

# Friern Barnet *Newsletter*

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## LANDER'S CORNER

*by David Berguer*

The area where Friern Barnet Road, Bowes Road, Waterfall Road, Oakleigh Road South and Brunswick Park Road meet is officially called Betstyle Circus but it was always known locally as Lander's Corner.

In the 1880s Andrew King Lander started his monumental masons business which was situated at number 1 Friern Barnet Road.

Derek Spurgeon kindly gave us an interesting story concerning Lander's:

"An aunt of mine had been going out with one of the Lander's sons who went off to Australia. She followed him on her own at the age of 21; in 1924 it was unusual for a girl to travel so far on her own. They subsequently married and ran a sheep station in Queensland before settling down in Geelong, just outside Melbourne.

When Joan and I visited her for the first time in 1991 she said that she had hated every day that she had lived in Australia. When we asked why she stayed she said that the last thing her mother said to her was: "You will be back, my girl!"



*In this photo taken in 1971 Landers yard is on the right, just below the billboard.*

After some 67 years in Australia she still had a cut glass English accent and was known for carrying a white tablecloth and silver tea service in her car when she took visitors out for a picnic.

She finally died at the age of 99, still with the accent and still hating Australia.”

## PRONOUNCIATION

*by David Berguer*

Anyone who travels on local buses up and down High Road Whetstone will have been surprised to find that the nice lady from Transport for London who made the recorded announcements of the stops insists on pronouncing Athenaeum Road as “Atheneeeum” rather than “Atherneum”. I feel like shouting out every time “No it’s not!”



The other annoying thing is the number of people who pronounce Friern as “Free-ern” instead of “Fry-ern”. There is very good evidence for the latter pronunciation as seen in old maps:

<i>Spelling</i>	<i>Map source</i>
Fryarn Barnet	John Norden (1548-1652)
Fryarn Barnet	Jan Jansson (1588-1664)
fryarn Barnett	John Blake (1596-1673)
Friarn Barnett	John Seller (1660-1697)
Fryarn Barnet	Richard Blome (1660-1705)
Friarn Barnet	Robert Norden (d 1703)
Fryern Barnet	Thomas Moore (1784-1851)
Fryan Barnet	Anthony Zatta (1779)
Fryarn Barnet	John C Cary (1775-1835)
Fryern Barnet	Sydney Hall (1818-1860)

In Pauline Ashbridge’s excellent book *The Fields of Friern* she quotes from a number of historical documents, all pointing to the fact that early pronunciations reflected the presence of the Knights Hospitallers or even Cistercians in the area:

Ffreren Barnet	Court Roll 1495
Frerenbarnet	1519
Friarn Wood	1529
Friern Barnet	1535

Frerenbarnett	1536
Frerernbarnett	Register of St John of Jerusalem 1536
Friarne House	1586
Fryarn Barnet	1746

So, spellings varied (this was not uncommon in times when few people were educated) but it is difficult to see why, if it was indeed pronounced “free-ern”, the spellings did not reflect this.

Incidentally, the nice lady from Transport for London at least manages to pronounce Friern Barnet Lane correctly, (Fry-ern) so she can’t be all bad!

I wonder if there are any other areas in London which have so many different spellings of their name?

### **WHATEVER HAPPENED TO OLD.....?**

*by Yvonne Ruge*

My sisters and I all went to Woodhouse Grammar School (as was) – did you too? Or did you go to another of the local schools but also find yourself, like me, occasionally wondering “whatever happened to....?” and regretting having lost contact over the years?

Last summer one of our iconic teachers (of Art, Eileen Martin, Bunny’s wife) died just short of her century, and there were only two of us Old Woodhouseians at her touching and revealing funeral. It seemed a pity.

In 1994 our Percy Reboul and John Heathfield produced a brilliant history of the School, but only up to 1949. Might this be a good time (since there are still several of us around – but not for ever, not for ever!) to mobilise an appendix both for the Society’s archive and for our own interest and enjoyment?

