

Friern Barnet *Newsletter*

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FRIERN BARNET LIBRARY LATEST

by Dorrell Dressekie

Friern Barnet Library, which was closed by Barnet Council on 5 April 2012, re-opened ten months later on 5 February 2013 with Council agreement to return the library to the community, to be run by residents as a community facility. The re-opening was marked by the handing over of keys from the Occupy London activists (who occupied the library as squatters since September 2012) to Trustees of the newly formed Friern Barnet Community Library.

The long campaign by the local community to save the library did not prevent its closure. But soon after it was closed Save Friern Barnet Library Group organised a pop-up library on the green area adjacent to the closed library. Dubbed 'the People's Library', it opened on 14 April 2012 and had the support of local people, many with children. The local newspaper *The Times Series* reported on 19 April 2012 'Another Day, New Chapter'.

Support for the campaign for re-opening of the library was evident as local people signed petitions, nearby shops displayed notices and petition sheets and many



The keys to the library are handed over by the occupiers on 5 February 2013

were regular users of the service, commented on the closure as regrettable and a loss of the only community facility in the area. The People's Library proved popular too and gained national coverage when, following a visit by a film crew and journalists, the local situation was highlighted on the BBC TV programme *The One Show*. Barnet Council had planned to merge two libraries, Friern Barnet and North Finchley, into one landmark library at artsdepot, Tally Ho. But Friern Barnet Library was closed before that merger took place. The shelves were emptied of books and the doors padlocked. Shortly after closure residents were informed of a book lending service at the artsdepot starting 24 April 2012. This was located on the fourth floor in a small room and it had very restricted opening times. It was said to very expensive to run and was eventually discontinued.

Friern Barnet Library remained closed until squatters entered the library building through an open rear window in September 2012. The squatters, who described themselves as caretakers, reportedly invited council officials to the library to negotiate with them. Such a request was possible due to changes in the law which made squatting in private property a criminal offence but made no similar reference to the use of commercial properties. The entry of squatters into the library made national news, appearing in *The Guardian* of 12 September 2012 under the heading "Squatters re-open London Library" Barnet Council officials met with them soon after entry into the building. The Council suggested relocating the library into Friary House but this was not well received. Friary House had several drawbacks, not the least of which was its location in the centre of Friary Park with the inevitable problem of access for many library users. The offer had already been rejected by the Save Friern Barnet Library campaigning group. An unfortunate aspect in the negotiation was that while continuing the talks to seek an equitable solution the Council at the same time initiated the legal process to evict the squatters.

The squatters continued their occupation of the building and soon had Friern Barnet Library open for business. Many residents, though tentatively looking on at first, were soon coming in with donated books and videos to fill the empty shelves. Local schools donated books, a furniture centre gave chairs and tables and some technical equipment was installed. Externally, posters were displayed to announce that the library was open and to give the opening times and details of the programme of activities. Local residents were also signing up as volunteers and many even brought with them basic necessities such as tea, coffee, milk, cakes and biscuits.

During the period the library was closed the Save Friern Barnet Library group, through the dedicated research of local architect Maryla Enefer, submitted an application to the Council's heritage team to have the library awarded historical building status. While such status would not influence the Council's decision on the future of the building, its guidelines refer to preserving and enhancing, wherever possible, a local building that had been awarded such a listing. The application was supported Friern Barnet and Whetstone Residents' Association, The Finchley Society, the Twentieth Century Society and the Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings. It was a successful application and on 3 December 2012 the building was listed in the Council's Schedule of Buildings of Local Architectural or Historical Interest. A month earlier the library was added to the Register of Assets of Community Value. This was possible due to the passing of a new Localism Act which places a duty on Councils intending to sell certain

buildings to notify all interested parties. The community, as an interested party, could then have the right to place a bid with intention to purchase.

