

Friern Barnet *Newsletter*

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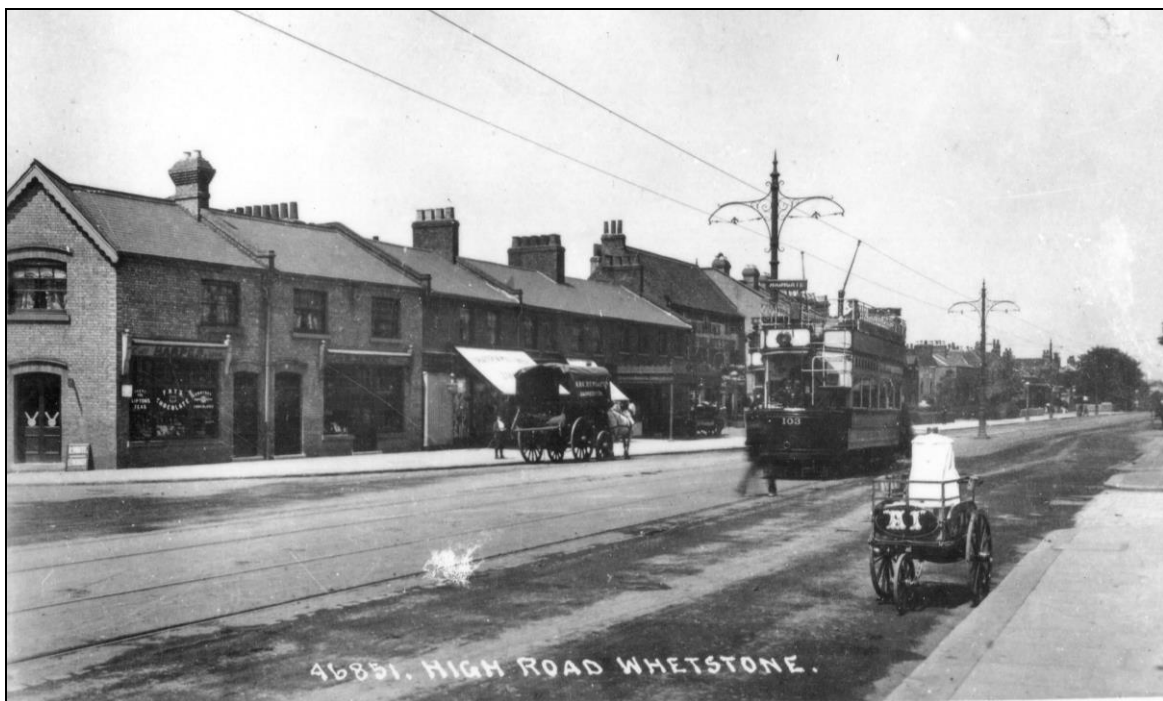
MY LIFE AND TIMES - PART TWO

by Hetty Case

In about the year 1911 the Sunday school was graded into different departments and for many years I helped in the Primary Department. I was one of the first members of the newly-formed Camp Fire Group and spent some happy holidays with them.

My first day school was at Colonel Puget's where the sorting office now stands in Oakleigh Road North. There were only two teachers, Miss Myhaffy and Miss Bartlett and very few children; we paid one penny a week. After a time the school closed and I went to St John's. I did well at school and would have liked to have taken a scholarship, but in those days there were no Government grants.

There was no public transport on the roads and no school meals so we had to walk from Totteridge station to St John's School (opposite the *Swan & Pyramids*) four times a day. The only traffic was the horse-drawn tradesmen's delivery vans; the baker's van, the coal cart and the milk cart with its huge shiny churn. There were also horse-drawn cabs taking people to the station to catch trains to the City.



A typical Edwardian scene in Whetstone: a horse and cart, a tram and a milk cart with a large churn
(Commercial postcard)

The road was perfectly safe and we could bowl our hoops or play ball as we went along. On the way we would meet the horse-drawn Royal Mail van which came along every day at quarter to nine and quarter to two. At the *Swan & Pyramids* was a horse-drawn bus which used to travel from Finchley to Norwood. At that time trams began to make their appearance and they came as far as Whetstone but eventually the service was extended to Barnet. As the years rolled by, we saw motors on the road but they were very slow. I remember standing at the top of Totteridge Lane and seeing King Edward go by in his Daimler car. The car was moving so slowly that we could see him quite plainly – a wonderful looking man with his white beard – raising his top hat in response to our cheers. As traffic increased, so did travel; there was a red bus which ran from Golders Green to St Albans and it was a treat to ride on the top. The fare was sixpence!