If you are an Old Wood and at least mildly interested I am very open to co-ordinating a contacts list and, if there is enough response, a nostalgic get-together. Email me your Woodhouse dates, also your contact details if you are happy with being circulated, to [yvonneruge@live.co.uk](mailto:yvonneruge@live.co.uk) – but I am also at 133 Friern Barnet Lane N20 0XZ and on 020 8445 4967. I look forward to hearing from you.

### **THE BACONS OF FRIERN HOUSE**

*by John Philpott*

To the left of the path approaching the south porch of St James’s Church is a large tomb with the inscription:

JOHN BACON, Esqre of Friern House  
Departed this life Feby 26<sup>th</sup> 1816, Aged 78

It stands near the end where an avenue of elms once lead from his house to the church door. Within the church is his funerary hatchement, central above the chancel arch.

It seems likely that John Bacon was of the family descended from Sir Nicholas Bacon (1561-1626), Queen Elizabeth I’s Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. John Bacon’s eldest son had a godmother Lady Mary Johnston, daughter of John Bacon of Shrubland Hall, Suffolk, who was a direct descendent of the Lord Keeper. Moreover, after her death, her widower married the Friern Barnet John

Bacon's daughter. He would have been related, too, to the Bacons, baronets of Redgrave (the premier baronetcy, created in 1611) and Mildenhall, also of direct descent from Lord Keeper Bacon.

Throughout his working life he was employed in the Office of First Fruits, set up in the 18th Century to administer the distribution of "First Fruits and Tenths", dues extracted by the Pope from the English clergy up to the Reformation, diverted by King Henry VIII to the Crown, and under "Queen Anne's Bounty" applied to form a fund from which the stipends of the poorer clergy were augmented. In the Office he rose from junior clerk to the senior post of Receiver. He was also Secretary to the Stewards of the Society for Maintaining and Educating Poor Orphans of the Clergy ("Sons of the Clergy"), responsible for annual fund-raising concerts, performed in St Paul's Cathedral, or the Merchant Taylor's Hall. A contemporary wrote of his "great benevolence, uncommon flow of spirits, convivial habits and easy pleasantry of manners".

John Bacon leased from 1783, and bought in 1810, Friern (or Friary) House (the predecessor of the house in Friary Park and its estate from the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral who had become owners of the manor of Friern Barnet at the Reformation. Later, following the Act of Parliament for the enclosure of Finchley Common, he acquired more land. He was active in local affairs and in 1798, with the fear of French invasion, he was chairman of a committee set up to raise a corps of Finchley and Friern Barnet Volunteers; a uniform was designed, and subscriptions were raised, but the scheme came to nothing. Although not one of its instigators, he was from its foundation in 1809 one of the annual subscribers to the parish charity school. On the other hand, he sought to avoid payment of tithes, arguing that since the Knights Hospitallers, the first Lords of the Manor of Friern Barnet, had been exempt, so should he.

Mary, his first wife, was born in 1737. Her father, John Linnell (1729-1796) was a furniture maker, whose firm produced furniture of a quality rivalling that of makers such as Chippendale. John and Mary Bacon had three children: John William (born about 1777), Francis D'Arcy (born 1778) and Maria. Mary died in 1793 at Weymouth. In 1802 he was married in St Mary's Church, Twickenham, to Elizabeth, widow of Charles Morton, daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Pratt. Elizabeth, born 1756, survived him, dying in 1828.

From 1810, John and Mary's elder son, John William, was living at and farming the Manor Farm, part of his father's estate. The younger son, Frances D'Arcy, joined the army. He was commissioned as lieutenant in the 5th of Foot in 1798, and left the army in 1812, a major in the Royal Dragoons. During his service, he saw action in two brief and unsuccessful campaigns, in the Low Countries and South America. The daughter, Maria, was married in 1802, the year of her father's second marriage, in St James Church to Sir William Johnstone, Baronet, widower (whose first wife had been John William's godmother). Sir William and Lady Maria had three sons and three daughters; on Christmas Day 1808 their second daughter, Anna Maria, "born at Fryern House", was baptised in St James's Church.

