



*The dilapidated stables, on the right of the picture*

Duckworth spent his £600 savings on a dynamometer which was bolted to the floor with the exhaust pipe going through the roof. They started by preparing existing cars for racing and then began work on the new Ford Anglia 105E engine which had high revs and was therefore ideal for conversion. They bought engines in batches of 100 and had them delivered to Friern Barnet where new crank rods and pistons were installed. By October 1958 they had produced 125 cars.

Their first motor racing victory was in 1960 when Jim Clark won the Formula Junior category in a Lotus 18 at Goodwood.

In 1961 Cosworth moved from Friern Barnet to a 60 feet x 30 feet building in Kenninghall Road, Edmonton where Lotus had assembled the first Lotus Elite. The workforce had by then grown to 16. Costin's contract with Colin Chapman expired in August 1962 and he was then able to join Cosworth full time.

In 1964 the company moved to Northampton and in 1966 they signed a contract with Ford to develop a new 3 litre Formula One engine. The following year Jim Clark won the Dutch Grand Prix. Cosworth dominated the sport for 15 years during which time they had recorded 155 wins by drivers such as Emerson Fittipaldi, Mario Andretti, James Hunt and Nelson Piquet.

It is ironic that two businesses involving high speed should have had a common connection with a much slower form of transport. Lotus started out in *The Railway Hotel* in Hornsey and Cosworth in *The Railway Hotel* in Friern Barnet.

## **GENERAL ELECTIONS**

*by John Heathfield*

The earliest cinema in Finchley, the Wentworth Hall, was quick to make fun of elections. At the height of the January 1910 election the film *Scroggins Puts Up for Blankshire* was shown. According to the *Finchley Press* the film included "screamingly funny scenes" showing Scroggins canvassing and having water thrown over him from an upstairs window and being pelted with custard pies at the election meeting. Would that we would have a repeat this year!

The 1910 campaign opened in earnest at Squires Lane School where the hall was packed to overflowing, with many people unable to gain admittance. The Chairman said that his function was to see that all sides got a fair hearing. The main issues were Home Rule for Ireland (the Home Rule Bill had been discussed as early as 1895); Education – attendance until the age of 12 was to be made compulsory; and Unemployment – it was suggested that the State fund a massive increase in road building in order to create jobs. It is interesting that over a hundred years later we are still trying to solve the problems of Ireland, schools and jobs.

There was much discussion about the new Old Age Pensions. The Conservative speaker, Lord Ronaldshay, standing in for Mr H T Tubbs the present member who was ill, said that he would compel the poor to pay for their pensions or lose them. On trade, he desired to put the English producer on level terms with the foreigner by increasing import taxes. The Liberals were in favour of increasing Alcohol Tax and spending the money on pensions and increasing the size of the British navy. During the meeting the names of Winston Churchill and Lloyd George, both liberals, were loudly booed by some each time they were mentioned.

In the 1928 election, fought in the shadow of the death of Mrs Pankhurst, all women were able to vote for the first time. Following the campaigns fought by the suffragettes and the recognition of the role played by women in the First World War, limited franchise was granted to women with the Representation of the People Act of 1918. Women over 30 were given the vote, however they had to be over 30 and had to be either a member of, or married to, a member of the Register. In the Act all men over 21 (except those who had registered as conscientious objectors) were given the vote, regardless of whether they owned property or not. As a result of the Act some 8.4 million women were able to vote and the Eligibility of Women Act 1918 allowed them to be elected to parliament.

Two General Elections since the War had unforeseen results. In the 1945 election, despite the overwhelming popularity of Winston Churchill following his leadership during the War, his Conservative Party lost to a landslide victory by Labour led by



*A Liberal Party flyer from 1979*

Clement Attlee. Many people, particularly returning soldiers, felt that Labour offered better solutions to homelessness and unemployment. In 1992 the Labour Party led by the ebullient Neil Kinnock was defeated by the less charismatic John Major. Labour was clearly ahead in the polls but a week before the election they held a triumphalist rally in Sheffield which may have influenced undecided voters against them. The Conservatives achieved a majority of 21.

