

Friern Barnet *Newsletter*

Published by Friern Barnet & District Local History Society

Issue Number 38

September 2009

WHEN THE CIRCUS CAME TO TOWN

by David Berguer

In September 1955 the Bobby Roberts Circus came to Whetstone. The circus was sited on Finchley Field, opposite Totteridge & Whetstone Station and was there for just two days, Monday 19th and Tuesday 20th, with two shows on each day. Prices ranged from 2/- to 7/6d and amongst the attractions were baby elephants, polar bears and black bears, sea-lions, lions and lionesses, Arabian stallions, performing dogs, an “unrideable mule”, as well as acrobats, clowns and tight rope walkers.

Bobby Roberts was born in 1912, the son of Paul Otto, a clown and tumbler, and Mary Fossett, sister of Sir Robert Fossett who was one of England’s leading circus owners. Bobby spent all his life in the circus business and was a skilled animal trainer. His son, Bobby junior, first performed in the ring at the age of 4 and did juggling, acrobatics, high wire, horse riding and sharp shooting. The Bobby Roberts Circus continues to this day, although there are no plans to visit Whetstone and parade elephants in Totteridge Lane!



*Bobby Roberts junior, aged 13, leads the elephants from the High Road into Totteridge Lane on Sunday 13 September. Hammersley's the fishmongers and Easton's Café are in the background
(Ron Kingdon Collection)*

HOW FRIERN BARNET DEALT WITH HITLER

by John Heathfield

The summer of 1940 was fraught with confusion. The British army had withdrawn from Dunkirk saving some 330,000 men but leaving most of its equipment behind. A War Office document dated June 1940 lists the armaments available to defend the British Isles:

2 pounder anti-tank guns	34
Bren guns with 1,250 rounds each	2,300
2 inch and 3 inch mortars	very few
Light tanks	395
Medium tanks	72
Heavy tanks	33
Field guns with 200 rounds per gun	420
Medium and heavy guns	163

Churchill wrote to Roosevelt: *"We expect to be attacked here ourselves by parachute and airborne troops in the near future."* Churchill's idea was to form the Local Defence Volunteers, later called the Home Guard.

The 334 (Barnet) Searchlight Regiment which formed part of the outer London ring was told on 12 May 1940: *"Enemy parachutists will use every form of disguise, military or civilian, to escape attention."* On 8 September: *"Invasion imminent, probably within 12 hours. The enemy will have armoured cars and tanks. Every man will go into the woods and cut himself a stout cudgel."* The Middlesex Regiment stationed at Sweets Nursery formed a rapid reaction platoon of 3 officers and 50 men. The officers had six rounds each and the men 10 rounds – not bad against the German army!

Against this background of confusion, plans were made to defend London. Records are sparse and hurriedly kept. Anti-tank ditches and roadblocks were constructed. Some remain to this day near Northaw and Potters Bar. A theoretical defence line called the Green Line was constructed along the North Circular Road – it was theoretical in that it only existed as a line on a map. In reality a strong point was constructed using the railway tunnel at Pinkham Way. This was supplemented by concrete-filled oil drums, which could be tipped onto their sides and rolled about and then stood on end to form a very effective barrier, particularly when covered by machine gun fire. At one time there were still some left in the Glebelands.

One exercise was held on a Sunday morning in which the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards attacked east along the North Circular and were opposed by the local Home Guard (No 11 Company of the 28th Middlesex Battalion), some of whom came from the Standard and were given time off with pay. At lunchtime both sides were given cups of tea by local housewives and one wonders how the tea ration stretched, though soldiers are noted for their efficiency as scroungers.

A pamphlet called *"If the Invader Comes"* was published in June 1940. It said *"If the Germans come the order is to remain where you are. Stay put. Do not believe rumours. Do not spread them. Report anything suspicious. Do not give any German anything. Be ready to help the military, but do not block any roads"*

unless ordered. In factories and shops, organise a system by which sudden attack can be resisted. Think always of your country before yourself."

Cyril Fletcher's dad, who was Town Clerk of Friern Barnet, was made Anti-Invasion Officer and he had to prepare a list of all shovels, picks and wheelbarrows that might be useful to the military. Under martial law, these would be requisitioned and the civilian and the civilian population put to work building defences. Anyone disobeying an order from the local military commander could be shot but there is no evidence that this ever happened.