We had some good times at school even if the teachers were strict, insisting on our having to attend with clean boots! The classrooms were bare and warmed by a coal fire: we had to learn the multiplication tables and poetry by heart, and being a Church School, we also had to learn the Catechism by heart. The only recreation was drill in the playground – boys and girls separate.

I remember the day we went to school and were told that King Edward VII had died. We were instructed to go home quietly and not come back until after the funeral. It seemed like the end of the world and we all walked home so quietly until the silence was broken by an old gypsy grinding out loud tunes on her barrel organ and calling to us “You’re glad the King is dead so you can have a holiday.” Strange how things like that stay in your mind.

When I left school, I had to stay home to look after my younger brother and sister and in 1914 I was sent away to service. I hated it, but in those days there were not too many jobs for girls. The work was hard and poorly paid, and there was not much free time. There was a shortage of food and even potatoes were scarce.

In 1917 my brother was killed. I felt it very much as we had been brought up together – my other brother and sister being so many years younger, and after leaving home, I had seen very little of them. I kept changing jobs until at last I went to a family who treated me as one of themselves. I was very happy there and they were upset when I left to get married.

The concluding part of Hetty’s memoirs will appear in the next Newsletter.

WOODHOUSE WOES

The following item appears in Friern Barnet Urban District Council Minutes for 11 Jan 1955:

“Land on Woodhouse Road between Woodleigh Avenue and Lyndhurst Avenue. A letter dated 14 December 1954 was submitted from the Secretary of the New Southgate and Friern Barnet Chamber of Commerce stating that the Board of Management of the Chamber has passed a Resolution at a recent meeting deploring the fact that it was proposed to erect flats on the above site, which they regard as being obviously needed as a shopping parade. The letter states that Friern Barnet traders now see their last hope for a main shopping street gone forever. A reply has been sent to the Chamber of Commerce setting out the

history of this matter and explaining the circumstances on which permission of flats on the site was granted.”

The flats were eventually completed in 1958. The developers, Davis Estates, wanted to call the new flats Woodhurst Court but the Council rejected this proposal and settled for Hurstwood Court instead.

It is interesting to speculate what effect a large number of extra shops in Woodhouse Road might have had on the area and it is perhaps surprising that the Council did not consider the option of replicating what had happened immediately opposite in Grand Parade in 1923, where shops with flats overhead were built. Unfortunately, the reply that the Council sent to the Chamber of Commerce does not seem to have survived so we will probably never know their thinking.

THE END OF THE LANE

Our member Lal Hardy sent us the following poem which was written by his grandmother, Mrs G L Dixon, in 1975 when a flyover was being built over the North Circular Road at Colney Hatch Lane:

The end of the lane

The scent of woodsmoke filled the air
And found its way into the bus,
We looked in dismay at the bonfires ablaze
Made of trees which were special to us.
Only mound of earth where the oaks had stood
And the elms and the poplars, too
Their great trunks trimmed now lay in rows
For the saw to cut them through.
The brook will soon be under the road,
And the children's sports field, too,
And the little wild things which live here about
Will be gone – Dear Lord where to?
Is this progress – progress to what?
To the same unending view
Of flyovers and link roads and “easier flow”
For the traffic soaring through?
And places that mark the seasons
With spring green and autumn hue,
Will be harder to find, and recalled with regret
By folks just like me-
And like you.

As work is due to start on improving the severely congested stretch of the A406 between Bounds Green Road and Palmers Green, I wonder if anyone would like to compose a poem about today's North Circular?

1948 AND ALL THAT

by Jenny Coupe

The year 2008 had two anniversaries – the formation of the National Health Service and me starting my nursing career. I had finished a three year pre-nursing course at Hendon Technical College. In those far-off days you could take

an exam at the age of 13 for a three year vocational course and as I had always wanted to be a nurse I thought it was perfect for me.

