

Friern Barnet *Newsletter*

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CHANGES AT TALLY HO

In 1934 Woodhouse Road was extended westwards at Tally Ho Corner and the new road, Kingsway, linked up to Ballards Lane. At the same time, a new tram terminus was built in Nether Street, between the Gaumont cinema and *The Cricketers* pub. Ballards Lane then became one-way northbound and the Great North Road became one-way southbound, a system that still exists today. Local traders viewed the changes with scepticism, as can be seen by these quotes from the *Barnet Press* of 22 March 1935:

“Belgrave Tavern (corner of Stanhope Road). We have been hit badly since the 21 tram stop has been taken away. The “twenty ones” carry a lot of workmen. In the old days they came in here for a drink. Now they get off the trams at the new terminus and don’t bother to come down to us. You see those workmen outside repairing the tram track? Well, they come in here for a pint and so our business fluctuates. Give me the good old times when men didn’t mind walking a quarter of a mile to a tavern”.



The tram station in Nether Street, with the Gaumont cinema to the left of the bus and The Cricketers pub on the right

“Tally Ho Hotel. The removal of the bus stop has affected us badly. With the state of the trade at the moment I could cut my staff by three or four. We are not frantic yet and hope the summer returns will show improvement. During the holidays I have always engaged a temporary staff. Judging by present results this will not be necessary again. Now that the Barnet trams stop further down the road I have lost a good many customers. It’s a funny thing, but people always walk forward and never backward”.

“W C Davies (tobacconist and confectioner). I shall apply for re-assessment. Before the roundabout came we had customers from the 9 and 21 trams. It’s the tobacco buyers we have lost. Last year we were re-assessed 60 per cent. The assessors knew that the one-way traffic system was coming and should have taken it into consideration”.

“H Philpott (newsagent). Since the trams have moved, our sale of daily newspapers have dropped slightly. Periodicals are not so bad. Nowadays the man travelling from Barnet to Cricklewood changes at Woodhouse Road and not Tally Ho Corner. That’s where we have lost some of our morning trade”.

“W Jelks & Sons (furniture depositories). The number of people looking round our showrooms has decreased 25 per cent. At the moment traffic alterations have a very deterring effect, but, in time, people will come across to the island, instead of being taken away. I feel sure they will regard this spot as the safest in North Finchley for shopping purposes. Nervous people do not mind crossing against one-way traffic. In twelve months’ time the new system will be a godsend. I find that the majority of passengers walk to Tally Ho Corner from the roundabout along the Great North Road and not Ballards Lane. Out of 20 passengers from a 21 tram the other night I counted eight who stopped to look at my windows. I have no doubt that the illumination of the shop after dark will pay in the long run”.

The paper reported that, although traders in the Great North Road were complaining of diminishing customers and those in Ballards Lane were severely affected, the only shopkeepers who betrayed any sign of optimism were the ones at the junction of Woodhouse Road and the Great North Road.

WOODHOUSE DAYS - continued

by Caroline Wright (nee Cooper)

Other teachers I remember through the years include Mr Fradd for French, Mrs Martin for Art, Miss Davies for English (who was my inspiration to become a teacher) – she wore lovely full skirted summer dresses and married another member of staff later on, Mr Wood for Maths (deputy head with a son in our class) and Miss Whitehead who taught PE (she was my inspiration to become a teacher of PE). I loved PE right through the school as it was the subject where I outshone the more academic ones. I played a lot of hockey and tennis after school and at weekends. I had my own hockey stick and tennis racquet (complete with press!). We had a new gym just after I started school there and I used to go to the trampoline club on a Friday and I was entered in occasional competitions. I played hockey for the school even though we used to have