There have been only been two hung parliaments. In February 1974 Harold Wilson led a minority government but subsequently won a majority in a rerun of the election in October the same year and, of course, in 2010 when The Conservatives formed a coalition with the Liberal Democrats.

Since the War there have been nine Labour Governments and nine Conservative led Governments. The 2015 election on 7 May will doubtless prove to be an extremely interesting one.

## **AMY'S HOUSE**

*by John Philpott*

An exhibition – “Small Stories” - currently at the V&A Museum of Childhood, Bethnal Green, shows the development of dolls' houses from the seventeenth century to the beginning of the twenty-first, hence portraying the changes in home life over that period. “Miss Miles's House” is one of the twelve on show.

Amy Miles was born and brought up in Friern Barnet. Her parents, John and Sophia, moved into the Manor House in Friern Barnet Lane in 1851 with their three children: Sophia (3 years old at the time of the move), Charles (1) and their new baby, Henry. Eliza (known by her second name, Janet) was born after the move in 1854 and Amy, the youngest, in 1857. Both girls were baptised in St James's Church. John Miles was governor of the New River Company and an extensive landowner. Soon after the family's arrival in Friern Barnet, John was appointed churchwarden by the Rector, Robert Morris, an office he was to hold for thirty-five years. As the population of the parish grew, he financed the building of All Saints' Church, consecrated in 1882, together with its school and vicarage, also providing the land on which they were built. His second son, Henry, was the first vicar of the new parish.

It would be nice to imagine Amy as a child playing with her dolls' house at her home in Friern Barnet Lane, but it was not made until the 1890s. We do not know what led her to create it ; the curator of the Exhibition surmises that perhaps, following the death of her father in 1886, she was recreating her childhood home in his memory. By this time, only the two youngest children, Janet and Amy, were still living at the Manor House with their mother. Their sister, Sophia, had married Edmond Morris, son of the Rector, in 1873; they were still living, with their large family, in Stoke Newington. Charles was living in Berkhamsted, Henry in All Saints' Vicarage.

Amy would have had the house made and bought most of the beautifully made furniture which she installed. There is great attention to detail: the dog curled up on the floor, the newspaper left on the chair. The house is very up-to-date with the latest technology. In the hall there is a telephone; in the bathroom (to the right on the top floor) the bath is supplied with hot water from a gas geyser. There is electric lighting in every room, very advanced for its time. Perhaps the little girl in the nursery (top left), with its dolls' house, is Amy, with her brother Henry at the top of the stairs. Mrs Miles is entertaining a neighbour in the drawing room, and Mr Miles in the billiard room.

There are several servants: the butler in the dining room (ground floor, to the left of the staircase), the cook in the kitchen, a maid in the bathroom. This Amy would have taken for granted. In 1861, when she was four, there were eight servants living in the house: governess, nurse, nursery maid, cook, house maid, footman and groom. In the coachman's house, the coachman lived with his wife and their two children; the gardener lived in the front lodge with his wife and children.



*Amy's dolls' house from 1890 (Victoria & Albert Museum)*

Mrs Miles died in 1902. Following her death, much of the Miles estate was sold for building, but the Manor House and its grounds survived to become North Middlesex Golf Club. Janet and Amy moved to a flat in Kensington. There they managed with just one live-in servant.

We have a tantalising hint that the two sisters had more adventurous lives than we might suppose. In April 1914 they are on the passenger list of the *SS Orcoma*, arriving in Liverpool, having embarked in Rio de Janeiro. The month following their return, Janet died, aged 60. Amy died in 1928, aged 70. She was then in Berkhamsted, perhaps living with a member of her brother Charles's family. Charles himself had died in 1911, as had her sister Sophia. Both Janet and Amy are buried in Friern Barnet churchyard; their brother Henry conducted their funerals. He, having retired in 1932 after fifty years as vicar of All Saints', died in 1944 at the age of 93. He is also buried in Friern Barnet churchyard.