I applied to Hornsey Central Hospital, the cottage hospital in Park Road, Hornsey and I was taken on as a student nurse, although nowadays I would have to be an auxiliary and could never do any of the treatments then performed with no formal training. That is not as bad as it sounds as in those days all treatment training was done “at Nellie’s elbow.” Nurse training at Hornsey consisted of two years at Hornsey and then two years at either University College Hospital (UCH) or King Edward VII at Windsor. My pay was £52 a year plus my keep and I had one day off a week.

The hospital had three wards, a female ward, Scott Balfour; a male ward, just referred to as “men’s”; and Southwood ward for children. The operating theatre, casualty and out patients were all one department. We worked from 7.30am to 8.30pm with three hours off, either 10am to 1pm, or finish at 6pm. Time off included meal breaks. Night duty was 8pm to 8am, with three nights off in 14 and these could be any time in the 14, so you could work 21 nights without a break and, as a tour of duty was three months, we were permanently tired.

We lived in the nurses’ home, with a home Sister watching over us who was more worried about our morals than our actual wellbeing. Rooms had to be kept tidy – she inspected them daily – and there were no locked doors. I was always in trouble over the so-called untidiness of my room and I wonder what she would think of today’s teenage rooms. We were allowed one late pass a week until 11pm and could sleep out, with permission, before our day off. Night Sister did a round of the nurses’ home at 10.30pm, reaching in and turning off our light; she then locked the front door. This, of course, did not stop us from breaking the rules as most of us could climb the 6ft high gate and the girls on the ground floor opened their windows to let us in. If you were caught it meant a trip to Matron for a telling off which usually consisted of “*what would your mother say if she knew you were out so late?*” and no late passes for a week.

Meals were taken in the dining room with one huge table with Matron at the top and then senior sisters, sisters, staff nurses, student nurses in year order and then me. If I arrived early and was told to sit down before anyone senior to me, they never let me forget it. You ate what was put in front of you – rationing was still in place and we were usually too hungry to do otherwise and naturally we could not leave the table before Matron and, as most of us smoked, we were desperate to get to our rooms and light up.

A day on duty started with ward cleaning. The ward cleaner, part of the ward team, cleaned the floors after we had pulled out all the beds. It was our job to clean the lockers, window sills and bed tables. Beds were pushed back into perfectly straight rows, with wheels turned inwards 40 degrees left or right. Night duties included cooking supper for all the staff and, although officially we were allowed an hour for supper there was nowhere to go so sometimes if it was a fine night we would creep out for a walk. We also had to do the ward mending and pack dressings (gauze and cotton wool) into sterilising drums. Patients were woken at 6am and routine was strictly adhered to: medicine round, nursing treatments, bed making, bed pan rounds and washing all had to be completed by the time the day staff came on duty. The senior nurse had to read the report and then the night staff could escape to our rooms. We were expected to go out for a

walk and to be in our beds by 12 noon and stay there till 5pm, although I don't remember walks as I was usually so tired that I fell into bed and slept all day.

Then the National Health Service came into being. I don't remember the actual event but I do remember that from that date we did not have to pay for breakages. Up till then a syringe was charged at a shilling and a thermometer sixpence with various amounts for pieces of crockery. All breakages had to be taken to the Matron and, with luck, a doctor would take the blame as they did not have to pay.



*The Hospital Management Committee, Surgeons, Doctors, GPs, Matron, Sisters, Staff, Student Nurses, ancillary staff, porters, reception staff – and the surgeon's dog
(Jenny Coupe Collection)*

Although this sounds a miserable sort of life, we really did have a lot of fun. Living in the nurses' home meant we were all in the same boat. Most of us collapsed in the sitting room where there was a radiogram but no television. And then there were the dances. These were held whenever we could think of an excuse and someone would be nominated to ask Matron for permission. Alcohol was not permitted except, for some unknown reason, cider and we spent ages scraping the labels off the bottles! Matron always came in half way through the evening for a cup of tea and thank goodness she did not ask what was in our cups. Night sisters appeared at 10.30pm and the gentlemen were expected to have left by 11pm. The front door was locked behind them and all our lights were out by 11.30pm.