John Bacon's death at Friern House in 1816 was followed by family dissension and collapse of the family's status. His will, made in 1804, first bequeathed £1,000 to his "dear son John William Bacon" who had been "disappointed of a legacy" of that amount which he had expected to receive from his Godmother and "upon which he had relied to answer for a temporary debt" – a hint of disaster to follow.

Apart from that, the estate was to be equally divided between his three children, with Maria's share to be held in trust for her and, after her death, her children, "not to be subject to the control of her husband". As the eldest son, John William would probably have expected to inherit the whole; the year of their father's death, Francis D'Arcy, on his own behalf and that of Maria and her children, "exhibited their bill of complaint in His Majesty's Court of Chancery against John William Bacon....that the Will might be established". Commissioners were appointed to divide the estate into three equal parts and, in 1822, a private Act of Parliament put the partition into effect.

In 1824 John William Bacon was bankrupt. He attributed his insolvency "to having entered into securities for my brother Francis and other persons, by which I have been engaged in Law proceedings for several years..." The schedule lists 130 debts, totalling £67,923 (equivalent in today's money to £5,213,584). There are a number of debts incurred by his late father for whom the estate is liable: money borrowed, goods supplied, a surgeon's bill for Mary (dead 31 years). There are a number of bills of exchange drawn by Francis D'Arcy, guaranteed by John William. A substantial part of the debt arises from legal fees, but there are also many trades people owed money; coal merchant, fruiterer, glazier, coach hire, Messrs Broadwood (grand piano £130), "Hannah Chipney for Education and Housing of my Children £140". He is in debt to Abel Lendon, Rector of Friern Barnet, for tithes (disputed) and for his father's memorial hatchment; he also owes tithes to the Rector of East Barnet. On the other side, John William has just three debtors owing him substantial amounts: his brother Francis D'Arcy, and his brother-in-law, Sir William, who are both abroad; the third is the King's Bench prison. In December 1824, John William is himself committed to that prison. On committal, he signs a list of "expected items", in total value £17 16s, that he is allowed to keep: in prison he has just his own clothing (1 coat, 1 pair trousers, 2 shirts....); at Friern House are clothes for his wife (3 gowns, 4 petticoats, 2 pairs stockings, 1 pair stays...), apparel for infant, bed and bedclothes, table, 2 chairs, fire guard, sundry crockery. Friern House and the estates were sold.

Meanwhile, Major Francis D'Arcy Bacon was travelling through Russia and the Caucasus to the Balkans, where he was caught up in the Greek war of independence. Taken prisoner, he was brought to the camp of a Greek warlord, Odysseus Adroitness, whose *aide-de-camp* was an Englishman, Edward John Trelawney. Odysseus and Trelawney, who were in difficult straits, asked Bacon to take a message to a Captain Hamilton RN, seeking his help. After a journey of several months, through hazardous terrain and a war zone where he encountered atrocities at least as terrible as those of the wars of our time, in the course of which he learned that Odysseus had been killed and an attempt made on Trelawney's life, Major Bacon delivered his message and secured the help of the Royal Navy. After another hazardous journey, he reached Trelawney's almost inaccessible cave-fortress on Mount Parnassus and rescued the severely wounded Trelawney, together with Ersatz, his 14 year-old wife, Odysseus's sister, and brought them to safety on board *HMS Sparrowhawk*.

Eventually Francis D'Arcy Bacon returned to England from his travels and his brother was released from debtor's prison. At the time of his death in 1842, at the age of 65, Francis D'Arcy was living in Lambeth, and is buried there in the churchyard of St Mary's, close to Lambeth Palace. (Church and churchyard are now the Museum of Garden History). When John William died three years later he was living in Kentish Town. He is buried in Highgate Cemetery. John Bacon

remains alone in the family vault in Friern Barnet churchyard; but there is a later inscription (now illegible but recorded by a 19th century antiquary):

“In Memory of Major FRANCIS D’ARCY BACON, second son of the above John Bacon, Esq. and of Mary his wife, daughter of John Linnell, Esq., who departed this life Decr. 2nd 1842.”