It is a hundred years since Amy's dolls' house was first put on public display. She lent it for an exhibition at the V&A in 1915. Later she gave it to the museum and it was transferred to the Museum of Childhood in 1921.

("Small Stories" is at the Museum of Childhood, Cambridge Heath Road, Bethnal Green (near Bethnal Green tube station) until 6 September 2015 ([www.museumofchildhood.org.uk](http://www.museumofchildhood.org.uk)). A book, *Doll's Houses* by Halina Pasiebska, published by the V&A, describes the collection, with photographs showing the contents in detail

## LADDERSWOOD ESTATE, NEW SOUTHGATE – THE BEGINNING OF THE END

by Colin Barratt

The Council estate of Ladderswood was built in the early 1970s, just before the wholesale slaughter of the centre of New Southgate. It lies between Station Road, Palmers Road and Upper Park Road, and consisted of a mixture of maisonettes and flats. Its most prominent block was the 10 storey Curtis House. The estate was poorly constructed, and has caused problems for Enfield Council for many years, both from structural issues and anti-social behaviour. Probably the final straw came when Curtis House received national notoriety in 2005 when one of the failed London bombers was found to be a resident there. It was decided to demolish the estate and re-build it. After much consultation a design was agreed and a developer appointed, Mullalleys.

Before the 1970s re-development of New Southgate a pub called *The Sir John Lawrence* stood at the bottom end of Palmers Road. This was swept away with all of the houses around it, but a new pub was built a short distance away, at the edge of Ladderswood, and named *The New Sir John Lawrence*. This closed a few years ago and the site was cleared. Last year the first block of flats of the New Ladderswood development was started here, and is now halfway to completion.

Curtis House stands near to this building site and had been emptied ready for demolition. In February the Council decided to have a “demolition ceremony” there and invited members of the local Neighbourhood Panel, former residents and members of the Council and developers to attend. As a member of the Neighbourhood Panel I was also invited. I knew that this event wasn’t going to be a spectacular explosive reduction to rubble, as there was too much asbestos in the building, and it was too close to other buildings. The demolition was going to take weeks, if not months, so this ceremony



was just a publicity event to show that the Council had started the work. I thought we may see a crane with a wrecking ball, or men with hammers knocking down some of the concrete panels from the top, but it turned out to be just a few men (and women) from the Council and developers taking it in turns with a sledgehammer to knock down a wall of breezeblocks next to the main entrance, under the gaze of several press photographers. The photo here says it all!

The artist's impression of the new estate looks good, and will include a hotel, community centre and some light industry, but whether the reality matches it, we will have to wait and see.

## **WHO WAS CURTIS?**

*by Colin Barratt*

Curtis House was named in memory of Alderman William Curtis, who was Lord Mayor of London in 1795 and an MP for many years. He lived in a grand house in Palmers Green, near to the road which was later named in his honour, Aldermans Hill. Before the 1970s re-development of New Southgate the only local road named after him was a tiny road off the bottom end of High Road, New Southgate, opposite where I lived, which is now long gone. Curtis House is close to where Curtis Road used to be and possibly this is why it was given the name.

After Curtis House has disappeared there will be no record of his name, which is a pity, as he was an interesting and larger than life character, who should be remembered.

## **CLOCK & WATCHMAKERS' ASYLUM – HOW TIME HAS CHANGED!**

*by Colin Barratt*

Reading Nick McKie's article in the last newsletter about the Clock & Watchmakers' Asylum ('The Homestead') in Waterfall Road reminded me of the research I did in 2004 to produce a brief report on the history of these retirement homes. Some of my information had come from the Guildhall Library, which holds the archives of this trade, but I hadn't seen the press articles on the stone laying ceremony and the newly opened homes, which were fascinating and can be added to this history. It was also a surprise to see that, after the stone laying ceremony, the assembly went to the "beautiful grounds at the rear of *The Railway Hotel*" for a meal. To those of us who remember this building, more commonly referred to as *The Turrets*, it's difficult to visualise it as having "beautiful grounds". How time has changed!