During this period the activities at Friern Barnet Library were growing in popularity and were well attended by the local community. Regular events included drama and rhyme time and song and story time for pre-school children, yoga and pilates classes, French for Beginners and musical evenings. There were special sessions too with invited speakers and book signings by authors. The occupation was also gaining media interest both nationally and worldwide, a website was launched and maintained and there were visits on several occasions by journalists and photographers. But hanging over all these events was an impending court hearing. However the first hearing, set for October 2012 was adjourned to allow time for the occupiers to organise a defence. Eventually at a two day trial, on 17 and 18 December 2012, Barnet Council was granted a possession order of the building. But a ruling by the judge allowed some time before enforcing the order and the final date of 31 January 2013 was agreed.

In the following weeks after the granting of the possession order a series of meetings held between Council officials, the occupiers and some local residents led to agreement for the library to run as a community facility by residents. A Public Interest Company was set up and with nine local residents stepping up as Trustees, Friern Barnet Community Library was formed and temporary licence granted to them to take control of the building. The culmination of this was the handing over of keys from the occupiers to the Trustees on 5 February 2013. The *Barnet Press* of 7 February 2013 carried a report that the leader of Barnet Council had met with the Trustees and described them as a very committed group of local residents and looked forward to seeing the new community facility up and running.

Barnet Council offered a grant of £25,000 to assist with setting up and running the community library and began negotiations to award a lease, two years in the first instance, to the Board of Trustees. In discussion with the Council were other aspects such as responsibility for general repairs, buildings insurance, utility bills and the upkeep and maintenance of the building.

Friern Barnet Community is now up and running. Opening hours are Mondays to Saturdays 11am to 7pm. It relies heavily on volunteers from the local community signing up to a rota, offering to share a skill and assisting generally with a range of tasks. Organisational meetings are held on Monday evenings, 7pm to 9pm and are open to all and the programme of activities continues. There are Drama and Rhyme Time run by a local drama teacher; story and song time for pre-school children, gentle yoga; a knitting group; French for Beginners and musical evenings. Special events take place such as talks on a range of subjects and book readings by new authors. Some activities are also organised to link in with more general occasions such as children's art activities during the Easter holiday. Local residents and casual visitors are now going in and using the space, and the range of activities and special events highlight the need of many residents of Friern Barnet for a community space. The Board of Trustees and team of volunteers working together and supported by local residents leaves little doubt that Friern Barnet Community Library is becoming a vibrant community hub. Hopefully it will remain a permanent and valued feature in the cultural life of the community it serves.

FRIERN BARNET LIBRARY: THE INSIDE STORY

A blow-by-blow account of the campaign to keep the library is given in a new book to be published on 28 October. *Friern Barnet: The Library that Refused to Close* is written by Keith Martin, a Society member and one of the team of people involved from the very beginning in its struggle with Barnet Council. Keith is thus able to give an insider's view of the campaign and quotes from letters, emails, and newspaper articles, meetings and personal recollections as well as details of the court case which led to the reopening of the library. The book is well illustrated and is published by Chaville Press, 148 Friern Park, London N12 8LU at £10.99 plus £3 postage and packing. £2 from the cover price will be donated to the library. The book will also be available from Waterstone's at Barnet and North Finchley. ISBN 978-0-9569344-7-5

A MILKMAN'S LIFE

by Percy Reboul

Rummaging through some old audiotapes the other day, I came across one done by my father in 1984. He was 75 at that time and it was about his childhood memories of 1920 when, as an 8 year-old boy, he helped a local milkman to deliver dairy products in the New Barnet area. He started at 5.30am (seven days a week) and had to finish the job in time to go to school. Reflecting on those hard times for some, my thoughts also turned to lifestyle of milkmen in those days – you hardly see them these days and yet they, and more particularly their horses, were such a colourful part of childhood. Here is my father's tale:

