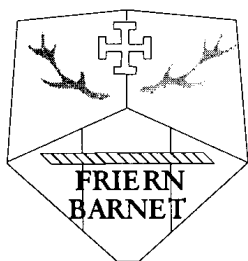


Friern Barnet & Whetstone Residents' Association



March 2010

Friern Barnet and Whetstone Residents' Association

- We are non-political
- We work for all residents in the area
- We discuss issues with Local Councillors and Council Officials
- Associated with the following bodies
 - The Federation of Residents' Association of Barnet
 - The Post Office Advisory Panel
 - The Finchley Society
 - Friends of Friary Park
 - The Friern Barnet & District Local History Society
 - Coppetts Wood Conservationists
 - The London Green Belt Council
 - North Finchley Local Agenda 21

Oakleigh residents fight for open space

Oakleigh Ward has few open spaces, and one of those remaining is under threat of development. A sports ground is enclosed by Chandos, Langton, and Buckingham Avenues and the High Road and at one time was home to Old Owens Sports Club. It was acquired by the Haringey Gospel Hall Trust. A Gospel Hall and Wellgrove School were built on the grounds and used by members of a world-wide Christian Fellowship known as Brethren.

The Trust wishes to dispose of the property, and to its credit has consulted with neighbouring residents. Any Trust has a legal obligation to obtain the maximum value when disposing of charitable property, and in this case the Trust has been advised that the securing of planning permission for a residential development is the right way to do this.

No planning application has been made yet, but one is, we understand, imminent. Originally 87 flats and 56 houses were intended, but following discussions with local residents this has been



Development will spoil the spaciousness of the Chandos Avenue area

scaled back to 20 flats and 77 houses. 70% of the homes would have access from Chandos Avenue, and 30% from the High Road. Local residents have formed 'Residents Against Development' (RAD), which has a strong committee with which our officers have liaised, have delivered leaflets about the proposed development in the area and have held consultation meetings with residents.

To date RAD does not have a formal position on the development, but residents consulted at the meetings had concerns about traffic, parking (and therefore health and safety), drainage and infrastructure, height of proposed buildings and concerns about being overlooked. Also, strains on services such as schools, doctors and police; noise and pollution, and the need for more green space and playing fields. Mention has also been made of a possible restrictive covenant.

It has also been pointed out that the proposed provision of 1.25 car parking spaces per household would be woefully inadequate in an area where 614 households have an average of 1.45 vehicles per household, and 467 household have 1.7 vehicles per household.

Planning Policy Guidance 17—for open space, sport and recreation—states that local authorities should undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open spaces, sports and recreational facilities, and

Friern Barnet & Whetstone Residents Association

AGM

**Wednesday 14th April 2010
at 7:30 p.m.**

**Community Centre, adjacent to St John
the Evangelist Church, Friern Barnet
Road, N11**

All Members Welcome

**The meeting will be followed by a
presentation from**

Mr David Howard, chairman of FORAB
(Federation of Residents Associations of Barnet)
and of East Barnet Residents Association —
“Are Supermarkets Taking Over Our Town
Centres?”

Continued page 2

Bleak future for Totteridge and Whetstone library

Last June we printed an article about a replacement for the Totteridge Library, closed several years ago. When we had asked the Head of Libraries, Museums and Local Studies about the commitment to replace the Totteridge Library, he replied, after referring the question to the current political administration, that discussions had previously concentrated on the potential to provide this service through a redeveloped Barnet House, but that no funding had been allocated.

We wrote to each of the Oakleigh and Totteridge Councillors to ask them to support the replacement of the Totteridge Library and fight for funding to be provided in the 2010-2011 or 2011-2012 Budgets.

The three Totteridge Councillors responded with a joint letter, saying that the provision of library services was very important to all of them, and that they would ideally love a new library in Whetstone High Road. They said that Barnet House is not a suitable site, not least because of the Council's short term leasehold tenure, and that a new library will have to await a planning opportunity fitting it into a new scheme.

Cllr Brian Salinger, one of the Oakleigh Councillors replied that he has supported plans for the possible future use of a part of Barnet House for library purposes, but suspected that any such use would be dependent on any monies that become available, if a change of use for the building is sought by an outside developer. He knows that Councillors have indicated to planning officers that they would like to see a library facility incorporated in plans for the redevelopment of the former Furnitureland site, but monies for this would also have to come from a planning agreement. He thinks it unlikely that libraries on the Furnitureland site and Barnet House would both be pursued.

Given the tight financial constraints this year and for the foreseeable future Cllr Salinger does not think there would be any other way of financing a new library. The other two Oakleigh Councillors have not replied.

So it seems that a replacement for Totteridge Library is just a mirage. When the lease on Barnet House expires the building is more likely to remain an empty shell for many



The former Totteridge library lies empty and unused

years. In Whetstone High Road the Black Bull site has planning permission to become a Travelodge hotel, with a retail store on the ground floor. The BP petrol station is to become flats and offices, but at present is being used as a used car lot with hand car washing, and the office block almost opposite Barnet House has been demolished, with planning permission for offices and flats. So those sites are already spoken for. The only possible sites that we can think of for a Library are a redeveloped Green Man site, or the former Royal Mail sorting office in Oakleigh Road North which is now a closed down carpet store. But with Councillors expecting a developer to pay for the new Library we are likely to be in for a long wait.

The Furnitureland site has been talked of as a replacement for the North Finchley Library, although residents of North Finchley would prefer a new library to be more central, in or adjacent to the Artsdepot in Ballards Lane.