Author's note: The research notes for this article were part of the preparation for the book *Barnet at War*. They were lost when my computer crashed. I thought it best to write what I could before my mind crashes as well.

FRIERN BARNET IN WARTIME

by David Berguer

During the course of my weekly trawl through the Friern Barnet UDC Council Minutes I came across a number of interesting entries during the period 1939-45. I present these as they appeared in the minutes, but they do give a feeling of how the area was affected in those dark days.

AIR RAID SHELTERS

15 Jan 1942. 900 Morrison indoor shelters were received and 812 distributed. A further 300 will be delivered, however there is small demand and the authorities have been advised that future supplies should be sent to areas where demand is higher

AMBULANCE STATIONS

- Station no 1. 'Burrington', 33 Oakleigh Avenue
- Station no 2. St Peters Church Hall

BRITISH RESTAURANT

No 6 Friern Barnet Lane (Church Hall). Middlesex County Council lifted requisition of the premises for civil defence purposes on 31 March 1942 and they were re-requisitioned for a British Restaurant on 1 April 1942. A full meal for adults cost 1/3d and for children, 8d. The menu was: Soup 2d, Meat and veg 8d, Sweet 3d, Bread ½d, Tea 1½d. The WVS provided helpers each day

No 6 Friern Barnet Lane (Church Hall). 23 Jul 1942. Incognito Theatre were refused permission to use the Church Hall for 3 evenings as the General Purposes Committee felt that such a letting would cause much interference with the running of the British Restaurant

FIRST AID DEPOTS

- No 1. County Council Infants School, Oakleigh Road North
- No 2. Church Hall, Friern Barnet Lane
- No 3. Holly Park Infants School
- No 4. Palmsville Garage, Colney Hatch Lane

FIRST AID POSTS

- Post no 1. All Saints Church
- Post no 2. Holly Park Clinic

PUBLIC SHELTERS

- Albion Avenue, St Peter-le-Poer. 27 Jun 1940. Shelter for 210 people
- Colney Hatch Lane. 27 Jun 1940. On vacant land junction of Sydney Road

- 35 Friern Barnet Road, Dean's Bakery. 27 Jun 1940. Shelter for 70 people in rear basement
- 105 Friern Barnet Road, Deans Bakery. 27 Jun 1940. Shelter for 210 people in rear basement
- Friern Barnet Road. 27 Jun 1940. Friern Barnet Road near railway
- Friern Barnet Road. 27 Jun 1940. Near Mental Hospital gates and possibly in grounds
- Great North Road. 27 Jun 1940. In wide footway between Chandos Avenue and Buckingham Avenue
- 1328 High Road. 27 Jun 1940. Shelter for 124 people
- Oakleigh Park Station. 27 Jun 1940. In close proximity to Station
- 6 Halliwick Court Parade, Woodhouse Road. 11 Jan 1940. Shelter for 150 people
- Woodhouse Road. 27 Jun 1940. On island site between shopping road and main road near Ashurst Road