"I worked for a milkman called Maurice Salter employed by the A1 Dairies in High Road, Whetstone. Our round covered many of the large houses in New Barnet. In 1920, the A1 milkmen did two rounds a day, the first starting at 5.30am and the second around 9.30. We lived opposite the dairy at 5 Clark's Cottages near the *Black Bull* pub, and you could tell the time of day by the noises from the dairy. It started at 4.30am, when Teddy Parr would be getting the milk ready for the roundsmen, dragging the milk churns across the cobblestones into the dairy to fill the men's churns with milk ordered the previous day. The next noises would come from Fred Hart, the horsekeeper, who would water and feed the horses and put on all their harness except for the bridle. That job would be done by roundsmen when they coupled their horses to the milk floats at the bottom of the yard. There were three cowmen and 25 cows which were milked by hand. Tommy Maynard would light and stoke the boiler which produced the steam and hot water for the men when they returned from their last round, to clean and sterilise the bottles, cans and churns. A most important member of the team was Miss Dench. She started at 9.00am and her job was to make up the roundsmen's baskets which contained products like butter, margarine, eggs and bread to be sold to customers. Whatever happened to Neville's bread; you don't see it around these days? Miss Dench also ran the dairy shop and did the men's books when they returned from the round.

A milkman's day was a very busy one. Maurice Salter, for example, once he had got his horse and cart together, would move into the dairy to fill his bottles and fix their cardboard stoppers, fill his churn, pick up the basket from Miss Dench and move off at 5.30. In summer, delivery was lovely. In winter it was bad. There was little if any street lighting and trying to ladle

milk into a customer's small can in the dark was a real problem. The float itself was only lit with paraffin or candle lamps which gave out only a small light. Most customers liked their milkman. He would be in personal contact with them seven days a week and would often, for example, post letters for them. The local newsagent would also ask us to deliver newspapers to houses a long way from the shop.

The horses played a great part. They got to know the route and would walk from house to house without a word of command. The only time you needed to get on the float was when crossing the road to get into another street. With a new horse, an ostler would come with us for a week or so until the horse got used to the route. Winter months were bad for horses as they got frightened when the roads were icy or slippery. The horseman at the dairy would take the horse to Baldwins the Whetstone farrier who would make up winter shoes for them. These had threaded holes in them. We were supplied with a bag of 'roughs', small iron spikes which were also threaded and could be screwed into the shoe hole to give a better grip. I've seen horses, even in the coldest weather, sweating with fear of slipping. The milkman's dress in 1920 was interesting. It was just after World War I and the younger roundsmen wore riding breeches, leggings and heavy boots bought from the army surplus store. They also wore an army greatcoat with the metal buttons removed and replaced with plain ones. In summer, Maurice wore a straw hat but his father, who also worked for the dairy, wore a bowler hat.

Two memories of those times. A Christmas one, when the dairy sold turkeys. After gutting and trimming, the entrails were put into milk churns, cooked over a steam pipe and fed to the pigs which were kept at the bottom of the yard. The other was a tragedy that occurred in 1923. In the summer months the cows grazed in the fields of Totteridge up to the golf course. A gate was left open in the fence which bordered the railway line and a herd of cows strayed onto the line and were hit by a steam train. Six of them were killed and I saw one which had been dragged as far as Totteridge Station. The bodies of the cows and unborn calves littered the line.

I left school in 1924. It was a sad day to give up working for the A1 Dairy and for Maurice Salter who had been so kind to me. The four years I served were among the happiest of my life."

FRENCHMAN'S FARM

by John Heathfield

The Frenchman was Pierre Henri Joseph Baume (1797-1875), one of the most eccentric characters ever to live in Friern Barnet. The son of a wigmaker, he was born in Marseilles but was sent to Naples to seek his fortune at the age of 13. He became acquainted with Davies Gilbert, a future president of the Royal Society. He became secretary to Prince Castecicala, Italian Ambassador in Paris and it is said that he spied for the French King Louis Phillipe; this was in the period following the French Revolution and was a time of deep uncertainty and suspicion. He chose to hide by working as a "spiritual adviser" to the Duc du Rohan (a future Archbishop of Rheims). By about 1822 he had amassed a considerable fortune and came to London about 1827 where he acted, amongst other things, as a debt collector for

the Prince Regent. He is said to have spied on the British Radicals for both the British and French Governments.

Pierre lived in an incestuous relationship with his sister, Charlotte, by whom he had a son; she also bore him a daughter but both mother and child died in childbirth. He sold their bodies to anatomists at University College (as the victims of incest, they could not be buried in consecrated ground). This gave rise to the rumour that he had murdered both of them and earned him the soubriquet "The Islington Monster."

