

Friern Barnet *Newsletter*

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CORONAVIRUS SPECIAL EDITION

We don't normally publish a Newsletter in May, but we thought we would keep you in touch with the Society. Our AGM was scheduled to be held on Wednesday 27 May at the North Middlesex Golf Club and we had planned to reschedule this to Wednesday 23 September, but even this seems uncertain so we hope this Newsletter will keep you up to date and also entertained.

EPIDEMICS IN THE PAST

by David Berger

The current coronavirus is shocking, but it is not the first time that the world has been affected by horrible diseases. In 1347 people returning from Asia reported the outbreak of a plague which spread northwards through Italy and Spain, reaching England in 1348. At that time some 90% of the population lived in the country – London's population was around 70,000, so the close proximity of the inhabitants led to the rapid spread of what was to become known as the Black Death. The symptoms were horrendous – a blackened tongue, vomiting, sweating, a stinking breath, shortage of breath, dark blotches on the skin, headaches, loss of appetites and 'foamy and odorous' urine. The first signs included boils in the groin, armpits and behind the ears, which hardened. Most people were dead within a week. Other versions of the disease included pneumonia and infection of the blood; sufferers were dead within hours or days.

The disease was no respecter of people – probably a third of Britain's population were to die horrible deaths including the Archbishop of Canterbury and then his successor, who lasted two days before he, too, was struck down. People were buried in mass graves; crops were unharvested, and sheep and cattle wandered over fields untended.

Whilst there was no successful cure for the plague, various ideas were put forward. Edward III ordered the Mayor of London to cause the city to be cleaned from all bad smells, so that no more people will die from such smells.

In 1665 a bubonic plague affected England and killed a quarter of London's population – some 100,000 people. The Great Plague of London was spread by fleas which had lived on rats, and open drains in the streets and overcrowded tenements helped to spread the disease. Samuel Pepys chewed tobacco as a precaution, and he kept a record of the plague in his diary. This entry was for 10 August 1665:

“By and by to the office, where we sat all the morning; in great trouble to see the Bill this week rise so high, to above 4,000 in all, and of them above 3,000 of the plague. And an odd story of Alderman Bence's stumbling at night over



A flea – the cause of the plague

a dead corpse in the streete, and going home and telling his wife, she at the fright, being with child, fell sicke and died of the plague. We sat late, and then by invitation my Lord Bruncker, Sir J. Minnes, Sir W. Batten and I to Sir G. Smith's to dinner, where very good company and good cheer. Captain Cocke was there and Jacke Fenn, but to our great wonder Alderman Bence, and tells us that not a word of all this is true, and others said so too, but by his owne story his wife hath been ill, and he fain to leave his house and comes not to her, which continuing a trouble to me all the time I was there. Thence to the office and, after writing letters, home, to draw-over anew my will, which I had bound myself by oath to dispatch by to-morrow night; the town growing so unhealthy, that a man cannot depend upon living two days to an end. So, having done something of it, I to bed.”

Towards the end of the First World War an influenza pandemic swept across the world. It was called Spanish flu, although it probably originated in China. The reference to Spain came about because newspapers widely reported what was happening in that country, including the fact that it even affected King Alfonso XIII, although he subsequently recovered from it.

The epidemic started in January 1918 and reached its peak in August of that year, three months before the armistice. It is estimated that it infected over a quarter of the world's population of 1.9 billion and possibly 50 million people died. The high death toll was largely due to malnutrition, plus troops being confined to the trenches where it spread rapidly. Unusually, it affected the young more than the elderly and deaths in Britain amounted to 228,000. The number of people killed by the flu actually exceeded those killed in the war.

The local press reported the outbreak:

“Hendon & Finchley Times 30 September 1918:

This month saw the first signs that the worldwide influenza epidemic had reached Britain. Absences from work rose, London's central telegraph office was crippled because 700 people were absent through illness. The situation seems certain to get worse.

Around the globe, this virulent strain of influenza has already caused millions of deaths. So far attempts to develop a vaccine to combat the disease have failed and some doctors are predicting that more people could die of influenza than were killed in the war.

The disease is known as Spanish flu, but it is by no means clear that it began in Spain. China and India have been the hardest hit to date, with millions

reported dead. Now it is spreading through Europe and the United States amongst people weakened by the wartime hardships.”

“Hendon & Finchley Times 25 October 1918

The epidemic of influenza, which is sweeping the country, and is particularly acute in north London, has not left Hendon and Finchley immune, a large number of cases being reported. Several deaths have taken place.