to travel around London on public transport to get to matches on a Saturday morning. Though I would often wait for Dad to get back from the Club on a Friday night when he had had a couple of drinks and was in a good mood and ask him to give me and my friends a lift. I played in the County hockey trials once. In athletics I found I was good at the 880 yards. I was a last minute substitute for my house on sports day and ran against Daphne Scott who used to win everything. I beat her and held the school record for many years after that. I went training with Mr Yarrow who introduced me to the idea of interval training. I improved every time I ran the event and actually ran an important race at Copthall Stadium, crossing the line just as my brother Anthony arrived from work to see me run. A wonderful feeling and I can remember overtaking other runners on the final back straight knowing that I had plenty of energy to get to the finish. By the time I left school I had full colours for hockey and athletics – that meant a different coloured badge to go on the pocket of my blazer. We used to wear coloured sashes diagonally to show which team we were in for team games. I represented my house, Livingstone, whenever I could. What I didn't like about PE was showering afterwards. Even though the cubicles were private and had curtains, I was paranoid about anyone seeing my naked bits and would go to the end shower where I could hang my towel on the end wall. Our PE uniform was pale yellow Aertex shirts and royal blue divided skirts. We also had royal blue athletic knickers for gym and athletics.

I took part in some drama productions at school. I was asked to audition for a part in a play as my face was 'so flexible', but then didn't get the part. Later on I was a nun in a play called *Godstow Nunnery* and an announcer for a group performing *George and the Dragon* but actually said the wrong title on more than one occasion. I was a member of the school choir as a soprano initially then an alto. I enjoyed the annual school performance of *The Messiah* which involved all the pupils singing at the local church for the parents. Even Dad enjoyed it. The choir would have bits to sing on their own – I remember singing with a small group of other altos – *How Beautiful are the Feet*. On at least one occasion the choir performed at Westminster Hall in Central London and also at Archway Central Hall. I think we also sang the *Te Deum*. We had Musical Appreciation classes when in the sixth form. These were led by Miss Howard who was also the conductor of *The Messiah* and choir. We would sit in the Hall while she played various pieces of classical music. We also had General Studies with Dr Corrigan where we supposed to discuss current affairs etc. I used to enjoy going to the Literary Debating Society, particularly balloon debates although I never took part. These activities were often house based and we would have house meetings every term or so and the prefects would organise the various teams.

I was in Livingstone and the other houses were Gordon, Nightingale and Scott. They all featured in our school song with music by Hedley Martin and words by G R Mellor, along with our school motto - Cheerfulness with Industry! I can remember only the first few lines of the song:

'Gordon, Livingstone, Nightingale and Scott
Cheerfulness with Industry
Woodhouse!'

We each had to have our own hymn book in which we got other pupils to write good luck messages and autographs on the day we left. I still have my copy of *The Messiah* and my hymn book.

The Hall was also used for exams. I used to get very nervous about needing to go to the toilet as no one ever asked except me and it was so embarrassing. In the end, just.

THE SCHOOL SONG

Words by G. R. MELLOR, B.A. Music by H. G. MARTIN, B.Sc.

Moderato

VOICE

1. By
2. By
3. Is

PIANO

field and track, by pitch and court Hy - gie - a beck-ens active
board and chart, by bench and book Min - ere - a sage-ly summons
dal - ly round and com-mon task Our aim to take a cheer-ful

youth- A wel - come call, a bra - cing call For
youth- Im - pel - ling call, im - per - lous call For
part; To those in need an out - stretch'd hand And

grace-ful poise and strength of frame. And Na - ture mod-er-ate - ing
men-tal poise, and strength of will. And Mus - es calm sweet sol - ace
when there comes the last great call For some may-be the scroll of

smile On gal - last struggles lost and won.
give To those who strive for truth and right.
fame, For all "Well done, you played the game?"

CHORUS (well marked)

1st and 2nd times

Gor - don, Liv - ingstone, Night-in-gale and Scott, Cheer - ful-ness with In - dus - try,

D.C. 1^o

2nd time

Wood - house! Cheer - ful-ness with In - dus - try, Wood - house!

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The School Song (Woodhouse)

before I took my A levels, Mum took me to Uncle Ken, our doctor, who prescribed some pills that he said would 'dry me up'. They worked a treat and I had no more problems. Turned out they were sugar pills and acted as a placebo. Still, not bad when you consider A level papers would be three hours long. The invigilators would sit on the stage. Mr Yarrow, who was a relatively young teacher, would sit there with his ear plugs in listening to music and tapping away in time. A very vivid memory of Ken Willis was when I had to have a polio injection at the age of 5. I was petrified of injections but the needles were very long and scary and although Uncle Ken got the needle into my buttock he then had to chase me around the surgery – which was actually a room in the house they lived in on Holden Road. When he extracted it, it was bent!