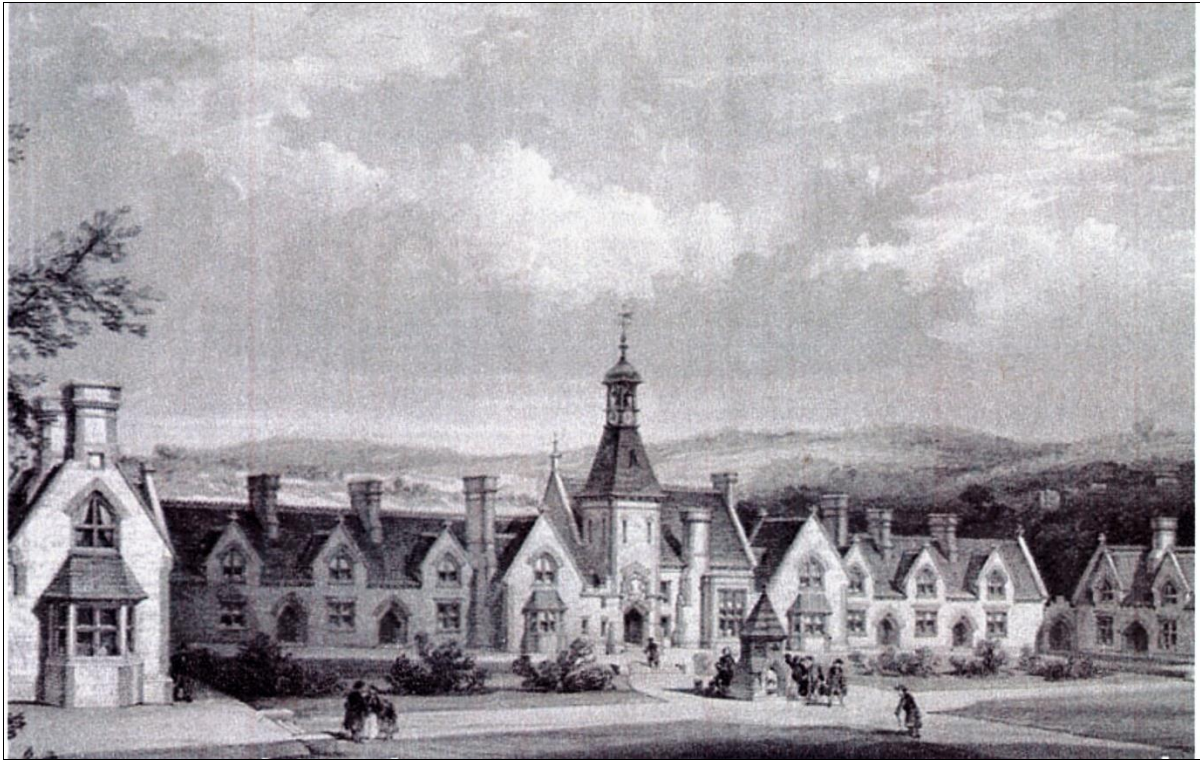
In my research I found an announcement about a Festival Dinner in June 1904, at The Hotel Cecil in The Strand, to commemorate the Jubilee of the Asylum, and the completion of 50 years work in helping the deserving and infirm members of the trade. This was also to raise funds to cover the running costs of employing a nurse, who would live in a newly provided Nurse's House, which was necessary as the average age of inmates at the time was 76, with many over 80.