Dr Cohen, without a jury, held an inquest at the Friern Barnet Council Offices on Monday concerning the death of Elsie Louise Milwood, age 19 of Onley Lodge, Prospect-place, East Finchley.

Kathleen Keymer said the deceased, her sister, had always been delicate. She had received hospital treatment for curvature of the spine. On Thursday last she said she felt unwell but, in the evening, feeling better, she got up. Next morning deceased complained of a sore throat, and asked for a cup of tea, but when the witness went to take it, she could not make her sister answer. A doctor was sent for, and upon his arrival he said the deceased was dead. Dr Orr, of East Finchley, said the organs were diseased, and death was due to congestion following influenza. He had a large number of cases of influenza. The coroner recorded a verdict of Death from Natural causes.”

“Hendon & Finchley Times 1 November 1918:

There has been, and still is, a large number of cases of influenza in the Finchley district, but from an authoritative source we can state that comparatively speaking, the epidemic has not been so severe as in some surrounding districts.

As we stated in our issue of last week, the elementary schools were closed for a fortnight, and at the present time it is the intention to re-open on Monday next. We regret to hear that a teacher at Squires Lane School and another teacher at St John’s School have died of the disease; one at the County School has also passed away. There are many cases of whole families being down with the malady, and not a few deaths have occurred; but as before stated, the epidemic is not so prevalent as in some districts.”

The same issue of the paper also included this, which although it seems to be an editorial was, in fact, what is today known as an advertorial, in other words a paid-for piece designed to look like a normal news item:

“Sunny Spain used to send many delectable things to us, such as Oranges, Muscatels etc, but war-time conditions have stopped the importation of such things in any quantity, however Spanish flu does not appear at all difficult to obtain, for every London district seems to plentifully supplied.

A very nasty thing is this modern influenza, and the greatest care is necessary both to avoid it and to overcome its after effects if it is unfortunately taken. An over-worked or run-down system is a happy hunting ground for the germs, and all who wish to keep fit should take special precautions at the time.

Nourishment in plenty is the best safeguard, and the finest concentrated nourishment is Bovril, which is a proven enemy to influenza. Bovril before, during or after can be freely used with confidence, and with the satisfactory

knowledge that no article of food has so little increased in price during the last four years.

A good fresh supply of Bovril can always be obtained from Messrs Harvey and Shillingford's stores at 11 King's Parade, Church End, Finchley, and they recommend it with the full knowledge that it will do all that is claimed for it.

Do not wait until the flu takes the offensive, fortify your system now."

There was a second wave of Spanish flu but by 1920 the pandemic was over, and life returned to relative normality. And then we had Ebola, the SARS virus, Swine flu.....

On the subject of health, do you remember the great horse meat scandal of 2013? It was discovered that some food producers in Romania and Ireland were mislabelling horse meat as beef and then falsifying documentation. On investigation it was discovered that this had probably been going on since 2012. Many well known names were unwittingly involved including Asda, Burger King, Findus, Makro, Whitbread and even Waitrose. Tesco issued the following leaflet to customers in their Colney Hatch Lane store:

**We are
changing.**



The problem we've had with some of our meat lately is about more than burgers and bolognese. It's about some of the ways we get meat to your dinner table. It's about the whole food industry. And it has made us realise, we really do need to make it better. We've been working on it, but we need to keep going, go further, move quicker. We know that our supply chain is too complicated. So we're making it simpler. We know that the more we work with British farmers the better. We've already made sure that all our beef is from the UK and Ireland. And now we're moving on to our fresh chickens. By July, they'll all be from UK farms too. No exceptions. For farmers to do what they do best, they need to know they've got our support. We know this because of the work we've been doing with our dairy farmers to make sure they always get paid above the market price for milk. We know that, no matter what you spend, everyone deserves to eat well. We know that all this will only work if we are open about what we do. And if you're not happy, tell us. Seriously. This is it. We are changing.

TESCO

For more information visit
tescofoodnews.com

It was even discovered that Aintree racecourse had been selling dead racehorses to a slaughterhouse in West Yorkshire, even though it was illegal for animals that had been euthanised by injection to be put into the food


Our local MP issued this leaflet to her constituents in April and we include it because in future years it will be seen as an historical document:



Theresa Villiers MP

Member of Parliament for Barnet

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Advice & Support Information



Dear constituents,

The Covid situation is very grim, with lives being lost every day. The lockdown is disrupting daily life for all of us, but the severity of the emergency means that the Government has had to put in place extraordinary measures to save lives. Without these new rules on social distancing, the danger is that we would not be able to get the coronavirus under control and it would overwhelm our health service. That would mean many more lives would be lost and the emergency would last much longer than it would without this lockdown.