I was given a small radio for my birthday and as I was the only nurse to have one, the girls would gather in my bedroom where we would all sit in the dark

while Night Sister did her round, then we would listen to the Jack Jackson record programme. I only remember two songs “*We have to put boots on Willie*” and the Wiffenpoof song: “*We are poor little lambs who have lost our way.*” The first song has been lost in the mists of time but now and then the Wiffenpoof song will be played and bring back all the memories of Hornsey Central Hospital.

FINCHLEY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

While we are on the subject of hospitals, we are proud to announce that our esteemed Committee member Dorrell Dressekie has finally finished her history of Finchley Memorial Hospital which has been occupying her for over two years. The result is a beautifully printed and produced 80 page book which not only traces the history of the hospital from 1904, when the need for a local cottage hospital was first identified, through its birth in 1908 and ending in 2008 when the centenary was celebrated. The book includes personal reminiscences of local people and anyone who has attended the hospital as a patient or visitor or has worked there will appreciate this record of a much loved and well run local resource. The book is available at our meetings at £10 or at £10.66 by post. The enclosed order form can be used to order this or any of our other publications.

MY MEMORIES

by Ralph Bass

I was born on 3 June 1918 at 77 Gladstone Avenue, Wood Green. I have learned that it was named after the British Prime Minister and the housing estate was built for artisans after the 1899-1902 Boer War. The house itself was owned by the Salvation Army and it had water and drainage services, with gas for lighting and solid fuel for heating. My father had the job of looking after the gas lamps which were lit by matches and needed periodic renewal of the incandescent mantle fittings. I had a small garden for seeds and bulbs.

My father had been in the First World War and had been wounded in the left arm by a sniper apparently aiming for his heart. He worked for Cassels, the printing and book firm near the centre of London to which he travelled by bus, tram or steam train. Our family was comparatively small for the time – my mother and father and my younger sister, May.

Among things I can recall are the crystal set with headphones which meant that only one person could listen to the radio at a time. The programmes for young children were only on for about two hours in the evening and were speech only, no music. The transmitting station was 2LO and programmes were provided by the British Broadcasting Company, later the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). A big new event was the gramophone, which was spring driven and had to be wound up. The 78rpm records were played with steel needles which fed into a concealed acoustic horn.

In those days we did a lot of walking and I can remember going up Lordship Lane and along Station Road past the Barratts sweet factory with its delicious smells and on to Alexandra Palace. Another walk took us from Lordship Lane and via Bounds Green Road to Broomfield Park. Or we would go via Station Road, Alexandra Park Road, and Grosvenor Road to Halliwick Road to where the Coppetts Road estate was being built with huge amounts of red coloured burnt clay which provided a form of ballast which was useful for making pathways. Fortunately my school, Noel Park, was in walking distance from the house.

Our holidays, either a week or two weeks, were spent at the seaside, usually Southend, and we travelled there by train. We always tried to bring home sea shells, seaweed and a bucket of sand. On a less pleasant topic, I can remember having my tonsils and adenoids partially removed which was not a pleasant experience and I was home the same day.

By now we needed a bigger home so my parents negotiated for a 3 bedroom house in Hill Road, part of the Coppetts council estate, which we moved to around 1924. The area was then partly wooded and partly fields. I went to school at what was affectionately known as “tinpot” in St James’s Lane, the name coming from the rain beating on the corrugated iron. By now we had a valve radio with an accumulator and batteries and we played in Halliwick Park and took walks to places like Friary Park.

In 1926 we moved to 5 Everington Road be a bit nearer to the main road and the shops and transport services and I now attended Tollington School, which gave me a good education until I needed to find a job. My sister went to Coldfall School and, although her academic progress was normal, she excelled at sports, especially high jump, and she went on to represent the school in an All-England competition and came second. Tollington used to hold their marathon races in the fields around Friern Barnet. In 1931 I contracted diphtheria and was treated by Dr Albert Simpson who lived at 96 Halliwick Road. I was sent to the Coppetts Wood Isolation Hospital where I had to stay for eight weeks, which included my thirteenth birthday, and I had no access to my family. After recovering I remember going to Friary Park to collect newts and we often used to take picnics there.