When I had to have an injection for TB at Woodhouse I used to practice pinching my skin for weeks beforehand to get used to the idea. Like most kids, I hated going to the dentist – more brown leather sofas and ugly pictures. I had to have a tooth out by gas once and dreamt I was having my tooth out – in my dream the dentist had a huge mole on his cheek. I had to have a verruca treated once and had to have it frozen off with liquid nitrogen by a doctor in hospital.

There were two different staffrooms and I never saw either of them. The ladies staffroom was upstairs and the men's downstairs. You could knock on the door but they tended to be cross if you did.

They changed the school uniform as we were about to leave and I was chosen to be one of the models. The original uniform was very strict – down to what denier stockings you could wear in Year 3 and the dreaded navy blue knickers already mentioned. There were no tights in those days so I had to have a suspender belt which was very uncomfortable. Coats had to be navy gabardine though I do remember I had a navy

fashion coat with a fleece lining towards the end of the sixth form. In years 1-3 you had to wear a navy blue gymslip with a white blouse and a tie. In year 4 you could wear grey pleated skirts instead of gymslips and a grey v-neck jumper but you still had to wear regulation shoes from Clarks in either black or brown lace-ups which had little tassels on them. We were as creative as possible with the jumpers and I had a large man's jumper that was nice and baggy. We would turn over the waistband on the skirt to make it shorter. We had to wear a blazer and beret going to and from school. I became a prefect so I had a metal badge to wear too. Hair had to be tied up.

So I left school in 1966 and went to work for a year at the National Reference Library for Science and Invention before going to teacher training college in Walsall in 1967. In 1970 Mum and Dad sold our house in Holden Road when the Byelorussian Community who owned Marian House opposite us and two of the houses in Holden Road made Dad an offer that he was pleased to accept – out of the blue, but an opportunity for the family to move out of London to Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire. For many years Mum would have had bad dreams about being back in Holden Road with the roof leaking, ceilings coming down, floorboards rotting etc, etc. So overall a good decision.

THE OTHER W G*

by John Heathfield

Ours was W G Collier. He took over the Headship of Friern Barnet Lane Boys' School on 26 August 1896, the previous Head, Robert Pitson, having been dismissed for drunkenness. He wrote: "I took charge of the school today. The discipline has been very unsatisfactory – stone throwing, disobedience, laughing, playing about and talking have been rife. Twice pistol caps have been discharged in the classroom."

The Inspectors' reports show the improvement he made:

"1896. Following the change of Headmaster, there are many signs of improvement. Overall assessment: Good."

"1898. The teaching is intelligent and thorough."

"1900. This is an admirable village school, taught with enthusiasm, skill and much success. The boys are thoroughly interested in their work and show that they are trained in self-control and esprit de corps".

"1901. This school has made a remarkable improvement. Grant increased."

Collier had two ideas which were unusual at the time. One was that if children are interested they will be well behaved, and the other was that if children understand what they are being taught, they are more likely to remember. When the new school in Holly Park was opened in 1904 the question of the first Head Teacher came up. The Secretary of the Friern Barnet Education Committee said: "I recommend Mr Collier, I can have him available for interview if you wish." The Committee decided to accept the Secretary's recommendation and did not interview. This is in such contrast with today when the Human Resources Department of the Council would draw up a Person Specification and a job description, with inputs from the Equal Opportunities Department, the Race Equality Department, the Gender and Disability Department and the Finance Department before the post was even advertised. In view of the controversy on educational standards, I wonder if the old ways are not the best.

The school logbook contains many snippets, which are worth reprinting:

“The girls have one pinafore each which is supplied by the school. They were supposed to be washed by the weekend but this is seldom done because 1) this is an inconvenient time 2) the parents are so poor that many of the mothers work on a Saturday 3) during the winter months there is much illness 4) Monday is the proper washing day and many mothers object to washing and ironing on a different day.”

“1884. Through the kindness of Mrs Miles, soup will be provided twice a week during the winter months and the children can have a slice of bread, thus providing a good nourishing meal for a penny.”