STAY AT HOME



PROTECT THE NHS



save lives

RULES ON STAYING AT HOME AND AWAY FROM OTHERS

Every citizen must comply with social distancing rules. The police have been given the powers to enforce them – including through fines and dispersing gatherings.

You should only leave the house for one of four reasons.

1. Shopping for basic necessities (eg food and medicine) as infrequently as possible.
2. One form of exercise a day; a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household.
3. Any medical need, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
4. Travelling to and from work, but only where this cannot be done from home. The Government is stepping in and helping pay people's wages – a scheme which is one of the most generous of any in the world – paying grants to keep people in work and help them pay their bills.

These four reasons are exceptions – we should all be minimising time spent outside of the home and ensuring we are 2 metres apart from anyone not part of our household.

These measures must be followed by everyone.

CLOSING PUBS, RESTAURANTS, NON-ESSENTIAL SHOPS, GYMS & PUBLIC SPACES

The following businesses have been required to close: non-essential retail shops, such as clothing and electronics stores; hair, beauty and nail salons; outdoor and indoor markets, (excluding food markets); libraries, community centres, youth centres, gyms, indoor/outdoor leisure facilities; playgrounds, sports courts and outdoor gyms; places of worship, except for funerals attended by immediate family; hotels, hostels, bed and breakfasts, campsites, caravan parks, and boarding houses for leisure use.

STOPPING PUBLIC GATHERINGS

The Government is stopping all public gatherings of more than two people.

The two exceptions to this rule are:

- Where the gathering is of a group of people who live together - this means that a parent can take their children to the shops if there is no option to leave them at home.
- Where the gathering is essential for work purposes

Social events, including weddings, baptisms and other religious ceremonies are not allowed. Funerals can continue, including attendance by immediate family.

The Government will keep these measures under constant review and will relax them when the scientific evidence shows that this will not jeopardise efforts to tackle Covid-19.

Stay home, stay safe and save lives.



Theresa Villiers MP, Member of Parliament for Barnet

P.S. I send out a monthly e-newsletter updating constituents on my campaigns and activities Parliament and in Barnet. If you do not yet receive it and would like to sign up, please email me at theresa@theresavilliers.co.uk and I will add you to the list.

This communication is funded by IPSA to assist Theresa Villiers MP in her Parliamentary duties

Local Advice & Support

LOCAL AUTHORITY LATEST INFORMATION



VOLUNTEERING ***ONLY VOLUNTEER FOR REGISTERED ORGANISATIONS***

NHS Volunteer Responders
www.goodsamapp.org/NHS

Barnet Council
[engage.barnet.gov.uk/
communityhelpub](http://engage.barnet.gov.uk/communityhelpub)

Friend In Need
www.fin-eastbarnet.org.uk/welcome.htm
@ jesse@fin-eastbarnet.org.uk
020 8449 8225

Age UK
www.ageuk.org.uk/barnet/activities-and-events/covid19-action-plan/
@ info@ageukbarnet.org.uk
020 8203 5040

Community Barnet
[www.communitybarnet.org.uk/portfolio/
covid-19-resources-aid-your-wellbeing-
during-isolation](http://www.communitybarnet.org.uk/portfolio/covid-19-resources-aid-your-wellbeing-during-isolation)
@ info@communitybarnet.org.uk

Volunteering Barnet
volunteeringbarnet.org.uk/2293-2/
@ enquiry@volunteeringbarnet.org.uk
0300 365 9960

My office continues to support and assist constituents with all enquiries and casework.

However, following Government advice on tackling coronavirus, our ways of working have had to change. Enquiries will be responded to as soon as possible and we ask for your patience as it may take longer than usual to reply.

We will be prioritising casework and enquiries to help those most in need and vulnerable.

Regular surgeries with face-to-face meetings have had to be replaced with phone calls to comply with social distancing rules.