Around 1932 my parents made their first house purchase and we all moved to 255 Alexandra Park Road, a three bedroom house which cost them £800 – a lot of money in those days. The library at Muswell Hill had just opened and I borrowed a technical book which shaped my life long career. My first job was at Standard Telephones at New Southgate, in the telephone research laboratory where we were trying to design better telephones with improved quality of voice transmission and reception. As the firm was American based, in 1934 I applied for a job at the Post Office Engineering Department. After passing an entrance examination I was accepted as a youth in training at 12/6d a week. I then went on to study for City and Guilds Certificates.

We hope to publish a second article from Ralph, covering the period 1935 to 1968, when he left London.

DID YOU WORK AT FRIERN HOSPITAL?

by David Berguer

Towards the end of last year I was contacted by a Mr Raphael Stipic who is investigating the life of a remarkable woman, Dorothy Lawrence about whom little is known. Dorothy was born probably in 1888 and, having been abandoned by her mother was adopted by a guardian of the Church of England. She had an ambition to become a journalist, a rare occupation for a woman in the early days of the 20th century. She had a few articles published in *The Times* and at the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 she tried to become a war correspondent.

Having been thwarted in this ambition in 1915 she went to France, managed to acquire a uniform and disguised herself as a man. She then managed to work her way into the Front Line and join the Royal Engineers 179 Tunnelling Company where she survived detection for ten days. She was eventually spotted, was detained in a French convent at St Loos and was court martialled. She was returned to England and wrote a book *Sapper Dorothy Lawrence: The Only English Woman Soldier* in 1919. She lived in Canonbury until 1925 when she claimed that she had been raped by her guardian. In what was almost certainly a cover-up she was declared insane and was committed to Colney Hatch Lunatic Asylum where she remained until her death on 29 August 1964.

Mr Stipic is anxious to talk to anyone who worked at Friern Hospital during the time Dorothy Lawrence was an inmate to see if they have any recollection of her. If you know of anybody who fits the bill, please contact me with their details and I will speak to them and, with their permission, give these to Mr Stipic who hopefully will then be able to shed more light on the only woman soldier to have fought in World War I.

FROM THE ARCHIVES #1

“Correspondence was submitted by Mr C W Baully of ‘Birchington’, Friars Avenue pointing out the difficulty strangers to the district experience in finding Friars Avenue and suggesting that the words “*Leading to Friars Avenue*” be added to the street name plate in Queenswell Avenue. The Highways & Public Works Committee appreciate the difficulty which is experienced in finding roads which lead off main roads but this operates throughout the whole district and if similar action was taken with regard to every street it would lead to considerable expense and probably to some confusion where many streets lead off one. The Committee therefore cannot see their way to accede to Mr Baully’s request.”
(Friern Barnet UDC Minutes 9 Feb 1934)

FROM THE ARCHIVES #2

“The Clerk submitted a letter which had been received from the Secretary of the Cinematograph Association of Great Britain and Ireland with regard to the nuisance caused in cinematograph theatres by stink bombs etc and pointing out their Association had made representations to the Home Office and had submitted a draft bye-law for the approval of the Home Office and asking the Council if they were prepared to approve of the draft bye-law and the Committee recommend that this Council support the action which had been taken by the Association.” *(Friern Barnet UDC Minutes 26 Sep 1930)*

WELLS AND WATER

by John Heathfield

Our local London clay is a gardener’s despair because it is ill-drained and sticky. One reason why development in the area was sparse was the shortage of water and apart from a few streams, people were dependent on wells, which in clay are slow to fill and are muddy.

In big houses the well was outside the back door, in smaller houses wells were shared between three or four cottages. Water was usually raised by a pump – the traditional bucket and windlass was rare and largely a picturesque fantasy. By the mid-1850s a pipe had been fitted to the pump to provide water for a sink in a scullery at the rear of the house near the well. The most menial servant who got stuck with the washing up was the scullion, who worked in the scullery.