There are seven wards in Chipping Barnet constituency. Three wards have one library each. One ward (Coppetts) has two libraries. Three adjacent wards (Oakleigh, Totteridge and Underhill) have none.

One wonders what has become of the sales proceeds of the former Totteridge Library. Has it been set aside to be spent on a future Totteridge & Whetstone Library, or has it gone to help pay for the modernised Hendon Library, or been invested in an Icelandic Bank?

BS

. . . Oakleigh residents fight for open space

The developers will need to consult local community and demonstrate that proposals are widely supported by them.

In view of the expected population increase in the Borough it may be argued that sports grounds should be retained. It could also be argued that more children will lead to a need for more schools, and that this site, which

has been used by Wellgrove School, would be suitable for a private or state school with sports facilities which could be shared with the local community. More information on the Brethren can be found online at

www.theexclusivebrethren.com Your committee will continue to monitor the situation closely.

BS

Centenary plans for Friary Park

As we know, 2010 is going to be the year of the General Election. We in the London Borough of Barnet are also going to be voting for a new Council. That particular election is happening on Thursday 6th May, so it is almost logical that the General Election will also take place on that day. At the time of writing, none of us knows for sure.

What we do know for sure is that Friary Park opened to the public 100 years ago on 7th May. The planned celebrations of the opening were delayed and subdued due to the death of King Edward VII on the previous day.

In 1909, after much wrangling with the Urban District Council of Friern Barnet, local businessman Sydney Simmons donated over £7,000 to enable Friern Barnet Urban District Council to purchase the estate previously owned by Mr. Edmund Richardson. In offering the money, Mr. Simmons put forward a number of wishes, including dedicating the land to the inhabitants of Friern Barnet as a public park for all time.

Sydney Simmons was born in 1840 in Okehampton, Devon. As a young man he served a ten-year apprenticeship at a Plymouth drapery, then came to London in 1862 where he began working for a large carpet manufacturer. He studied books on design and decoration at the South Kensington Museum, and because of his eagerness to learn and his confident manner, his employers appointed him their North American sales representative.

While in the United States, Sydney acquired the rights for a newly patented mechanical cleaning process. On his return to the UK, he then founded two highly successful carpet-cleaning companies, one using steam and the other compressed air. By 1900, Sydney Simmons was a rich man. Hence, he was able to purchase two parks, the newly named Simmons Park in Okehampton (in 1907), and Friary



Sir Sydney Simmons donated Friary Park to the public

Park, in Friern Barnet, which opened to the public in 1910.

100 years later a group of people from local organisations connected with this Association have been meeting regularly, to formulate the best way to celebrate Sydney Simmons gift to the people of Friern Barnet. Rather than have the actual date sabotaged by elections, interruptions and general inability to have true focus from

the Council, we have decided to integrate the Centenary celebrations with the Friern Barnet Summer Show.

The 2010 committee is hoping to have a Summer Show that will be remembered by children and adults alike, and providing the weather stays dry, will be enjoyed by everyone attending. It is anticipated that people will come from far and wide to help us celebrate, including our friends from Okehampton, where Simmons Park is now our 'twin'. (Well, we do have the same 'father').

This year's show is scheduled for 21st and 22nd August, so put those dates in your diary and keep a look out for information and updates on all things to do with Friern Barnet Summer Show.

HH



Friary Park in the winter of 2010



Friary Park in the past— Friary Park is proud of its Green Flag, the Council's recognition of the care which it enjoys from Antonio, the regular park keeper, and the support of its Friends. But it has been a central attraction now for 100 years and there have been numerous changes, from the heavy iron gates, to the green houses, to the most recent addition of an exotic tree in commemoration of Friern Barnet's 50 years of twinning with Chaville, a town on the outskirts of Paris.

A few items which older locals will remember are the handsome boating lake, near the statue, in the centre of which a small island provided a home for a family of ducks, the line of ducklings waddling down wooden "staircases" to surprise schoolchildren with their ability to swim perfectly without any parental instruction or life-belts. On the slope towards Torrington Park a large bandstand was in regular use. Both can be seen in the above photo taken in the 1960s.

KR

Forthcoming Events

To support **Friary Park Centenary**—Quiz Supper

Saturday 22 May All Saints Arts Centre, 112 Oakleigh Road North. Tickets £9:00 per person, 8 people per table, raffle, mid-quiz entertainment. Starts 7:00 pm prompt. Tickets Janet Liversidge 0208 368 3927

Incognito Theatre

"Harvey" by Mary Chase; **Sunday 21st March - Saturday 27th March**. Sunday performance starts at **6pm**, all other performances start at **7:45 pm**. Ticket Prices : **£9** non-members, **£8** members, **£5** students.

Friern Barnet and District Local History Society

Wednesday 24 March Allotments by *Leon Price & Phyll Miles*

Wednesday 28 April The Fleet Valley by *John Neal*

All meetings take place at St John's Church Hall, next to Whetstone Police Station, Friern Barnet Lane. Starts 7:45 p.m.; cost £2 to non-members.

Friern Barnet Library

Weds 17th March – Hendon Aerodrome – 100 Years – by *Hugh Petrie*

Weds 21st April - Friary Park: A Centenary Talk – by *Mel Hooper*

All coffee mornings are from 10.30 – 11.30

Coppetts Wood Annual Woodland Festival

Sun 16th May 2 pm to 4 pm At Coppetts Wood Nature Reserve

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