Who thought to add Francis D’Arcy’s name, so long after the family had left the parish? Was it, perhaps, his mother’s family or was it John William, a sign of reconciliation between the brothers after the strained relationship in the past?

### **Footnote**

The following article appeared in *Barnet Press* of 11 September 1915:

#### **“A HIGHWAYMAN’S COUP**

The following paragraph appears in a paper called “The True Briton”, published in London on Saturday, Feb. 1st, 1800: - “Last Tuesday evening, John Bacon, Esq., of Fryen (*sic*) House, near Barnet, was stopped by a single highwayman, near Colney Hatch, who robbed him of his cash and watch.” “This,” says the Friern Barnet Parish Magazine, “is evidently the John Bacon whose tomb lies half-way up the path leading from the Friary Gate to the church and whose hatchments (to be identified by the hog which served as the family crest) hangs over the east window of the south side. This John Bacon died in 1816 at the age of 78, so that he was 62 at the time of the encounter, The incident is, perhaps, scarcely worth recording except that it suggests the comparative remoteness of Friern Barnet at the beginning of the 19th century, and the enormous changes that have taken place in the local surroundings of his generation and ours. Colney Hatch was but a selection of cottages, the Parish Church was hidden away in the rural seclusion of meadows and trees and the newspaper itself – comprising four small pages of four columns each – from which this cutting is taken was issued at sixpence a copy.”

### **A NEW NORTH FINCHLEY?**

*by David Berguer*

When Mary Portas was asked by the Government to investigate the future of Britain’s high streets, one of her recommendations was the setting up of a fund to enable local councils, working with the local communities, to regenerate deprived areas and try to bring them back to life.

The Mayor of London’s Outer London Fund was part of this initiative and this year a sum of £1.1million was awarded to Barnet Council for the improvement of North Finchley “*to increase the vibrancy and growth of the high street*”. Barnet Council has added a further £400,000 so a sum of approx £1.5 million will be spent in the area. There is, however, a time limit on the scheme – the money has to be spent by the end of March 2014. At a public meeting in the artsdepot on Thursday 28 February the North Finchley Town Team was launched and residents and local traders were asked to volunteer their services to help plan the activities. There are three strands to the plan -Art & Culture, Community and Business, Marketing and the Economy.

The audience and the consultants involved discussed several ideas including the greening of the area through the use of planters and hanging baskets, the moving of the Friday market from the Lodge Lane car park to the high street itself, the

increase of community-based projects and improving the area just north of the *Tally Ho* pub. However, the overwhelming response from the audience was that the one thing that could really regenerate the area was an improvement in parking arrangements. Since Barnet Council did away in 2012 with parking meters that accepted coins and introduced payment by mobile phone coupled with an increase in parking charges, there has been a significant drop in trade in North Finchley. Following a public outcry, parking charges have been reduced but they are still a disincentive for people visiting the area. The general feeling was that cosmetic changes would not be enough on their own.

It remains to be seen whether Barnet Council will actually take on board people's concerns over parking, but we will be monitoring and reporting on changes to North Finchley.

## **CORNER SWEET SHOPS**

*by Joan Morrell*

Between the two World Wars money was short and married women did not go to work but stayed at home to look after the children and it was then that quite a few corner, front room sweetshops opened up. The one I remember was at the corner of Pollard Road adjoining Oakleigh Road North. There was another near the



*The shop on the corner of Pollard Road. Number 174 Oakleigh Road North*

*Rising Sun* before the parade of shops opposite was built. There was also one at each end of the entry to Oakleigh Park Station and another near the entrance to STC; that one was run by Thelma Harris who lived at 1 Hemington Avenue and did a lot of good work locally including running the Girl Guides Company in Friern Barnet. She used to have a Hessian sack hanging by her front door to collect silver paper for charity. Thelma also ran the Friern Barnet School Old Girls which commenced in 1927 when she was in the sixth form and remained in charge until she died. Betty Morris and I are the survivors of that – I still keep in touch with her and have known her since we were both about 8 years old and I was one day older than her! We shared the same wooden desk at school.