He began speculating in property in London and made enough money to become respectable. He then began moving in literary and scientific circles. He bought the farm in 1852 and sold it in 1856. The *Barnet Press* said that the price was £40,000 but that was probably a misprint, £4000 is more realistic. Pierre decided that since all men are equal, class distinction was wrong and he moved into the alleyway between his labourer's cottages and kept monkeys in a wire cage on the roof. He moved to Manchester in 1858 where he became a member of the Rechabite Movement which was an offshoot of the freemasons dedicated, amongst other things, to teetotalism. He moved again in the mid-1860s to the Isle of Man where he continued to make money by investing and became increasingly reclusive and miserly. He lived on the top floor of a small run down house and collected his shopping by lowering a tin on a string. He was highly incensed one day when, walking along the sea front, a lady offered him a penny for a cup of tea. He said that he was worth a quarter of a million pounds.

When he died he left all his money to charities, including nine scholarships to King William's College, money for the School of Navigation, The Manx School of Art and a scholarship to the Royal College of Music. His will was contested because certain charitable bequests, which were illegal under English law, are allowable under Isle of Man law. His illegitimate son turned up to claim the estate and Friern Barnet Parish further muddied the waters by claiming that Baume really intended to leave his money to the poor of the parish and was of unsound mind at the time of his death. The money finally went to found an Industrial Home and the Ramsey Hospital. A statue of "The Frenchman" was made in 1884 and is on display in the Manx Art Gallery.

The farm itself had several names. In 1661 it was Friern Lodge and in 1783 it occupied 234 acres. It formed part of the Bacon estate and in 1841 it covered 16 fields and was rented to William Reeve and further lands were rented to Sarah Powell. As Frenchman's Farm, it was sold by Bacon's daughter, Lady Johnston, on her death in 1847. By 1889 it was being rented by Thomas Sketchley as a mainly grass and hay farm but by 1897 the farm and farmhouse were derelict.

The estate was to form part of the Bethune Park Estate, which was largely developed in the 1920s and included Park Way and The Ridgeway and also covered much of what became the Holly Park Estate. Lady Johnston also owned Fromer House, near Queen Elizabeth's Well, where she lived. This is the house that Pierre Baume used and later Thomas Sketchley. Fromer is a corruption of Tromers – John Tromer held premises in Finchley the time of Henry IV. The Church Farm Estate was owned in 1841 by Mrs Bethune and consisted of Church Wood Field (6 acres); Church Field (14 acres); Damson Grove (12 acres) and a second Church Field (11 acres). It too was rented by Thomas Sketchley and was developed from 1932 on.

ROBIN'S DINNERS

by Nick McKie

It all began in the Newspaper library at Colindale. I was leafing through the *Barnet Press* on microfilm when I stumbled on the following letter in the issue of 11 March 1909:

“ROBIN” BREAKFASTS AND DINNERS TO POOR CHILDREN

To the Editor of the “Barnet Press”

Sir, - I am requested by the committee of this fund to ask if you will kindly make known what we are doing. All children residing within the postal district of New Southgate who need food (which they cannot get at home) can have free breakfasts and dinners at one of the coffee houses in the district on presenting tickets, which can be obtained in their districts from the following members of the committee, subject, of course, to investigation as to need, etc, viz: -

- (1) FREEHOLD, of
 - (a) Mr. C.W. Allen, St. Ives, Wetherill-road, and Cromwell-road School
 - (b) Mr. Moses Buchanan, 132 Palmers-road

- (2) HOLLY PARK DISTRICT, of
 - (a) Mr. Charles Horn, Park House, High-road
 - (b) Mr. J. Shipley, 9 Beaconsfield-road
 - (c) Mr. J. Humphreys, 8 Brunswick-crescent (school attendance officer)

- (3) THE AVENUE AND BRUNSWICK PARK DISTRICT, of
 - (a) Mr. A. K. Lander, Ashroyd, Oakleigh-road
 - (b) Mr. A. Stamp, 37, Beaconsfield-road and St Paul's Schools, The Avenue