The best way to contact us is by emailing : theresa@theresavilliers.co.uk

AS ADVICE & GUIDANCE IS
ISSUED PLEASE VISIT
WWW.GOV.UK/CORONAVIRUS

The following social media accounts are posting the latest factual advice and information related to COVID-19

- Public Health England Twitter: @PHE_UK
- Department of Health and Social Care Facebook & Twitter: @DHSCgovuk
- NHS Facebook: @NHSwebsite
- NHS Twitter: @NHSuk
- Theresa Villiers MP facebook [Fb.com/theresavillierscb](https://www.facebook.com/theresavillierscb)



BEWARE OF CORONAVIRUS SCAMS - TRADING STANDARDS ADVICE

- Always follow Government advice.
- Use local council websites, local council services and trusted charities like Age UK.
- Contact your local councillors or MP if urgent.
- Be careful on social media, especially with coronavirus response groups springing up.
- Be as careful as you normally would be... Don't be rushed into decisions.
- Don't purchase items from your doorstep or respond to surveys.
- Don't draw attention to the passer-by that you are self-isolating (signs in windows).
- Don't give bank details, cash, credit or debit card information to strangers to do shopping etc.
- Don't buy cures and medicines online.
- Don't buy soaps and sanitisers from unknown sources.
- Buy all products from known sources.
- Trust and seek help from family and friends.

SCAM
SMART
DON'T GET
CAUGHT OUT!



Please pass these messages to your friends & family - by phone, internet or social media - and ask them in turn to make sure that anyone they know who might need supporting knows where to turn.

[Fb.com/theresavillierscb](https://www.facebook.com/theresavillierscb)

020 8449 7345

Theresavilliers.co.uk

CORONAVIRUS

PROTECT YOURSELF & OTHERS

NHS HEALTH INFORMATION AND ADVICE

For the most up to date guidance please visit:
www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19

What to do if you have coronavirus symptoms

Continue to stay at home if you have either:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- To protect others, do not go to places like a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. Stay at home.
- Use the 111 online coronavirus service to find out what to do: 111.nhs.uk/covid-19

Only call 111 if you cannot get help online.

If you need medical help not related to coronavirus, do not go to places like a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

- For health information and advice, use the NHS website or check your GP surgery website.
- For urgent medical help, use the NHS 111 online service.
- For life-threatening emergencies, call 999 for an ambulance.

Advice for people at high risk

If you're at high risk of getting seriously ill from coronavirus, there are extra things you should do to avoid catching it. These include:

- not leaving your home – you should not go out to do shopping, visit friends or family, or attend any gatherings.
- avoiding close contact with other people in your home as much as possible.

If you are having difficulties getting groceries delivered or need help on another non-health matter, please email Barnet Council on covid19support@barnet.gov.uk or ring them on 0808 281 3210.

Who is at high risk? Those who;

- have had an organ transplant
- are having certain types of cancer treatment
- have blood or bone marrow cancer, such as leukaemia
- have a severe lung condition, such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma
- have a condition that makes you much more likely to get infections
- are taking medicine that weakens your immune system
- are pregnant and have a serious heart condition

Getting help for a vulnerable person

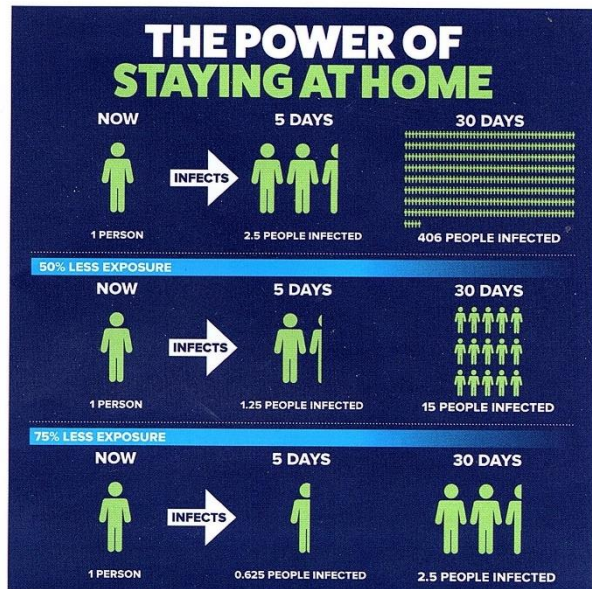
Information on local matters relating to Covid-19 can be found on Barnet Council's website:

www.barnet.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-latest-information-and-advice/urgent-help-and-support-covid-19-helpline

The council have set up a referral hub for vulnerable people in the borough. You can refer people to them who need help using these details: @ covid19support@barnet.gov.uk ☎ 0808 281 3210

Please note that this hub (and these contact details) are for non-health related matters.