I have recently had great pleasure in re-reading my back numbers of the Newsletter as I intend passing them to my niece, Evelyn Boyd, who lives in Amersham. She was at one time joint Head Girl with Christine Ruge at Woodhouse School and still keeps in touch with her.

### **ANOTHER PUB BITES THE DUST**

Yet another pub has closed its doors for the last time. This time it is *The Bank* on the corner of Friern Barnet Road and Station Road, New Southgate.

The building started life in 1892 as a branch of the London & Provincial Bank which became Barclays Bank in 1901. The address was then number 1 Bank Buildings which, when the road was renumbered in 1939, became 38 Friern Barnet Road. The bank closed in 1991 and the building was turned into a pub, *The Bankers Draft* which was renamed *The Bank* in 2005.

The closure of pubs is becoming a worrying feature of local life, not just in our area but throughout the country, where it is estimated that two a week are closing. Changing demographics and recreation habits have meant that wine bars and



*The pub on the corner, when it was a bank*

coffee shops are now places of choice for a meeting with friends, particularly amongst the young.

Since the Society was formed in 2000 we have lost *The Royal Oak* in Sydney Road, Muswell Hill (now converted into flats), *The Woodman* in Oakleigh Road North (demolished and flats built on the site), *The Duck* in Colney Hatch Lane (now an Italian restaurant), *The Torrington* in High Road North Finchley (now a Starbucks), *The Rising Sun* in Oakleigh Road North (converted into a Tesco Express), *The Autumn House* in High Road North Finchley (now an Indian restaurant), *The Orange Tree* in Friern Barnet Lane (converted into a Tesco Express), *O'Neil's* in High Road North Finchley (now a bar), *The Triumph* in

Summers Lane (empty at the moment), *The Black Bull* in High Road, Whetstone (demolished and a branch of Halfords and a Travelodge built on the site), *The Ennis Tavern* in Ballards Lane (now a bar), *The Bull & Butcher* in High Road, Whetstone (converted into a succession of night clubs none of them lasting long) *The Alexandra Arms* in Cromwell Road, Muswell Hill (converted into flats) and, of course, most recently *The Turrets* (now demolished).

## **THE GREAT WAR**

Next year sees the hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of World War I, “the war to end all wars” and we are working on a project to investigate its effects on the local area. If you had a relative who fought in the war or you have any reminiscences from them and you are willing to share them, please contact either David Berguer (020 8368 8314) or Nick McKie (020 8368 5730).

## **THE CLERKENWELL NUNS**

*by John Heathfield*

The earliest principal reference to Clerkenwell nuns is from a register kept among the Cottonian MSS at the British Museum. In common with many old and valuable documents this beautiful book can only be handled while wearing cotton gloves.

The nunnery was founded about 1185 by Jordan Brisset or Bricett and his wife Muriel. He gave money to Robert, a priest, to build a house in Clerkenwell, on a site now occupied by St James’s Church in Friern Barnet Lane. Robert bought 14 acres of land near the clerk’s well. John Brissett had also given money to the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem which they used to buy 10 acres from the nuns on order to build a house just to the north of the nuns’ house. There is no record of the date but the buildings were in use by 1185.

The nuns were members of the Benedictine order and so were known as black nuns. Fuller describes them as “the ancientist order in Britain, being black nuns but I assure you penny white, being most richly endowed”. Their numbers varied, but there were usually between fifteen and twenty and most of them came from rich families and consequently brought money into the order. They also brought their own servants with them and together with lay workers and other labourers there were perhaps 250 men and women working the land. They had a farm of 65 acres on land to the north of Muswell Hill, halfway up (or down) Colney Hatch Lane. The nuns’ lives were dedicated to the help of the old, the poor, the sick and the insane. The nunnery was suppressed in 1539.

It is interesting to speculate about the life of intelligent, rich women in the twelfth century. What did they do with their life? Presumably get married, embroider vast tapestries or go into a convent; there were no careers for women.