- (4) NEW SOUTHGATE DISTRICT (between Friern Barnet-road and Pymmes Brook) of
 - (a) Mr. W. Fallon, 45, Upper Park-road
 - (b) Mr. C. W. Adams, 30, Upper Park-road
 - (c) Mr. E. Willoughby, 8 Carlton-road and Garfield-road School

- (5) THE DISTRICT SOUTH OF THE BROOK TO BOWES PARK, of
 - (a) Mr. G.A. Richardson, 12 Warwick-road, and Bowes-road School
 - (b) Mr. M. Buchanan, as above.

Particulars of cases may also be sent to me. The work of this committee has been in operation since November 1889. Its object is to provide free meals to children only who are in need of food in consequence of exceptional distress through severe winters. Our funds are not available for the relief of chronic poverty, but when we are at work we draw no hard and fast lines. During the severe frosts in January, February and March 1896, we provided 3,864 free breakfasts, and I am thankful to say we can do the same this year (should the need arise) without asking for more money. – I am, Sir, yours obediently, GEO COSGROVE.

Hon. Secretary
21, The Limes-avenue, New Southgate, N
4th January, 1909.

I had never heard of Robin's breakfasts or dinners.

The Reverend Charles Bullock, born in 1829, was the archetypal Victorian churchman: hugely energetic, frighteningly confident in his Christian mission and a prolific writer and editor of uplifting works. After fourteen years as rector of St Nicholas' Worcester, he came to Blackheath in 1874 'in order to devote himself to the dissemination of pure literature'. How he came to occupy number 7 Paragon, Blackheath, I don't know; it might have gone with the job (he describes himself as a clergyman and editor in 1881) but it was a substantial dwelling – 'one of fourteen handsome houses, linked by curving colonnades.....designed for the upper middle classes.....with stables'. They remain today, Grade 1 listed. Bullock edited *The Fireside*; *Home Words* and *The Day of Days* (for Sunday reading). In 1876 he founded *Hand and Heart*, a penny illustrated Church of England newspaper. He wrote *The Way Home or the Gospel in the Parable* (translated into Norwegian!); *What Church? Or the Only Faith and Fold*; *Words of Ministry*; *Earthly Stories with Heavenly Meanings*; *What Do We Owe Him?* and doubtless many others before his death in 1911. We get the flavour of his mission, but the best is yet to come – in 1879 he published *Robin's Carol and What Came of it*.

Sometime in 1877 or 1878 Charles was in his study; it was cold outside and snowing. A robin tapped at his window hoping for breadcrumbs. This led him to thinking about 'the little Londoners' similarly cold and hungry and he duly set up a fund to provide food for them. The first Robin's dinner cost £100 and fed 3000 children 'very simply'. In January 1899 the *London Daily News* carried an article on Robin's Dinners which stated that 25,000 dinners had been provided at a cost of 7d each. Over 600 children had been served in Westminster Town Hall but most of the meals had been privately served in parish rooms.

The scheme had spread to the provinces and gained support from local newspapers: "Worthy of the imitation and support of all the benevolent in the Land" (*Shrewsbury Chronicle*); "A Robin Dinner Everywhere deserves our particular attention" (*Yarmouth Gazette*); "We heartily commend the project to the readers of the Argus" (*Liverpool Argus*).

In 1887 Bullock published a booklet '*How Robin Did It and How Other Birds May Do it Too*'. telling how the Robin's Dinner model had reached Norwich, Grantham and Nottingham and on page 26 helpfully giving a recipe for plum pudding. Earlier, in 1882, a Mr Walker, writing in the *Bristol Mercury*, gave details of his favourite recipe:

“...an excellent dinner was given in Manchester, on two successive new years to nearly 500 children. The dinner consisted of soup, bread and plum pudding and cost (for materials only) not quite 2½d each child. ROBIN’S SOUP, - One quart of split peas, two ounces of flour, one ounce of butter (or it is excellent without the butter) and a little mint; one gallon of water. Boil well together and season with pepper and salt. Cost of materials 7d per gallon. ROBIN’S PLUM PUDDING, - Half pound of currants, quarter pound of raisins, one ounce of candied peel, two ounces of sugar, one egg, one pound of flour. Boil for two to three hours. Cost of materials 10d. Cost of soup, pudding and bread for eight persons 1s 8d.”