Wells could be dangerous. In 1888 Emily Ingram aged 13 was found drowned in the well of her house in Whetstone. It was stated that her parents were away from home for long intervals and she was frequently left alone and her only means of subsistence was the small sums of money sent her at irregular intervals by her parents. An open verdict was recorded.

Water from neighbouring cesspits could easily drain into wells. In September 1873 Samuel Bull of Whetstone was charged with failing to close an insanitary well having been ordered to do so by the Finchley Sanitary Inspector. In December 1879 an outbreak of diphtheria at Lilly Villas in Oakleigh Road was traced to an overflowing cess pool. Dr Bury, of High Road Whetstone, was presented with an illuminated address by Totteridge Vestry in the same year for dealing with an outbreak of cholera at Totteridge. Totteridge School was supplied with water from the Long Pond opposite. Even today some of the large houses in Totteridge still rely on cesspit drainage.

In September 1869 the East Barnet Gas & Water Company began laying mains to supply Whetstone with water. It is hoped that property owners will avail themselves of the opportunity. *“It will be a good investment because cottages with clean water, and so without fever, will let for substantially higher rents.”* It is significant that the main emphasis was on profit for the landowner rather than the health of the cottagers. The mains were extended to Totteridge in 1870.

An interesting offshoot was the ice well. Apart from those in big houses like Copped Hall in Totteridge, they were constructed for fishmonger's shops in Henry Road Barnet and at the High Road in Finchley, Whetstone and Hendon.

EVANGELISM

by Karl Ruge

In June 1940, when World War II was nine months old, I persuaded my employers that Hitler could not be beaten without a personal contribution from me. As I was not liable to be called up because I suffered from the twin impediment of being ten years too old and not yet of British nationality, I volunteered for whichever of the Armed Services would have me.

A sergeant conducted the interview and when he reached *'religion'* on his questionnaire, I remembered the experience of two of my friends from similar backgrounds to my own: one had insisted that he was a Protestant and was persuaded that this was the same as Church of England and meant weekly Church Parade on Sundays, though these had little to do with 'church' and much with spit and polish and subsequent endless inspection. The other friend was determined to avoid this sequence of events and was driven to calling himself 'agnostic' as the only obvious alternative to C of E; the result was that he spent the rest of the wartime peeling spuds.

I stuck to my guns (although, at this stage, I had not yet been issued with any), explained to the sergeant that 'Lutheran' was the form that Protestantism took where I came from. This struck no echo in the bewildered NCO, until I referred to it as the Evangelical Church. "Why didn't you say so straight away?" he retorted with relief. As a result of his enlightenment, I remained an 'Evangelist' throughout my six years in the Army. This exotic entry in my pay-book gave me total freedom to attend (or not attend) any kind of Service on Sunday mornings (which meant attending the Methodist Church in the winter, or walks in the countryside in the summer). Walks were a luxury which King's Regulations, the Army's Bible, did not provide for. In the countryside you either route-marched, heaved heavy equipment 'at the double' or crawled on your belly with branches fixed to your helmet to mislead the unsuspecting enemy on the other side of the Channel: but you never walked.

MISS KIND

by Doreen Williams

Reading the last Newsletter brought back many memories (some happy, some not so happy) of my lessons with Miss Kind. I believe there was another Domestic Science teacher called Miss Cross, but perhaps my memory is playing tricks, as so often happens these days!

I was at Holly Park School from 1947 to 1950 until I passed my Technical exam, and went on to do a commercial course at Hendon Technical College, followed by 10 years at the Pearl Assurance Company, High Holborn, working in the solicitor's department, and then 16 years working in St Albans for a Patent Agent, followed by a part-time job back in a solicitor's office in Hemel Hempstead before leaving when my services were no longer required by the company.

I was in awe of Miss Kind. She was always immaculately dressed, wearing a starched white overall. Her lessons remain with me to this day, and she is thought of every time I iron my husband's handkerchiefs. I remember we had to wash six large handkerchiefs and, at the ironing stage, had to make sure they were ironed corner to corner. What a lesson to learn!

I also remember making raspberry buns, and making a dent in the middle for the jam with (a very clean!) thumb. She is with me when teaching my grand daughters this operation. The boys used to stand at the bottom of the steps from the Domestic Science room for any 'freebies' – my first indication of 'the way to a man's heart is through his stomach'.