Quoting from the press report in Nick's article, just after the Asylum opened, it says "The scenery, looking northwards, is varied and beautiful; and in the distance the view is closed by the hills at East Barnet, crowned with woods and studded with magnificent mansions". This shows how rural New Southgate was in the 1850s. Even 40 years later, in the 1898 Godfrey edition of the local Ordnance Survey map, the land north of the asylum is open fields, apart from the Great Northern Cemetery, right up to the ridge of Chase Road, Southgate and Cat Hill. The "magnificent mansions" would include Osidge, later the home of Sir Thomas Lipton, Oak Hill House, later a Theological

Training College, and Bohun Lodge, with Oakhill Woods behind. The first two of these houses still stand, and the view from Oak Hill College is still open across the valley of Oak Hill Park, as can be appreciated when looking up to it from Church Hill Road.

One of the images I have of the Asylum, included here, is an engraving showing the backs of these homes and their extensive private open grounds, with inmates walking around them. Beyond the roofs of this terrace of homes, looking southwards, the artist has depicted open land and the slopes of Muswell Hill in the distance.

The residents must have greatly enjoyed their retirement here but, 150 years on, it's difficult to relate these views and the descriptions of the idyllic surroundings to present day Waterfall Road and Betstyle Circus, which have changed so much.



*The engraving showing the backs of the houses*

### **SHARE YOUR WARTIME MEMORIES**

Channel 4 are working on a documentary which will commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day in May. The documentary will include first person testimony people who celebrated as well as archive footage and interviews with experts and historians.

If you were in your teens in 1945 and are willing to share your recollections, whether they be of meeting your future spouse or getting hold of rationed alcohol or organising a street party please contact Celine Fitzmaurice on 07932 783195. You could even end up appearing on the telly!

### **PROTEST IN THE PARK**

At 12 noon on Saturday 28 February 2015 a large group of concerned residents gathered in Oakleigh Recreation Ground to protest at Barnet Council's possible use of the Abbots site in Oakleigh Road South as a depot for their 125 odd refuse vehicles which are currently based in Bittacy Hill, Mill Hill. Over the years local residents have complained about noise and dust from the Winters' skip hire facility at the site which



has apparently another five and a half years left on its lease. One option that Barnet Council is considering is the purchase of this lease which would mean the site could be used by the Council in conjunction with the Abbots site to the south and which would presumably lead to a reduction in the total number of vehicle movements to and from the site.



*Protestors in the Rec*



*Entrance to the site in Oakleigh Road South*

## RUSSELL LANE EXPLAINED

At 1 o'clock pm on Saturday 28 February a plaque was unveiled in Russell Lane by the Mayor of Barnet Hugh Rayner. The plaque had been produced by Barnet Council at the instigation of Brunswick Park Councillor Lisa Rutter and the East Barnet Residents' Association with help from our President John Heathfield who supplied the words and pictures.



*Councillor Lisa Rutter, John Heathfield, Theresa Villiers, Mayor of Barnet Hugh Rayner and Gillian Gear, Vice President of Barnet Museum and Local History Society pose behind the plaque*

## FIRST WORLD WAR STORIES

John Philpott has compiled a list of the local men who lost their lives in the First World War and who are buried or commemorated here. *Parish of Friern Barnet Graves and Memorials of the First World War* records the graves in St James's churchyard and the names on the memorial and John has managed to produce biographies of some of the men..Looking through these, one is immediately struck by three things – firstly the age of the men, some barely out of their teens, secondly the effect these deaths must have had on the local community, and thirdly that, in the main, these men came from large families, far bigger than we are accustomed to today. It is difficult now to contemplate that ten or more people could have lived in one small house in the older parts of Friern Barnet.