William Howarth, a journalist, appears as Chairman and Secretary of the Robin Society from at least 1886 and maybe from its formation sometime after 1879. From then on he is the voice of the Robin Society in the press. In a letter of 1900 to the *Brisbane Chronicle* he said the first Robin dinner was given in Deptford on Christmas Day 1883, so it may be that the Reverend Bullock was “the organisation” until 1883 when the Society came into existence with Howarth as its Chairman.

The Society was one among many providing Christmas charity in London and the provinces; in 1889 St Thomas’s Hospital disposed of 400 pounds of beef and 500 pounds of Christmas pudding while the Seaman’s Hospital presented turkey, beef, plum pudding and an ounce of tobacco to the men. There is talk of magic lanterns and knitted mufflers and cuffs and ‘hotpot’ in Liverpool. As for the Society, in 1891 in Deptford 10,000 poor children were provided with coffee, cake, fruit etc. and in 1892 Mr Earle of Hackney catered for 2000 breakfasts at 8.30am - roll and butter, currant rolls and coffee. The *London Standard* reported in 1894 that throughout the metropolis 28,000 breakfasts had been served – coffee, a large meat pie, with woollen cuffs and a Christmas card to be taken home.

It seems that most local organisations collected contributions in cash from well-wishers and paid outside caterers to provide the meals; the stewards would be volunteers. In 1895 the *Nursing Record and Hospital World* records the Prince of Wales agreeing to become patron of the Society and making a donation of five guineas. The Society published some statistics itself. In 1887 ‘now yearly more than 20,000 hungry and happy guests’; in 1897 ‘15,670 breakfasts and dinners at 22 centres and since this branch started in 1883 162,670 breakfasts and dinners and 1573 little ones sent to the country’.

In 1869 the Charity Organisation Society (COS) was formed ‘to bring piecemeal charitable efforts together to work in tandem with the Poor Law system in a more co-ordinated and efficient way’. Among its founders were William Gladstone and Octavia Hill. It soon became apparent that the COS did not approve of the Society. In 1898 they reported that the Society’s appeals for funds should not be responded to, ‘the executive committee was purely nominal, real management was in the hand of two persons....one possessing a bad financial record’. The COS stated that ‘the mere distribution of food and clothing is likely to do harm by weakening the sense of parental responsibility and those who seek to assist poor schoolchildren should seek more effective means.’. In 1900 a letter to an enquirer concludes ‘I think in future you should find a safer agency on which to bestow your gifts’. And a report states ‘the society still continues rotten to the core’.

Howarth had set up the Robin Society and was hugely successful in promoting it and in encouraging others to carry on the good work, but his journalistic work got in the way and he bowed out in 1897. From then on the society is an idea rather than a functioning body; it has its address (in New Cross Road) and token officers; the idea is carried forwards by enthusiastic individuals everywhere with no reference to the centre. By the 1920s the society was still in existence but the COS reported that it was 'a pauperising and redundant agency' and 'there is nothing dishonest or fishy about the finances; they are just a foolish lot of people'. In 1929 it was stated 'it is some years since we heard of them' and in 1933 'I do not think the Society exists any longer'. The last reference is in 1938 when a firm of solicitors wrote to the COS saying that they acted for a dead testator who had left money to the Robin Society. Did it still exist? The COS, after some investigation we suppose, replied that 'Lloyds Bank have ascertained that the society is still in existence at 468 New Cross Road'.

The Society and its offshoots had thoroughly praiseworthy aims but the COS expressed the developing view that charity should be directed to those positively identified as deserving poor, and that there should be no overlapping relief.

The Society was overtaken by changing attitudes to the treatment of the poor.