WARDENS' POSTS

- 25 May 1939. Warden's posts constructed of 12 inch reinforced concrete walls with 6 inch reinforced concrete roof. Size not less than 8' x 6' x 8' high and to include a telephone
- Albion Road. 27 Jul 1939. Post no 16. New building, spare ground near Scout Hut at rear of St Peter-le-Poer Church. Warden Rev A S Taylor, St Peters Vicarage, Colney Hatch Lane, N10
- No 27 Athenaeum Road. 22 Jul 1939. Post no 3. A new building on piece of land in Athenaeum Road at the side of no 27. Warden H G Partridge, 70 Chandos Avenue, N20
- No 23 Buckingham Avenue. 22 Jul 1939. Post no 1. A new building in the garden of no 23, corner of Langton Avenue and Buckingham Avenue. Warden W H Tangye,
- No 28 Langton Avenue, N20
- Church Crescent. 22 Jul 1939. Post no 7. New building on the verge, corner of Church Crescent and St James Avenue. Warden L W McLane,
- No 65 Manor Drive, N20
- No 133 Colney Hatch Lane. 22 Jan 1942. This was used by the WVS
- No 272 Colney Hatch Lane. 27 Jul 1939. Post no 13. Wardens post. New building on The Hermitage ground, adjoining garden wall. Warden L W Bright, 25 Friern Barnet Lane, N11
- Ferrand Park (now known as Bellevue Road) 22 Jul 1939. Post no 14. New building, entrance of Holly Park Infant School. Warden W S Fairservice,
- 36 Lyndhurst Avenue, N12
- Friary Road. 22 Jul 1939. Post no 9. New building entrance to Ravenscourt Tennis Club, adjoining North Middlesex Golf Club. Warden J J Kitts, 56 Friary Road, N12
- Friern Barnet Lane. 22 Jul 1939. Post no 10. New building, corner of Friary Park, entrance in Friern Barnet Lane. Warden T W B Cornell, 58 Friern Barnet Lane, N11
- Friern Barnet Lane. 22 Jul 1939. New building, on grass verge opposite Goldsmith Road
- No 15 Friern Barnet Road. 27 Jul 1939. J F Milne, ARP Warden at Post no 15 lived here
- No 246 Friern Barnet Lane. 27 Jul 1939. Post no 4. This was the ARP headquarters during the War. Commander Thurlow lived here (*The Front Line. Friern Barnet Civil Defence Magazine. Mar 1941*) Warden P M S Farrington
- Manor Drive. 22 Jul 1939. Post no 8. New building in corner of spare land belonging to the Methodist Church. Warden W E C Baugh, 43 Manor Court, York Way, N20

- 4 Sep 1941. A Wardens' Post is situated in Myddelton Park
- 22 Jul 1939. Post no 2. A new building on the verge at junction of Oakleigh Park North and Oakleigh Park South. Warden P R Joyce, 35 Oakleigh Park North, N20
- No 2 Oakleigh Park South. 22 Jul 1939. Post no 6. New building in the garden of Oakleigh Park South. Warden T G Legg, 78 Pollard Road, N20
- Oakleigh Road North. 22 Jul 1939. Post no 5. A new building on the piece of land on the Council Estate at the back of the houses facing Oakleigh Road North, entrance from Oakleigh Road North by a passageway. Warden E W Barstow, 13 Loring Road, N20
- Oakleigh Road South. 27 Jul 1939. Post no 15. New building at the New Southgate Social Club, corner of Oakleigh Road South and Carlisle Place. Warden J F Milne, 25 Friern Barnet Road, N11
- Sydney Road. 27 Jul 1939.
- Post no 17. Caretaker's storeroom in Hollickwood Council School. Blast and splinter protection to be provided. Warden L T Hawes, 1 Wilton Court, Wilton Road, N10
- Warnham Road. 22 Jul 1939. Post no 12. New building in corner of Woodhouse Allotment Ltd, at the junction of Warnham Road and Lewes Road. Warden E Draper, 27 Hemington Avenue, N11

WAR DAMAGED HOUSES

- No 96 Ashurst Road. 13 Nov 1945. Application approved for war damaged house to be re-erected
- No 36 Athenaeum Road. 8 Jun 1944. Planning application for private air raid shelter
- No 83 Athenaeum Road. 8 Sep 1949. Application approved for rebuilding war-destroyed house and garage
- The Avenue. 24 Jul 1941. Houses reported as being damaged by enemy action
- No 8 Bramber Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 14 Bramber Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- Nos 1-11a Bramber Road. 15 Nov 1945 & 14 Mar 1946. Application approved for war damaged house to be re-erected
- Nos 2-14 Bramber Road. 15 Nov 1945 & 14 Mar 1946. Application approved for war damaged house to be re-erected
- Nos 35 & 37 Church Way. 13 Dec 1945. Application approved rebuilding war damaged houses
- No 37 Church Way. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 39 Church Way. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 39 Church Way. 13 Jun 1946 & 19 Jan 1947. Application approved for detached house to replace bomb-damaged property
- No 39 Church Way. 19 Jan 1947. Application approved for house to replace bomb-damaged property
- Friary Road. 19 Sep 1941. Damage to sewers was reported
- No 39 Friern Barnet Road. 9 Sep 1943. Listed as a dangerous structure due to war damage
- No 112 Friern Park (Bonvenuto). 16 Mar 1943. Application approved for structural repairs
- Hampden Road, junction of Sydney Road. 15 May 1947. Compulsory purchase of war damaged properties
- No 9 Holmesdale Road. 5 Sep 1946. Application approved for repairs to war-damaged house