“1887. Frances Gibson is to be excused needlework because of her poor eyesight and her parents cannot afford glasses.”

“1900. Mr Townsend and I spent the whole evening redecorating the schoolroom. This is the first time it has been whitewashed since the school was opened in 1854.”

“Sarah is absent, not being present.”

Incidentally, the summer holiday at that time was three weeks.

**W G Grace, of course*

MEMORIES OF ST JOHN'S SCHOOL IN THE 1930s

by Hazel Amor

The entrance was at the junction of Goldsmith Road and Stanford Road, and opposite the hut which ran along the footpath leading into Crescent Road. Children started lessons at 5 years old up to 11 years old. Boys were sent to St James School when they were eight years old. And then boys and girls worked towards the 11-plus exams, loosely referred to as the scholarship exams – a three-part test – primary, secondary and oral. Failures at primary were sent to Holly Park Council school – the rest went to grammar schools.

Classrooms seemed quite small, desks in pairs and in rows. Ink wells (pottery) were topped up by trustworthy pupils using hand ink cans with long narrow spouts. Morning prayers were taken by headmistress Miss Bradley and the Rector of the day would give a scripture lesson. I particularly remember Ascension Day – he asked us all to pick buttercups and forget-me-knots to decorate the church and explained they would represent the blue sky and sunshine for ascension into heaven. We attended a morning service and had a half day's holiday.

Lessons included reading, writing, arithmetic and mental arithmetic. We used to chant 1 to 12 times tables several times a week. Calculators, biros, plastic were unheard of. We wrote with straight wooden pens and metal nibs (these had to be renewed from time to time). Halfway through the morning lessons, we were given bottles of milk (one-third of a pint) and allowed a few minutes play time – a very rough area, and many knees bore scars of over-enthusiastic running about! The toilets were in the background – very basic and freezing cold – no lingering in those days.

We all walked to school in the morning, home and back again at the end of the afternoon. A car was a rarity. I was smacked on the palm of my hand by Miss Bradley for being late. The horrid boy Leslie was to blame for getting me to run away from the wicked witch – he got smacked too. Oh, the humiliation!

I remember history lessons – Jason and the Golden Fleece, Perseus and the Gorgon’s head (I can still see that head with the writhing snakes instead of hair). We also had lessons when poems were read to us and we wrote little stories. My success was a ghost story. The teacher was very popular as from time to time she allowed us to take a sweet from a large bag she provided. Those were the days. How innocent and gentle they were, and how fortunate we were.

(this article appeared in the December 2006 issue of ‘Fulcrum - the Parish Magazine of Friern Barnet’)

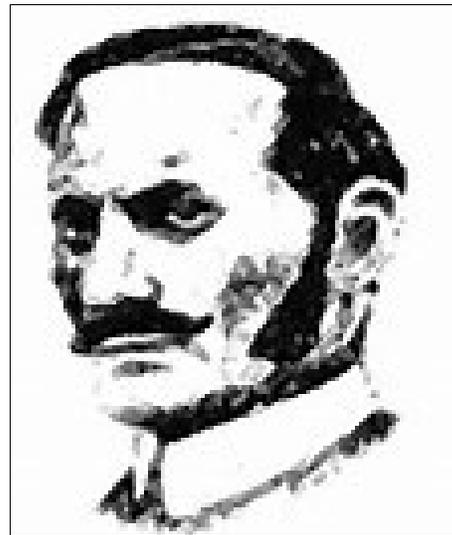
JACK THE RIPPER AGAIN

In our Newsletter of April 2017 we ended the article by saying that we would probably never know if Aaron Kosminsky was in fact Jack the Ripper. Well, now it appears that modern technology has proved that he actually was guilty of the crimes.

In 2007 the author Russell Edwards purchased at an auction a shawl that had apparently been taken from the body of the Ripper’s fourth victim, Catherine Eddowes. The shawl had blood stains on it in a pattern similar to that achieved by the slashing of an artery. An analysis of the shawl dated it to the early 19th century and that it had been made in Eastern Europe; Kosminsky was born in Poznan on the Russian/Polish border. Because Catherine was so poor it is unlikely that she would have owned such an item, so the assumption is that her murderer left it at the scene. Semen stains were discovered on the shawl and a DNA analysis of these resulted in 100% match with one of Kosminsky’s descendants.