For NHS health advice on Covid-19, please go to: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19



USEFUL CONTACTS

Crime Stoppers0800 555 111
 UK Visas & Immigration..... 0300 123 2253
 Citizen Advice Bureau0300 330 1175
 Shelter..... 0808 800 4444
 Fire, Police, Ambulance service,999
 Police Non-Emergency101
 Healthwatch.....020 8078 9990
 Debt Advice (Stepchange) 0800 138 1111
 If you require legal advice, please call the CLA to

establish if you are entitled to Legal Aid0345 345 4345
 Law Society (Find a solicitor service)020 7320 5650
 HMRC0800 015 9559
 School Closures0800 046 8687
 Samaritans116 123
 Universal Credit.....0800 328 5644
 HMRC for businesses & self-employed.....0800 241 222
 Free School Meals at home0800 408 1448

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19



HM Government



Government response to Coronavirus (COVID -19)

For practical advice and help around issues such as employment, financial support, business, healthcare workers & carers, travel, how you can help etc please visit:



PROTECT THE NHS

save lives

Government Business Support Hotline
0300 456 3565

Universal Credit Hotline
0800 328 5644

The breakdown of all the financial support currently available for individuals and business can be found here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19

Protecting the most at risk



1 Strictly **avoid** contact with anyone with COVID-19 symptoms



2 Do not leave your house



3 Do not attend any gatherings



4 Food or medication deliveries should be left at the door



5 Keep in touch with phone, internet, and social media



6 Use the **phone** or go **online** to contact your GP or other essential services

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR JOBS AND INCOMES

The Government is stepping in and helping pay people's wages through a scheme which is one of the most generous of any in the world. This includes:

- Paying grants to support as many jobs as necessary. Any employer in the country – large, small, charitable or for profit – who promises to retain their staff, can apply for a grant to cover most of the cost of paying people's wages. Government grants will cover 80 per cent of the salary of retained workers up to a total of £2,500 a month – above the median income.
- Introducing a three month mortgage holiday for those in difficulty due to coronavirus and a three month ban on evictions for rent arrears to help people struggling with their rent.
- Strengthening the safety net by increasing Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit by £1,000 a year – a cash injection of nearly £7 billion in the welfare system.
- The Government will pay self-employed people (except those earning profits of more than £50,000) a taxable grant worth 80 per cent of their average monthly profits over the last three years, up to £2,500 a month.

GETTING ASSISTANCE WITH FOODS AND MEDICINES IF YOU ARE REDUCING SOCIAL CONTACT

Ask family, friends and neighbours to support you and use online services. If this is not possible, then the public sector, businesses, charities, and the general public are gearing up to help those advised to stay at home.

It is important to speak to others and ask them to help you to make arrangements for the delivery of food, medicines and essential services and supplies, and look after your physical and mental health and wellbeing.

If you receive support from health and social care organisations, for example, if you have care provided for you through the local authority or health care system, this will continue as normal.

🌐 www.barnet.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-latest-information-and-advice/urgent-help-and-support-covid-19

✉ covid19support@barnet.gov.uk

☎ 0808 281 3210



Fb.com/theresavillierscb



020 8449 7345



Theresavilliers.co.uk

ROUND THE WORLD IN AN OLD BUS

Mechanic Bernard Cleary was so fascinated by buses that he decided in 1970 to drive one round the world. Mr Cleary was 24 and lived at 22 Coniston Close, Whetstone and had bought the single deck 1935 Bristol bus in September 1969. He said: "My friend, Roy Jackson, who was a draughtsman, noticed the vehicle while he was on a working holiday in Spain. I went and had a look and paid £100 for it."

The bus, registration number BHN 237 and formerly with United Automobile Services in Darlington, was driven back to England and for a year Cleary and Roy, who lived in Highgate, refurnished the vehicle at a farm just off the A1, three miles north of Potters Bar. With the help of friends, they stripped down the engine which had last been reconditioned in 1952 but showed very little sign of wear. The bus seats were replaced with bunks, a table, sink unit, cooker and ample cupboards for the journey.



Bernard and Loredana with their Bristol JO5G

Although Bernard and Roy had qualified at their various trades, they both spent some time as bus drivers at Muswell Hill garage where they were used to driving RFs, RTs and Routemasters.

They were hoping to take a route across Russia and Burma but because of a war in Cambodia, Burma refused them entry because many of the roads had been blown up, and Russia would only allow them into the European parts of the country. The two boys, accompanied by Bernard's girlfriend Loredana and two friends continued with their plans and, having spent £500 on the vehicle, they intended to pick up work on the way to pay for their adventure. The bus left Finchley on 1 November 1970, seen off by a group of wellwishers.