- Nos 49, 51, 53 & 55 Lewes Road. 18 Oct 1945. Application approved for re-erection of war damaged houses)
- No 53 Lewes Road. 20 Sep 1945. Application approved for war destroyed house to be rebuilt erection of permanent garage
- No 73 Oakleigh Avenue. 9 Dec 1948 & 8 Sep 1949. Application approved for rebuilding war-destroyed house
- No 75 Oakleigh Avenue. 10 Mar 1944. Application approved for structural repairs
- No 75 Oakleigh Avenue. 1 Jun 1942. Application approved for rebuilding of property damaged by enemy action
- No 31 Oakleigh Park South. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- Chelwood, Oakleigh Road North. 23 Jul 1942. This house was occupied by the ATC
- No 36 Oakleigh Road North. 10 Apr 1941. Vacated due to war damage No 38 Oakleigh Road North. 10 Apr 1941. Vacated due to war
- No 40 Oakleigh Road North. 10 Apr 1941. Vacated due to war damage
- No 40 Queens Avenue. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 42 Queens Avenue. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 46. Queens Avenue. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- Nos 40, 42, 44 & 46 Queens Avenue. 18 Oct 1945. Application approved for war damaged houses to be re-erected
- Ravensdale Avenue. 19 Sep 1941. Damage to sewers was reported
- Nos 7, 8 & 13 Russell Gardens. 3 Oct 1946. Application approved for rebuilding war damaged council houses
- Nos 1- 7 Russell Lane. 3 Oct 1946. Application approved for rebuilding war damaged council houses
- Nos 9, 9a, 10, 10a, 11 & 12 Russell Gardens. 3 Oct 1946. Application approved for rebuilding war damaged council houses
- Nos 5-7 Simmons Way. 3 Oct 1946. Application approved for rebuilding war damaged council houses
- Stanhope Road. 24 Jul 1941. Houses reported as being damaged by enemy action
- No 236-236a Sydney Road. 14 Mar 1946. These houses were built in 1935 and demolished by enemy action in 1945
- Valdivia. Temple Avenue. 20 Jan 1944. Application approved for garage conversion into air-raid shelter
- No 71 Torrington Park. 24 Sep 1942. The Engineer & Surveyor reported that he had been notified by the War Damage Commission that they regard 71 Torrington Park as a total loss and the Committee recommend that in pursuance of the Regulation 50 of the Defence Regulations the work of demolition be commenced forthwith under the supervision of the Engineer & Surveyor
- No 71 Torrington Park. 9 Oct 1947. Application approved for rebuilding of demolished property
- No 124 Torrington Park. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 124 Torrington Park. 9 Oct 1947. Application approved for rebuilding house
- No 23 Valley Avenue. 16 Sep 1943. Application approved for conversion of garage to air-raid shelter
- No 53 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 54 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation

- No 55 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 53 Wilton Road. 8 Jul 1943. Reference to no 53 being a bomb site
- No 57 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 58 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 59 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 60 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 61 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 62 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 66 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 68 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation)
- No 70 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation)
- No 72 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation
- No 76 Wilton Road. 13 May 1948. Application approved to rebuild war-destroyed house as 2 self-contained flats
- No 78 Wilton Road. 9 Oct 1941. Requisition of garden of demolished house for cultivation

If you have anything to add, or if you have any wartime reminiscences you would like to share with us, please do let me know. You can contact me on 020 8368 8314, on friernbarnethistory@hotmail.co.uk or at 46 Raleigh Drive, Whetstone, N20 0UU.