Catherine Eddowes



Aaron Kosminsky

In his book *Naming Jack the Ripper*, Edwards points out that Kosminsky’s mental illness could well have been brought on by inhumane and barbaric treatment that he had suffered, along with many other Jews, in his native country. Following the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 the Jews were blamed and they were driven from their ghettos, and their homes were looted and pillaged. Stories were told of babies being killed in their mother’s arms and women were raped and men killed. The Kosminsky family made their way across Europe and arrived penniless in London in 1882.

Despite what Edwards has uncovered, there are still those who have their own pet theories on the identity of Jack the Ripper, ranging from the Duke of Clarence to Sir William Gull, a surgeon, to the artist Walter Sickert and even Lewis Carroll! The leading British geneticist and expert on DNA testing, Sir Alec Jeffreys, claimed that this latest evidence is unreliable. So are we back to square one? Watch this space.....

WORKING AT FRIERN HOSPITAL

by Barry Winter

I was born in 1934 in Henfield, Sussex but the family moved to Brighton shortly after. In 1940, when I was nearly six, I was evacuated to live with my grandparents to Cowford, a mere 17 miles inland from Brighton. I imagine if Mr Schickelgruber had landed in England he would not have stopped at Brighton so I am not sure that it was all that good a move.

I shared a bed with an uncle who was some 18 months older than me and we shared the room with two more uncles. I attended the local school, St Peters, and every Sunday and on religious holidays I would sing in the church choir. On Saturday mornings, I delivered papers for all or most of the local gentry who lived in large houses or mansions scattered around the countryside. At one house in particular which had a long shingle driveway my bicycle would attract the attention of owner's dog which I feared. As soon as the barking started the chase was on and would throw the papers on the lawn, put my feet on the handlebars and lash out with the bicycle pump. I imagine the owners were doubled up with laughter at this spectacle. One day on returning to the shop I was told that the owner had hanged himself in a room above the shop so it seemed that his problems were greater than mine.

At the age of ten I needed abdominal surgery and was taken to Brighton Children's Hospital. I slowly deteriorated and at the age of twelve I went back there to have two operations, on a Monday and again on the next Friday, which was Good Friday. I know I was very lucky not to have departed this life. After my release my parents moved to Ringmer to work in a hotel but they decided to return to Brighton but I was informed by my parents that the council could only offer them a single bed flat so I was sent back to my grandparents until I was fifteen and in fact the local council presented me with books and toys for being the longest evacuee in Sussex! I remember waiting at the bottom of the garden every Sunday lunchtime to see if the number 17 bus from Brighton would be carrying my mother but she rarely came. She was not a very affectionate parent and I cannot remember her picking me up and cuddling me, bringing me any presents or sweets or kissing me and saying goodbye, which has certainly affected my relationship with my family. When I visited my parents in Brighton I discovered that they had actually been given a three bedroom flat and they had taken lodgers.

When I started work I had various jobs, as a cellulose sprayer, and an apprentice electrician on very low wages. I took on extra work at Brighton Ice Rink for the Christmas show of Cinderella. My job was to walk on, take the ostrich feather fan from one of the scantily clad artistes in the centre of the rink before she performed her act on a single rope hanging from the ceiling. I stepped onto the ice and promptly slipped over and slid all the way to the centre spotlight with the audience laughing and clapping. I think, on reflection, I missed my chance of stardom as it never happened again. I did, however, manage to save £50 which was a fortune to me at the time.

The cellulose spraying job only lasted two or three weeks as it involved laying under cars and cleaning the chassis with the spirit cleaner running down my arms. I liked the electrician's work and stayed for about five years.

I gradually began to realise that I was going nowhere career wise and decided that maybe London with all the bright lights and the excitement of a better life beckoned, so off I went with more hope than expectations. I stayed with a school friend, who also came on this adventure, in a single room in Holloway Road and working in Jones Bros department store. This lasted until he returned to Brighton and I struggled on eventually to work as a waiter in a restaurant in the West End. In the autumn of 1956 I collapsed at work and was taken to Charing Cross Hospital. I had another abdominal operation and had two weeks in hospital followed by two weeks convalescence in Deal in Kent paid for by the NHS. I then had a further, successful, operation. A change of career was waiting and one that changed my life in every way and to my betterment, financially and emotionally. I felt that if you take an opportunity when it comes, and despite the risks involved, you will probably succeed in life.