When the monks wanted a farm they chose the estate next to the nuns, north of Muswell Hill, just over the brook. This, of course, became Friern Barnet, but the nuns got there first. Does all this mean that we should call it Nuns’ Barnet?

## **WE WIN PRAISE.....AND AN AWARD**

It’s always nice when you get a pat on the back! Back in 2012 a lady from Canada posted the following comment on our photographic website:

“I have just spent hours browsing through your brilliant website. My family moved to Wetherill Road just off Colney Hatch Lane in 1938. I left for Canada in 1953. My two brothers and I are the sole survivors of a large

family. I have just forwarded them the link to your website. One brother lives in Dorset, the other in Melbourne, Australia. I know how delighted they will be. Thank you for your dedication and hard work. Anne Stacey”

You can access the website directly at [www.friernbarnet.com](http://www.friernbarnet.com) or via a link on the main website [www.friernbarnethistory.org.uk](http://www.friernbarnethistory.org.uk). The site now has over 5700 photographs on it but we could always do with some more! If you have any photographs, particularly school class photographs, please upload them. Just follow the instructions on the website. If you don't have access to a computer we can scan the original photographs for you and then return them to you.

Even more pleasing was a letter from the British Association for Local History (BALH) announcing that we had received the BALH Award for 2012 for our *Newsletter*. Dr Evelyn Lord, the Reviews editor for BALH said “I am always pleased to receive this Newsletter as it is a model of how a society newsletter can be produced with articles and information of interest to society members as well as being of relevance to the wider local history world”. The award will be presented to us on Local History Day on 8 June at the Charity Centre, Stephenson Way, NW1 2DP. This is indeed an honour particularly as we were in competition with most of the country's local history societies. A huge thanks to all our members who have contributed articles and photographs. To those of you who have not yet contributed, we would love to have your reminiscences as they are so valuable in helping to keep the past alive.

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- In 1644 puritans banned maypole ceremonies as “heathen vanity” based on “superstition and wickedness”.
- In 1797 the inventor of the top hat, London haberdasher John Hetherington, deciding to give his new hat its public debut, left his shop in the Strand and went for a drive in the City. The sight of his hat caused a sensation, people booed, several women fainted, a crowd gathered and a small boy got his arm broken in the crush. Hetherington was arrested, assigned before the Lord Mayor of London and charged with conduct likely to cause a breach of the king's peace, in particular: ‘appearing on the public highway wearing upon his head a tall structure having a shining lustre and calculated to frighten timid people’. Found guilty he was fined £50, an enormous sum in those days.
- In 1875 the Climbing Boys Act made it illegal for children to clean inside chimneys.
- In 1947, at the time when the British government was in the process of growing ground nuts in Africa, a law was passed which contained the following paragraph: “In the Nuts (unground) (other than ground-nuts) Order, the expression nuts shall have reference to such nuts, other than ground-nuts, as would but for this amending Order not qualify as nuts (unground) (other than ground-nuts) by reason of their being nuts (unground).”
- Under the Shops Act of 1950, *Playboy* and *Penthouse* magazines could be bought on a Sunday, but the Bible could not, and shopkeepers could be fined £25 for breaches of the law. The Act was subsequently repealed.

- Anyone contemplating suicide in England before 1961 was sure of success. Suicide was a capital offence so, if their attempt failed, they would be subject to criminal prosecution and sentenced to death.
- The Outer Space Act of 1986 prohibits ordinary citizens launching a 'space object' and 'carrying on other activities in space'. Under Section 9 magistrates are given the power to issue warrants and 'use reasonable force' to turn back an alien invasion provided, of course, that the aliens do not have a licence to invade.