By looking at just two roads, Holly Park Road and Parkhurst Road, one can imagine the effect that the deaths would have had. - a family grieving at the death of a son would

have been continually reminded of their loss by news that a neighbour had also suffered a bereavement. The following lists make sobering reading:

#### HOLLY PARK ROAD

No 9. Sidney Hucklesby, killed 27 September 1915, age 27 and Henry James Hucklesby, killed 22 Sep 1917, age 31. Two of eight children

No 33. Leonard Alfred Sexton, killed 7 October 1916, age 21. One of eight children

No 35. John Tingley, killed 7 April 1918, age 28. One of three children

No 36. William Bourne, killed 16 August 1918, age 33. One of two children

No 41. William Paul, killed 6 October 1916, age 22. One of eight children

No 48. Neville E Keen, killed 28 March 1918, age 31. One of six children

No 52. Ernest Frederick Bonner, killed 12 January 1917, age 25. One of five children

No 63. Arthur John Henry Cornell, killed 10 September 1916, age 23. One of two children

No 66. Alfred Leonard Price, killed 21 March 1916, age 27. One of seven children

No 68. Ernest Edward Usher, died 28 May 1919, age 36. One of five children

No 94. John Presser, died 16 May 1918, age 32. Only child

No 100. Ernest George Standley, killed 1 November 1914, age 20. One of six children

No 106. Alfred William Coleman, killed 11 September 1916, age 29. One of three children

#### PARKHURST ROAD

No 1. Alfred Leonard Price, died 21 March 1916, age 27. One of seven children

No 4. Joseph Stratton Mildern, died 9 August 1917, age 31 and Athol Mildern, killed 13 August 1918, age 28. Two of seven children

No 8. Ronald Henry List, killed 1 July 1916, age 24. One of three children

No 17. Sidney Ronald Turner, killed 22 April 1917, age 25 and Harold Frank Turner, died 26 May 1917, age 23. two of six children

No 26. Lawrence Henry Hewlett, killed 24 March 1918, age 19. One of three children

No 33. Oliver C Wall, died 23 October 1918, age 22. One of nine children

No 60. William Francis Wilkinson, killed 12 October 1917, age 20. One of four children

## WHAT TO DO WITH SHREDDED WHEAT

Colin Barratt's excellent talk in January gave details of his working life in Welwyn Garden City for the makers of Shredded Wheat.

Among the artefacts that Colin brought along was a recipe booklet published by the Shredded Wheat company. Coming up with interesting things to do with the product, apart from having it as a nutritious breakfast, must have been quite a challenge for the home economists involved. Among the more bizarre suggestions were the following:

### SHREDDED WHEAT JELLY

INGREDIENTS—1 packet of jelly ; 1 pint of water ; 1 Shredded Wheat biscuit.

Melt the jelly and prepare the mould in the usual way. Place the Shredded Wheat in the mould, and pour on the hot jelly. By the time it is set the Shredded Wheat will have swollen and filled the whole jelly. Turn out and serve alone or with custard, cream, fruit, etc.

### SHREDDED WHEAT RAREBIT

INGREDIENTS—Shredded Wheat biscuits ; cheese ; 1 egg ; white sauce.

Dip the Shredded Wheat biscuits in milk and lay them in the dish in which they are to be served. Cover them with a layer of grated cheese and pour over the whole a white sauce to which has been added a hard-boiled egg, put in oven until cheese is melted, then serve.

### SAUSAGE ROLL

Scoop out some of the interior of a piece of Shredded Wheat and insert a cooked pork sausage, covered with tomato sauce. Place under the grill ; put a slice of good ham or bacon on top and let it cook quickly.

### SHREDDED WHEAT SOUP

INGREDIENTS—2 broken Shredded Wheat biscuits ; 1 pint of milk or stock ; 1 onion. Pepper and salt to taste.

Boil onion ; put through sieve ; add milk and the two biscuits broken ; then thicken with flour.

Perhaps the more creative among you would be prepared to create your own recipes. We would be delighted to publish them. Please note though, no other breakfast cereals must be used!

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday 27 May 2015 prior to the talk on Coins by Jim Corbishley. With this Newsletter is the official invitation to attend, along with a Nomination Form and a copy of last year's minutes.

### SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

For those of you who have not renewed your subscriptions for the year commencing 1 April 2015, a further copy of the Membership Renewal Form is enclosed. If you have not renewed by 1 June you will no longer continue to receive copies of the Newsletter.

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