500 YEARS OF HISTORY ONLINE

by David Berguer

London Metropolitan Archives and the Guildhall Library Manuscripts Section are working in conjunction with the website ancestry.co.uk to launch a large number of documents online. These include:

- Parish records – records from more than 10,000 Greater London parish registers of baptisms, marriages and burials dating from the 1530s to the 20th Century
- Poor Law documents – relating to the administration of poor relief, including workhouse registers from 1834 onwards
- London school admissions – records from 843 individual London schools dating from the early Victorian times through to 1911, providing admissions and personal details for millions of London students

It is anticipated that the full digitisation and indexing program will include:

- Parish baptisms, marriages and burials
- Bishops transcripts
- Parish poor law records
- Boards of Guardians records
- Diocesan marriage bonds and allegations
- Non-conformist baptisms, marriages and burials

- School admission and discharge registers
- Electoral registers, overseers returns and poll books
- Land tax records
- Wills
- City of London Freedoms

The archive will eventually contain some 77 million names and will be a useful addition to the ancestry.co.uk website which is already very popular with people researching their family histories. Although most users have to pay for accessing its data, fortunately residents of Barnet who hold library tickets can access it free of charge at any library in the Borough. Because of the demand, it is necessary to book an appointment first with your local library. The website can also be accessed from Barnet Local Studies and Archives, 80 Daws Lane, Mill Hill NW7 7SL. Again, it will be necessary to book an appointment first (020 8359 3960).

AGM

At our Annual General Meeting on 27 May the Committee were re-elected but happily with the addition of Pat Cleland, who had served on the original committee when the Society was first formed. Our treasurer, Mel Hooper, presented a healthy balance sheet for the year ending 31 March 2009 and a copy of this is enclosed with this Newsletter for those of you unable to attend the meeting. The meeting agreed a small increase in subscription fees from 1 April 2010, when the rates will be £7 for a single person and £12 for a couple. The meeting was followed by the first of our annual John Donovan Memorial Lectures which will coincide with AGMs in future. The subject was the RAF Museum and it was excellently presented by David Keen from the Museum.

OUR FIRST SCHOOL

By John Phillpot

This year we have a Friern Barnet bicentenary to celebrate. On the 28 July 1809, certain "Gentlemen of Fryern Barnet" met in the Vestry Room of the parish church. They resolved unanimously "*that here be a Charity School established for the Education of a limited number of the Children of the Poor living in the Parish*".

The chairman of the meeting was John Holdsworth, churchwarden. Among the other four present was the Revd Abel Lendon, who had come to the parish the previous year, and who was to remain until his death in 1846, serving seven years as curate followed by thirty-one years as rector. These five formed themselves into a committee of management of the school, their first task to call on the parishioners of Friern Barnet, "to solicit their support and subscriptions". The sum raised, £51 1s, "*greatly exceeded expectations*", enabling the committee, meeting again just over a week later, to establish the number of pupils as ten girls and ten boys, the girls to be aged from six to thirteen years, the boys from five to nine. At that second meeting, they also appointed the first school mistress, Mrs Earpe, a resident of the Almshouses, and fixed her salary at twelve guineas per annum. (Three years later, Mrs Earpe is still the school mistress, and "*taking into consideration the state of their finances and the great attention and merit of Mrs Earpe*", they raise her salary to eighteen pounds per annum. She remained the school mistress until 1824). The school is to be held in a room of the Almshouses.

The school accounts list forty eight annual subscribers in the first year, and some additional initial donations. Most subscriptions are of one guinea. The committee members give two guineas each (and their wives each another guinea). The Rector, John Jeffreys, also subscribes two guineas; Richard Down Esq of Halliwick Manor, five guineas, with further sums from his wife and mother-in-law; and John Bacon Esq of Friern House, five guineas. There is a generous, if puzzling, donation of ten guineas from the Deacon and Elders of the Dutch Church. John Holdsworth tells the committee that this is "*from his recommendation*"; perhaps we may surmise that it arose from a business connection of his in London. Subscribers in the following years include George Byng M.P.; John Miles, who afterwards gave the land for the school (St James's) which from 1853 took forward the work of the Charity School, and who also founded All Saints' Church and School; George Smith, a later owner of Halliwick Manor; and his son George Knights Smith, who was to give the land on which St John's Church is built.

At its first meeting, the committee had decided upon the regulations for the support and management of the school; it must have been a long session; yet, even so, it was found necessary to add more rules subsequently. The children were to be brought up in the principles of the established church and taught their moral and religious duties; they were to be taught to show respect to their Superiors in general and their Benefactors in particular. In addition the girls were to be instructed in reading and sewing, the boys in reading. Such children as were capable were to be examined in the Catechism by the clergyman during Lent.