The journey began in France and then on to Italy, where Bernard and Loredana got married in her hometown, with Roy as best man. They then travelled through Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Turkey and Iran. In Afghanistan they encountered snow and ice with temperatures so low that they had to keep the engine running continually for five days to prevent the diesel from freezing. The Afghans were surprised to

come across a bus with only five people aboard; they were more used to buses overloaded with passengers, animals and freight both inside and on the roof!

While in northern India the team decided to take a diversion into the tiny kingdom of Nepal and visited the capital Katmandhu in a valley in the lower Himalayas. The city is 120 miles from the Indian border by a tortuous road, about three times the distance of the same journey by air. From Katmandhu they took the opportunity to head further north to view the old frontier into Tibet. They then headed south again into India and they spent some time in the capital city, Delhi.

The team made friends with Ranjan Marwah, a journalist on the *Hindustan Times*. As well as writing an article for the newspaper about their progress, it was Ranjan who came up with the name "UnBUStable". He reported that the suspension was a bit unforgiving and the roof leaked a bit, but otherwise the occupants had a "deep affection and respect" for the bus. They did earn a little money and help in India, some from Coca Cola and Nescafe. They then went on via Bombay to Madras where the bus was loaded onto a Russian cargo ship heading for Singapore - the Russian ship being 10% cheaper than all the others.

Although the money earned in India helped towards the shipping costs, money was getting a bit tight by the time the gang arrived in Singapore, so they left the bus behind and set off for Australia without it. But in March 1972 BHN 237 arrived in Perth, Western Australia, and the journey began again. They found Australia a very different experience from overcrowded Asia, and the ghost towns, wild outback and the empty Nullarbor Plain came as a bit of a shock. The relentless heat also gave them quite a thirst for Australian beer!

Then it was on to Adelaide, Melbourne and up to the coast at Brisbane. While in Australia Bernard wrote an article for Michelin magazine, in which he praised their radial tyres which had still not suffered a single puncture. Michelin paid him for the article and offered to supply new tyres at cost, but it wasn't necessary. Finally, the party travelled down to Sydney where the bus sailed across to Wellington, New Zealand. It arrived there in 1972 after clocking up 30,000 miles through 22 countries in 21 months. Extraordinarily the 45 year old bus had suffered no serious mechanical problems.

Although the team had intended to press on towards South America and the United States, that never actually took place. Instead they went back to Australia and drove up to Darwin shortly after cyclone Tracy in 1975. The bus was sold in 1976 in Darwin to a couple from Queensland, and that looked like the end of the story - but it wasn't. In 2006 a man called Clay Atkinson had acquired the bus in Queensland with the intention of restoring it. The bus was then moved to Brisbane, but news of its current state is sadly lacking. Nevertheless, it is a huge tribute to the quality of British engineering

LIFE BEFORE THE NHS

Alf Matthews was born in 1908 and after living in Hendon, his family moved to Russell Lane when he was eight years old. At the age of 83 Alf decided to write his life story and the first volume, *Alf's Memories*, contains an interesting description of his brush with death:

“Towards the end of the summer of 1919 I began to get terrible griping pains in my abdomen. There were times when Arthur Morley who was an exceptionally big strong boy, carried me home from school on his back when the pain was so bad I could not walk. I did not say anything to my mother at first, but one evening in November the pain was so intense that I laid across a chair gripping the legs and pressing my stomach onto the corner of the seat, to try and counteract the pain. My mother was, of course, very alarmed and my father ran all the way to Dr Spreat nearly a mile away (the doctor travelled his rounds in a two-seater yellow car which was nicknamed ‘the mustard pot’) to call him in, he said he would call in the morning. When he came he asked me if I had been eating raw carrots again. I told him ‘yes’. “That is why you have got the pain” he said. On other occasions when he had called to see my brother, I had mentioned the pains and he had questioned me closely and got out of me about the carrot eating.