In December 1956 I went to the Labour Exchange at Finsbury Park looking for a change in employment. It was suggested that I might try nursing and so off I went on the 521 trolleybus all the way to Friern Barnet. On arrival the conductor called out my stop and there was I looking at this imposing grey building and wondering if I should turn around and go back. But I decided against it and so off I went and found the office of the Chief Male Nurse. The interview seemed to go well and he said the preliminary training course would start in early February 1957 and he would inform me when to start.

Christmas and New Year came and went and by the end of January there was still no word so I went back to see what the problem was and I was told that a mix-up had occurred but I was asked when I could start. "Immediately" I replied and my life was to change forever. Little did I realise at the time how much. I was taken to residential accommodation, shown the cafeteria and then fitted for a made-to measure suit from Hepworths. These suits were of good quality and were not on sale to the general public so when I wore it off duty I felt really someone. At work we would change our suit jacket for a long white coat with epaulettes of different colours depending on your status. Charge Nurses wore dark blue coats and ancillary staff wore dark green jackets only.

I was sent to the school to find that instruction and training had been in progress for a week. I was given an intelligence test and I don't think I answered the example correctly – that's how stupid and ignorant I was – but nobody could have examined my answers because I entered the class of about thirty students one week late. During the 14 week course these numbers whittled down to a handful, me included. A lot of hard graft and studying seemed to be paying off for me. Nursing staff who chose to have hospital accommodation lived in single rooms in a detached house in the hospital grounds. Our laundry was done by the hospital including our own private clothing. Then it was off to the wards for practical experience which I found fairly easy and then it was back for more training. I was finding the big words and medical terms needed a lot of concentration but I was feeling more and more confident and I was now with three other students from my original course.

There was plenty of social life, sports and entertainment and a sense of belonging and a purpose in my life. At least I was happier now and more contented. February 1958 came and now it was the time to find out if anything had sunk into my brain as our Preliminary Examination was due. This consisted of a written part at Friern and

practical at the North Middlesex Hospital. I was informed after one month that I had passed the written part but had to take the practical again which I passed at the second attempt. It was on now to the second and third year training and I was feeling good. I had good food to eat, a new suit every year, a roof over my head, plenty of friends (females included!), sports, money and just about everything I could wish for. And to cap it all I was instructed to go and see the Chief Male Nurse; usually this was a sign that you were never seen again - sacked, got rid of, shown the door. So it was with apprehension that I went into his office and was told to sit down and I didn't think you would be told to do this if you were to be disposed of. Quite matter-of-factly he informed me that I had been chosen as the best third years' nurse. Wow! I was to be presented with books of my choice by the Chairman of the Nursing Council at the annual prize giving in the Main Hall at Friern. A big feather in my cap; if I could do this the world and everything was achievable.

I soldiered on until the final examination at the end of year 3 and the outcome was the same as before and I passed all the written and practical tests which I tackled with confidence. It was time for a celebration so a few of us went out for some high jinks.



I am in the middle

The male and female wards were on separate wings, with the males in the eastern wing and the females in the larger western wing. The female section had the same facilities, physical and psychiatric, as the male section. During my stay, all departments

and wards were in use including long stay and short stay wards for acute patients, a ward for TB patients and a further two medical wards which were on the male side.

I was now in the exalted position of Staff Nurse with a lot more responsibility and a more professional work ethic from me. I started to think ahead about what I wanted to do and the idea of working in another hospital appealed to me. A map of Europe was used and eyes focussed, a pin in the hand and a site for consideration was selected – Basle in Switzerland. I went to North Finchley, and bought a one-way ticket by train to Basle. I approached the Chief Male Nurse to see if when I had experience abroad there was any chance of me taking up my employment again at Friern. This was agreed and all I needed to do was to contact the hospital and I would be welcomed back. It was now early 1960 and I was 26 years old and still a bit green in many ways. I was leaving Friern with some trepidation as I had been very content and happy there but it was now time to move on. I said goodbye to everyone. I caught an early morning train and my adventure had begun.