Morning school was to be from 9 to 12, afternoon school 2 to 5 in the summer, to 4 in the winter. Thursdays and Saturdays were to be half holidays. There were to be two weeks holiday at Christmas and two weeks in the haymaking season. On Sundays the children were to meet at the school at 10 o'clock in the morning, 2.30 in the afternoon and (in the summer only) at 6 o'clock in the evening, and walk, accompanied by their mistress, from the school to the church in a decent and quiet manner. During the holidays; they were required to attend church only twice, morning and evening. They were not to be permitted to play about the village on Sundays.

The children were to be sent to school washed and combed. Moreover, the girls were to be clothed; a rule later amended: "*the boys be clothed also*". The school accounts provide illumination: we find expenditure on providing free clothes for the children. The first year, £19 is spent on clothing: material and the making of dresses for the girls, girls' cloaks, boys' clothes, hats, stockings and shoes. There is similar expenditure in subsequent years, but by the 1820's it has become reduced to the provision of aprons.

The school opened on the 21 August, just three weeks after the five men met and resolved that it should be set up. To obtain the first intake, a notice was read out in church on Sunday, inviting parents "*desirous that their children receive the benefit of the school*" to apply at the vestry in the evening of a day specified. As a result, a list of ten girls and ten boys was drawn up; it is not recorded how many applied, and whether any selection process was necessary. Subsequent admissions were to be on the recommendation of one of the subscribers; when a vacancy occurred, the next subscriber (taken in alphabetical order) would be asked to nominate a child.

In those days children were not universally appreciative of the education offered, nor were parents unfailingly cooperative with the school. Less than eight months after the school opened, we have the first miscreants: William and Mary Jarvis would be astonished that a record of their misdemeanour would survive two centuries. They had been very irregular in attendance and their parents "had returned very unbecoming answers to the School Mistress". The management committee showed considerable forbearance in dealing with the matter. The parents were ordered to attend the meeting of the committee after morning service on the following Sunday; they did not appear. A written notice was sent: unless they attended the next meeting their children would be dismissed. Again, neither parent came, but the committee, unwilling that the children should be deprived of their education because of the conduct of their parents, made a third attempt, sadly to no avail; William and Mary were the first (but not the last) to be dismissed from the school.

There are other instances where the authorities show sensitivity in applying the rules. On one occasion, a vacancy having occurred, they ask the subscriber next due to nominate a replacement to forgo his turn, so that they can admit a boy who is an orphan, supported by the parish and living with a resident of the almshouses. Income is received for the sewing work done by the girls, and, according to the regulations, the money received is to be divided between the girls, the mistress and the charity; however, a meeting of subscribers resolves that this last share be given up and divided between mistress and children as an encouragement, with three girls, who have been particularly regular, given a larger share. Another example: the committee considers the withdrawal of two children from the school by their parents; the reasons are accepted, and it is resolved that they be allowed to keep the clothes that had been provided.

Some of the founders and subscribers have their memorials in the Parish Church and in the churchyard. Abel Lendon's grave lies close to the east wall of the church; the Smith family grave is the large railed one closer to Friary Road; the graves of John Bacon and Richard Down are near the path leading to the south door. Richard Down also has a memorial inside the church, as does Thomas Lermite, one of the original founding committee, who served as treasurer of the charity from 1812 to 1824.

Among the original twenty pupils, we find in later years' records census returns of James Butt, married, living in High Road, Whetstone, and working as a harness maker; of the others we find no certain trace. Probably a number of the pupils are also buried in our churchyard, but, if they ever had memorials, they are long decayed; their names survive preserved in the Charity School Minute Book entry of 19 August 1809.

BAWTRY ROAD

by John Neal

In the course of researching my family history, I had a look at the Census for 1891 and came across some interesting data for Bawtry Road, where my family lived. Bawtry Road was then a short cul-de-sac surrounded by fields and nurseries.

In 1891 there were 21 houses in the road and the numbers ran up one side of the road and continued down the other side. When the new houses at the end of the

cul-de-sac were built in the 1930s all the houses were renumbered in the modern style, with odd numbers on one side and evens the other. There were 133 people listed on the Census which meant that each house had an average of 6.33 occupants. Three houses had no less than 11 persons living in them and, in contrast, there was only one house that had a single occupant, a man of 60.