The doctor promised to call the next morning but he did not come. By then I was confined to bed. He came in the afternoon. After examining me he went outside the bedroom with my mother. She came back crying and said: “Dr Spreat said you have got to go to the hospital immediately.” He said he would make arrangements about an ambulance – it was quite a complicated business in those days. The day was very foggy and late afternoon turned into evening and no ambulance had arrived. My father called in Bert Stephens from next door and he ran up the lane to telephone from Morley’s farmhouse. He was informed that the ambulance had broken down, so he telephoned for a taxi. When the taxi office realised where they had to go they said the driver could only go as far as the farm, where the last street lamp was. Bert Stephens hurried back with the information, then ripped off the door from his tool-shed and he and father carried me up the lane on the improvised stretcher. I can remember it so clearly, they put me in the kitchen to wait for the taxi and Arthur crept up to me and whispered: “Don’t die Alf.” The taxi still did not come. Finally, it did, and the driver explained that he had after all gone right down the lane and up the long drive to Oaklands and my mother had told him of course we were at the farm.

My father telephoned the hospital to say I was on the way and they said they would have a trolley waiting to take me straight to the operating theatre. When we arrived I was rushed off to the theatre and I learned later on that I only had about half an hour to live when the doctor operated. Some years ago, when being examined by an Insurance doctor he expressed amazement when he saw the huge scar which is still there. He wanted to know the details. He said: “That was a miracle for you to have recovered from acute peritonitis. In those days there were no drugs available to act against it; you had a 99 to 1 chance against you to have lived.” It was, in fact, a miracle and later on I will relate how I learnt about it from the late Teddiman, the wonderful man who was a severely handicapped polio victim who was in the next bed to me. He stayed on at the Wellhouse Hospital as the resident tailor. The house surgeon who performed my operation was Dr Cox.

It was through this illness that I met Ernie Poynter who became my life-long friend. We had met just previously at All Saints’ Sunday School and soon after I went into hospital he sent me a beautiful hand-painted ‘get well’ card. He is a talented artist and had painted lots of pictures. Not long afterwards he was admitted to the same ward as a patient – for appendicitis. Fortunately, he was discharged after two weeks against the ten weeks I was there.”

THE AGM

With this Newsletter we are attaching a copy of the Minutes of the 2019 AGM which we would normally have given out at the 2020 AGM. We are also attaching a copy of the Accounts for the year April 2019-March 2020.

- a) It is worth pointing out that of the sum of £5000 which had been transferred to us by All Saints' Church for the preparation of a history of the church, £4500 has been returned to them as they decided to design and print the book themselves. We retained £500 for researching and writing the history and supplying it to them, along with the photographs from our archives.

- b) We are glad that all members of the Committee have agreed to stand for a further year, until March 2021. For the record they are David Berguer (Chairman), Colin Barratt, Dorrell Dressekie, John Holtham (Membership Secretary), John Philpott, Nick McKie (Treasurer), Patricia Berguer (Secretary) and Richard Testar (Publicity Secretary). We would welcome additions to the Committee so, if you interested in meeting once a month to discuss local history matters (accompanied by tea and doughnuts!), please let Patricia know.

- c) We do not propose to increase the membership fee for the year April 2021-2022 unless unforeseen circumstances occur.

Unless we hear to the contrary, we will assume that the above points are agreeable and we will include their acceptance in the Minutes for the 'virtual AGM ' that has had to be prepared under these exceptional circumstances. May we wish all our members good health in these trying times.



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

Chairman: David Berguer
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**MINUTES OF FRIERN BARNET & DISTRICT
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
HELD AT 7.50 PM ON WEDNESDAY 22 MAY 2019 AT
NORTH MIDDLESEX GOLF CLUB, FRIERN BARNET LANE**

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman, David Berguer, welcomed those present and remarked that this was the nineteenth AGM and the fifth to be held at this venue.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Rachael Macdonald and Richard Testar

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST AGM

The minutes of the AGM for 2018 were approved.

Proposed by Mick Crick. Seconded by Yvonne Ruge. Carried by a show of hands.

4. SECRETARY'S REPORT

The committee had met 10 times, and held 9 lecture meetings and one Christmas Party. We had published four Newsletters and it was particularly encouraging that the Society had had so many contributions from members and it is always good to hear members' reminiscences as they help to bring the past back to life.

The average attendance at our meetings was 36, with the highest being 46, for the talk on *The Regent's Canal*.

During the year membership was 157, with a number of members joining via our website. 40 of our members live outside the area and a further 47 did not attend any meetings.

Sales of the book *Whetstone Revealed* had been successful and had covered the cost of printing the book.

Our website continues to attract visits from all over the world and so far we have over now have 9300 photographs on our Photo Gallery and over 2200 comments from visitors to the site, with many of them coming from people who now live outside the area but still have fond memories of it.

We continue to digitise our records and are putting these on to the website to make them readily available to the public.