The above are extracts from *The Strange Laws of Old England* by Nigel Cawthorne. Portrait Books 2005

## **METAL THEFT, AND THE CONSEQUENCES**

Nowadays we are used to reading of thefts of metal, anything from cable from the railways to drain covers from the roads, so it was intriguing to read the following in the 24 September 1910 issue of *Barnet Press*:

“At the Tottenham Children’s Court on Tuesday, William Robert Croot, 13, of Park-terrace, New Southgate, and Harold John Bulger, 13, of Crown-road, New Southgate, were charged with being concerned together in stealing on September 10th from building land at Grosvenor-road New Southgate, two iron chimney jambs and three iron shelves, value 10s, the property of Frederick Papworth, a builder. P.S. 65Y said that on September 13th, he was on duty in Grosvenor-road and in consequence of what he was told by the prosecutor, he went to St Peter’s Schools, New Southgate, and there saw the two boys, and told them he was inquiring about the missing iron. Bulger said, “I was with the boy Croot last Sunday, and I went with him and took some iron from Mr Papworth’s yard, and we carried some of it in a sack to Watts’ shop in Sydney-road.” Croot made a statement that they broke up the iron and took some to Watts’ shop, where Mrs Watts gave him 3d, and told him to call again in the evening. The other he took home. Some of the iron was found at Croot’s home, but his father said he did not know it was there. Both boys pleaded guilty, and had nothing to say in excuse. Bulger’s mother gave him bad character and so did the police. The boys’ school teachers spoke favourably of them. Each prisoner was ordered to receive six strokes with the birch.”

## **TEACHERS**

*by John Heathfield*

When the new Minister of Education took up her position in 1970 she wrote: “A lot of these very old buildings were in areas where the children tended to have a poor home background. Then you often found that these bad school buildings also had bad equipment and that it was very difficult to get children to go to them, so the children suffered a triple deprivation, lacking a decent home, proper school buildings and particularly lacking enough good teachers.”

The shortage of good teachers has been widespread for the past century. In 1889 all head teachers took a class full time. One wrote: “Average attendance 139.9 in two classes. It is very difficult to teach on account of lack of room. Another good teacher would be such an asset.” In 1896 W G Collier, of St James’ School Friern Barnet Lane wrote: “I have today taken charge of the school. The discipline in the upper standards is very unsatisfactory. Stone throwing, disobedience, laughing, playing about and talking have been rife. Twice pistol caps were fired.” In 1900

he wrote: "Mr Townsend (the other teacher) and I have spent the entire evening whitewashing the walls. This is the first time that this has been done since the school opened 47 years ago."

At All Saints School in Oakleigh Road North in 1900 there was such a shortage of teachers that "I am managing the school on my own with the help of two big girls in the babies' class." At Trent School, Cockfosters in September 1957, Miss Watson had a class of 51 children whose ages ranged from 7 to 11. The Governors were told: "following Government spending cuts it was most unlikely that funds will be available this year for additional building." In 1962 the Head Teacher reported that the high cost of housing made it impossible to recruit or retain teachers.

At Cromer Road School, the shortage of teachers was such that in 1962 the Head Teacher wrote: "Mrs M, who has taught Keep Fit for 2 hours a week at local Evening Institute started today. She is the nearest we can get to a qualified teacher." Potters Road School in Barnet was inspected by HMI in 1925. They raised doubts about the wisdom of using the entrance porch as a class room They revisited in in March 1925 and found "A class of 32 children in the Girls' cloakroom measuring 20 feet by 12 feet. The only heating is a portable oil stove. Lighting and ventilation are quite inadequate. This has been the regular practice since the admission of 15 extra children from the local Poor Law Institution with no extra staff." In 1901 at All Saints' Infants School: "All the boys attended well but the little girls do not come when it is wet. Ada Pitson not present, being absent."

#### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Our Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday 22 May 2013 prior to the talk by Maggie Radcliffe on *The 1960s*. With this Newsletter is the official invitation to attend, along with a Nomination Form and a copy of last year's minutes.

If you have any item that you wish to raise under Any Other Business please notify Patricia Berguer by Wednesday 8 May 2013.

#### **SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL**

For those of you who have not renewed your subscriptions for the year commencing 1 April 2013, a further copy of the Membership Renewal form is enclosed. Please complete this and return it to us if you wish to continue receiving the Newsletter.

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