There were 24 married couples in the street and between them they had 70 children aged 3 months to 18 years and 25 of these children were under 5 years old. 21 were described as “scholars”. There were only 4 people aged 60 and over and even allowing for shorter life expectancy in those days this figure does seem on the low side. Only 6 of the married couples were born in the same county as each other. There were 10 lodgers in the street, all working and aged from 17 to 46.

As far as employment went, none of the men were unemployed and none of the wives were shown with profession or occupation. Thirteen men worked on the railway as engine drivers, plate layers, tunnel miners or labourers. 4 worked as lunatic attendants (probably at the Asylum in Friern Barnet Road) and 3 were police constables.

These figures help to paint a picture of the street. Men would go off to work probably early in the morning and would return in the evening. Meanwhile their wives would be looking after the children at home and doing household chores, probably stopping for a chat with the neighbours while the younger children played in the street. This leaves many questions unanswered – who owned the houses and how much rent was paid? What were the wages of these residents? Where did the children go to school? Where did the families buy their food and clothing? How many went to church and where did they worship? Did any households keep animals? How did the families deal with illness and injuries? Perhaps we shall never know, but at least a study of the Census has given a glimpse of life in Friern Barnet 118 years ago.

FRIERN BARNET SUMMER SHOW

Once again we were blessed with fine weather over the weekend of the Summer Show, 22nd and 23rd August. Our stall was packed with a huge variety of second-hand items, many of them kindly donated by yourselves and we managed to sell a good proportion of them to eager visitors to the Show.

The only downside to the weekend was a very high wind that suddenly sprung up on Sunday afternoon which caused damage to our large gazebo and which resulted in us having to hurriedly dismantle it, helped by some customers and passers-by. As soon as we had done this the wind died away and we were left toiling in the boiling sun, but it was all worthwhile. In fact, our takings totalled £489.65 over the two days – a new record, beating last year’s total by £72.15 and a welcome addition to our funds. A huge thank you to all the Committee for their hard work and to those of you who paid us a visit.

For next year’s show, which will be in the centenary year of the Park, we will be concentrating on producing displays on the history of the Park and the surrounding area and of the Edwardian era in general. We plan to hold this inside one of the large marquees which, we are assured, are virtually windproof! We look forward to seeing you there.

FRIERN BARNET TOWN HALL

We have now produced a new addition to our Brief History series of publications. David Berguer has written a 16 page history of Friern Barnet Town Hall which also includes some of your memories of Friern Barnet's most outstanding building, now thankfully preserved for future generations to admire.

If you would like a copy of *Friern Barnet Town Hall: A Brief History* please email or telephone us. The price is £1.50 plus 66p for postage and packing, or you can pick one up at our meetings.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Friern Barnet UDC Minutes 11 Nov 1937

"The Committee have received a letter from a resident in Friern Barnet Lane with regard to the confliction of opinion which seems to exist as to the correct name of this road and asking if the Council will place notice boards in this road bearing the words "Friern Barnet Lane" and underneath, the words "Friern Lane". The Committee would point out that the correct name of the Road is "Friern Barnet Lane", although for some years it was incorrectly described as "Friern Lane". The Committee, whilst recommending the erection of further signs in the Lane bearing the words "Friern Barnet Lane", cannot recommend the inclusion of the words "Friern Lane" as this might lead to possible doubt as to which is the correct name."

Footnote: The Minute books of the Council always referred to the road as "Friern Lane" until 1930, after which the name was changed to "Friern Barnet Lane".

OUR NEW PRESIDENT

Since the sad death of our founder and President, John Donovan, we have had nobody to fill his shoes. The Committee decided that the post needed to be filled and there was only one name that sprung to mind – the noted local historian, author, contributor to the Newsletter and erudite and witty speaker, John Heathfield. We approached John and he declared himself delighted and honoured to be asked, although the delight and honour were ours, for there are few people as knowledgeable about the history of our area as John.

John's career in education, as teacher, headmaster and Inspector of Schools means that he will be strict but kind where necessary and will ensure that our standards are maintained or, hopefully, improved. Welcome aboard, John!

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

Chairman: David Berguer
46 Raleigh Drive, N20 0UU
Phone 020 8368 8314

Website: www.friernbarnethistory.org.uk

email: friernbarnethistory@hotmail.co.uk