We continue to maintain contact with and continue to support other local groups including The Finchley Society, The Hornsey Historical Society, Friern Barnet & Whetstone Residents' Association, Hendon & District Archaeological Society and Southgate District Civic Voice.

We are constantly monitoring activities in our area, including changes to shops and we are also logging planning applications which are then incorporated into our Streets files. Whetstone in particular is undergoing big changes in the area and we are closely monitoring these.

We are once again indebted to Dorrell who manages to come up with different raffle prizes every month which help to cover our costs.

The Committee were thanked for their hard work and enthusiasm which help to make the Society what it is.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

Nick McKie reported that income (£2786) showed a 13% decrease from the previous year. The £1000 which was a donation from Friends of Finchley Memorial Hospital for the publishing of a history of the North London Hospice has been handed over to Dorrell for her to publish the book. Membership subscriptions accounted for £1536 and donations from members was £479. Sales of books and raffle tickets were slightly up The expenditure of £3367 compared with £3354 the previous year. Cash balance at the end of the year was £3948 down from £4106 the previous year.

6. APPROVAL OF THE TREASURER'S REPORT

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Maria Jordan seconded by Stan Gilks and carried by a show of hands.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

The reappointment of David Berguer as Chairman was proposed by Rosemary Coates and seconded by Stan Gilks and carried by a show of hands.

The Society had received no nominations to join the Committee and it was proposed that the Committee be re-elected *en bloc*.

Proposed by John Baker and Seconded by Helen Hooper. Carried by a show of hands.

8. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Keith Martin who has agreed to act Independent Examiner for 2019.

Proposed by Helen Hooper. Seconded by Jean Smith. Carried by a show of hands.

9. SUBSCRIPTION RATE

Subscription rates were last increased five years ago and since then postage rates, speakers' expenses and printing costs have all risen. It was proposed that the subscription rates for the year 2020-2021 be increased to £10 for a single person and £16 for a couple.

Proposed by Mike Jordan. Seconded by Stanley Gilks. Carried by a show of hands.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

There being no further items, the Chairman declared the nineteenth Annual General Meeting closed (at 8.20pm) and members were thanked for attending.

| FRIERN BARNET & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY | | | | |
|--|---------------|---|----------------------|------------------|
| INCOME and EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for the YEAR to 31 MARCH 2020 | | | | |
| | | 2019-20 | | 2018-19 |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| INCOME | | | | |
| MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS | | 966.00 | | 1,536.00 |
| SALES OF BOOKS and OTHER ITEMS | | 297.00 | | 120.00 |
| SALES OF RAFFLE TICKETS | | 287.00 | | 321.00 |
| ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS & PARTIES | | 370.00 | | 330.00 |
| OTHER INCOME & DONATIONS | | 318.00 | | 479.00 |
| ALLSAINTS' HISTORY CONTRIBUTIONS TO COST | | 500.00 | | - |
| TOTAL INCOME | | | £2,738.00 | £2,786.00 |
| EXPENDITURE | | | | |
| WEBSITE | | 120.00 | | 117.00 |
| ROOM & FACILITIES HIRE | | 1075.00 | | 1,020.00 |
| CATERING & PRIZES | | 616.00 | | 551.00 |
| SPEAKERS' EXPENSES | | 350.00 | | 444.00 |
| PRINTING NEWSLETTER | | 530.00 | | 527.00 |
| STATIONERY & POSTAGE | | 266.00 | | 370.00 |
| PURCHASE OF ARTEFACTS & EQUIPMENT | | - | | 130.00 |
| SUBSCRIPTIONS/DONATIONS/£50 AUDIT COST | | 275.00 | | 208.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | | | £3,232.00 | £3,367.00 |
| DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR | | | -494.00 | -581.00 |
| RECEIVED IN ADVANCE | | | - | 5,000.00 |
| CASH BALANCE at 1 APRIL 2019 | | | 8,367.00 | 3,948.00 |
| CASH BALANCE AT 31 MARCH 2020 | | | £2,873.00 | £8,367.00 |
| The above statement was prepared by Nick McKie, the Society's Treasurer, approved by the Committee and signed | | | | |
| on their behalf by David Berguer, Chairman | | | <i>David Berguer</i> | |
| Dated | 14 April 2020 | David Berguer | | |
| I have examined the above statement & certify that it agrees with the Society's records and documents as shown to me | | | | |
| | | | <i>Keith Martin</i> | |
| Dated | 15 April 2020 | Keith Martin FCA (Independent Examiner) | | |