Mr Grieves was my headmaster, who I remember clearly, along with other teachers one of whom, Mr Owen Berry, was a formidable gentleman who taught speech training. He was connected with the Incognito Theatre which was situated at the back of the playground. I would appreciate hearing reminiscences of Holly Park School from any other members. Carry on with your good work of producing your Newsletter full of memories.

SHOPS SURVEY

by David Berguer

Our annual survey of the local shops was conducted between July and December last year and the results are shown below, with figures for last year shown as a comparison:

	2007	2008
Restaurants/ Take Aways	104	100
Food shops	26	32
Estate Agents	25	23
Ladies Hairdressers	23	23
Furnishing/Carpets	20	16
Pubs	18	16
CTNs *	17	16
Beauty Salons	15	14
Ladies Wear	15	17
Dry Cleaners/Laundrettes	13	13
DIY/Hardware	13	12
Electrical	11	13
Chemists	11	10
Bookmakers	10	9
Banking/Insurance	9	9
Opticians	9	9
Charity Shops	8	7
Jewellers	7	6
Men's Wear	7	6
Building Societies	6	5
Footwear	6	6
Gent's Hairdressers	6	9
Wines	6	5
Garages/Car Accessories	5	7
Chain Stores/Discount Stores	5	5
Florists	5	5
Health Foods	5	4
Mobile Phones	5	5
Photography	5	4
Post Offices	4	4
Books	3	2
Children's Wear/Toys	3	4
Travel Agents	2	2
Antiques	2	2
Video Hire	1	1
Others	49	45
Shops Vacant	35	43
	539	533

*= Confectioners, Tobacconists, Newsagents

The breakdown by area is as follows:

	2007	2008
Ballards Lane	34	38
Colney Hatch Lane	41	40
Cromwell Road	2	2
Friern Barnet Road	68	63
Friern Bridge Retail Park	11	11
Nether Street	2	2
North Finchley	156	154
Oakleigh Road North	42	44

Oakleigh Road South	9	9
Sydney Road	2	2
Whetstone	105	101
Wilton Road	1	1
Woodhouse Road	66	66

It is worth pointing out that Woolworths was still trading when these surveys were carried out so it is included. The most interesting change since last year is the continuing demise of the traditional English pub; the *Black Bull* closed its doors for the last time on 31 March 2008 and the Bull & Butcher is now *The New Two Butchers Real Music Club*. Pubs have been slowly disappearing over the years. In the last 50 years we have lost the *Swan & Pyramids*; *Swan with 2 Necks*; *Blue Anchor* and *Hand & Flower* (all in Whetstone) and *The Cricketers* at Tally Ho, *The Woodman* in Oakleigh Road; *The Duck* in Friern Barnet Road and *The Royal Oak* in Sydney Road. It is estimated that some 5 pubs are closing every week in Britain, so the decline is not confined to our area. The introduction of smoking bans in pubs is cited as one of the reasons, but another is the demographic change in the UK, with large non-indigenous populations in certain areas who are not familiar with a pub culture, or who are forbidden to drink alcohol.

Familiar names to disappear from North Finchley during the year were Roseby's (in liquidation) and Budgens and Marks & Spencer while MFI (in liquidation) closed its store in Friern Bridge Retail Park. The current global economic downturn will doubtless have far reaching implications for other retailers, and the upgrading of Tesco in Colney Hatch Lane to a Tesco Extra, with a much enlarged store and wider product range, does not augur well for smaller businesses in the area.

In the UK as a whole it is estimated that the number of empty shops will increase by some 15% and the prospects of these being taken over by other businesses is very unlikely in a harsh economic environment. So, If we value our local small shops we need to support them as much as possible otherwise our High Streets could become areas of desolation with boarded up shops, graffiti and increased crime and vandalism.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

A reminder that your subscriptions expire on 31 March 2009. If you wish to renew for another year (April 2009 – March 2010), and we sincerely hope you do, please complete the Membership Form with this Newsletter. The subscription rate remains the same - £6 for a single person, £10 for a couple.

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

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