IMPROVING NEW SOUTHGATE

by Colin Barratt

In 2010 Enfield Council published their Masterplan for the future of New Southgate. The aims of this were stated as making New Southgate an attractive local neighbourhood that is well connected to the rest of Enfield and the surrounding areas. Residents would enjoy a clean environment, a well used network of high quality, multi-functional green spaces, high quality homes, local shops and community services and excellent transport links to central London and beyond. The Ladderswood Estate and adjacent industrial area redevelopment are also part of this scheme.

Some parts of the Masterplan were unlikely to become reality, but a number have already been completed, or are currently underway.

The **Red Brick Estate** lies between Station Road and the former High Road and was the main housing estate built in the 1970s redevelopment scheme. It consists of a number of small cul-de-sacs, with connecting paths. The name perhaps started as a rather derogatory term for the estate, but has been adopted in the Masterplan. The work done here was mainly to improve safety and make the area look better, and involved lowering wall heights, replacing old fencing and thinning out bushes and trees. It has now been completed, and has been welcomed by residents.

There are a number of **open spaces** along the former High Road. This part of the Masterplan was given the title "Take the High Road" and aimed to improve the spaces and create a green link between them. This started this year with High Road Open Space, and included new play equipment, an outdoor gym and a small football pitch. This was completed in June and an event was arranged to celebrate the re-opening. The next project will be Grove Road Open Space, which is a former WW2 bomb site, known locally as "The Bombie", and will include improved walkways and various other features. The Council have also said they

would like to include something which includes the history of the site. I have offered to help with this, if required.

In the 1970s the junction of the High Road and Friern Barnet Road was blocked off and built on. This top section of High Road is going to be opened up again for pedestrians and cyclists with a tree lined footpath, linking the Grove Road to Betstyle Circus.

The other open space is the Millennium Green, which lies opposite Homebase, between Station Road and the High Road Open Space. This is a little different, as it is run by trustees, legally set up to look after it. The Council have offered financial support to improve the Green, and this is still being discussed.

The Masterplan identified an opportunity to redevelop **Station Road** between New Southgate Station and Friern Barnet Road, currently occupied by a car sales business. Plans have now been unveiled for a new housing development here, which could start in 2014.



View looking east towards Station Road from Friern Barnet Road

The original **Garfield Junior School** was opened in 1883 when New Southgate was redeveloped in the 1970s the school had to be relocated, and a new school was built in nearby Springfield Road. Now, 40 years on, the school is going to be rebuilt again. The initial plan was to expand the school, from three-form entry, but it was then decided it would be better to completely rebuild it. Consultations are continuing on the design.

The proposal to demolish the run down 1960s **Ladderswood Estate** was made some years ago, but it has taken a long time to get the final approval for the new housing and commercial development. The present housing estate between Station Road and Palmers Road, and an industrial area runs between it and the A406 (Telford Road). The whole site will be demolished, and construction will begin in October 2013, phased over 5 years before completion, although the first occupants should be in by the end of 2014. The scheme will include a large hotel, located near the corner of the A406, and a community centre. The artistic drawings of the new development of course look very different, but we will have to wait and see whether the reality matches this!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

For those of you who were unable to attend the AGM, a copy of the Report and Accounts for the year April 2012 – March 2013 is enclosed with this Newsletter.

A PROUD MOMENT FOR THE SOCIETY



*David Berguer with the award
for the Best Newsletter of 2012
which was presented at the
BALH AGM on 8 June 2013*

FRIERN BARNET SUMMER SHOW

This year, for the first time since 1938, there was no Summer Show in Friary Park. The organiser and driving force behind the show in recent years had been Rev. Adrian Benjamin, vicar of All Saints' Church, and when he retired in September 2012 there was nobody to replace him, as the new vicar, Gregory Platten, did not arrive until March 2013. It is not yet clear if the show will resume in 2014 – maybe its time had come, but it is a pity that we shall be without such traditional events as the dog show, baby show and the horticultural and crafts displays.

The Summer Show had been a useful source of revenue for the Society, as we managed to make around £200-£300 each year from the sale of “previously loved items” from our stall. It will also be a loss to our members who managed to clear out their garages, lofts and sheds and donate the contents to us!

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