I travelled through Holland and Germany and finally arrived at Basle station early in the morning. I couldn't speak a word of French or German and certainly not the Swiss form of it. I found a nursing position in the local general hospital, living in hospital accommodation with very little food provided compared with what I had been used to. The Swiss people were rather reserved and not very helpful and if you couldn't understand which was rather awkward as I found learning the language very difficult. After a year I became more and more unhappy and most of all isolated and homesick. I contacted Friern who said they would welcome me back. I waited to collect my monthly salary and, without a word, took a taxi to the station and was in Germany in half an hour from walking out of the hospital. On reflection, if I had thought a little it would have been more considerate and appropriate if I had informed them of my decision but it was too late and I was on my way to recommence my previous happy lifestyle. My journey lasted two days, arriving back at Friern early on a Saturday morning. My employment confirmed, I started work the next day. I know it wasn't a great success and I don't know if anyone knew of my experience or had experienced anything similar before.

Back at Friern a Charge Nurse would always be wary of any sign of trouble – if any patient was difficult in taking medication, dressing himself, bathing, shaving or eating at mealtimes or showing disagreement. Staff procedures would mean that the patient's dentures would be removed and put into safe keeping. The nurse would try to convince the patient to conform and he was always afraid of any physical contact in case they were broken.

Medication was administered by the nursing staff and was mostly used to control aggressive patients. These did not worry me too much when I was a student but later it was always necessary to be cautious in dealing with and unpredictable event with psychiatric patients.

To be continued.....

COMMEMORATION OF ALLASTAIR MCREADY-DIARMID VC

by Colin Barratt

As mentioned in the September newsletter, a commemoration event will be taking place on 1 December. This is to recognise the sacrifice of Allastair-McReady-Diarmid,

who was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross for his brave actions at a battle in France in World War 1.

The event will be held at Grove Road, New Southgate, near to his birthplace, on the restored Open Space, which will now start at 11am, and last 30 to 40 minutes. Anyone is welcome to attend, but be aware that parking will be severely restricted, so try to come on public transport, if you can.

A leaflet is being produced, to be given out on the day, which will describe what this area of New Southgate was like around the time of his birth here. It will also give details of McReady-Diarmid's life, and the actions which resulted in him being awarded the VC. We also hope to have a small display set up in nearby St Paul's Church hall, where refreshments will be served. A full report will appear in the February newsletter.

CHRISTMAS 1946

by John Heathfield

You'd think that the first year after the end of the war would be a bright one. Of course we won, with a bit of help from the Russians and the Americans. In fact, the Americans made most of our ammunition, aircraft, tanks and guns as well as food supplies like powdered milk and powdered eggs. We then discovered that we had to pay for it and the result was an austerity even harsher than the wartime rationing. December 1946 was marked by shortages of everything and was unusually cold.

The biggest local employer was the Standard followed by Simms in East Finchley, John Dale at New Southgate, Specialoid in North Finchley and Maws in East Barnet, all now gone with the loss of many thousands of jobs – at its peak STC employed some 10,000 local people. The local paper had over three pages of job adverts with the most common being for girls and women to be shorthand typists. Lyons teashops advertised for women to work 49 hours a week in their new "self-service" café – "clean work and overalls provided". A genuine pre-war Prestige pram was offered for £5. Priors said "Bring your permits for Christmas to our Xmas Fair for sheets, blankets, scrim (why?), towels, butter dishes and chrome plates".

In the absence of television, amateur theatricals flourished, the Finchley Under-20 Club produced two new plays for Christmas and the annual show of the Chicken and Rabbit Society attracted over 200 entries. The Arcadia skating rink had daily sessions at 2.30 and 7.30pm. The *Gaumont* showed Irving Berlin's *Blue Skies* starring Fred Astaire and Bing Crosby. The *Rex* at East Finchley showed *David Copperfield* starring W C Fields and Freddy Bartholomew and the Golders Green Hippodrome had *Cinderella*. Further afield, Bertram Mills' Circus was at Olympia. Apart from the *Rex*, which is now *The Phoenix*, none of these still in existence.

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