



HISTORY

Neighbours from hell

By Ann Bronkhorst

Fifty years ago the residents of Neale Close – described then as a ‘good class neighbourhood’ – had had enough. Squeals, sounds of gunshots, smells, flies ... it was unbearable. But when they complained to the council they were told that the house in question was ‘properly conducted’.

Pigging it

The ‘house’ was a slaughterhouse, part of Park Farm, off East End Road. ‘Lord’ George Sanger had lived (and been murdered) there about fifty years earlier. Now, in 1954, the farm housed a piggery, perhaps a last survivor of the hog trade on which East Finchley once thrived.

In the late 18th century Shropshire hogs were sold at East Finchley’s hogmarket to local butchers who fattened them up on the leftovers from London’s distilling industry. Wealthy pig-dealers and hog-butchers owned land locally and ran pubs such as the George, the Hog Driver and the Sow and Pigs.

Fast forward to 1954: post-war meat rationing had ended and meat and livestock were decontrolled. But, as the Medical Officer of Health for Finchley noted, private slaughterhouses didn’t disappear. If they didn’t break planning regulations, had existed for some time and were regularly inspected there were

no grounds for withdrawing their licences. And that seems to have been Finchley Council’s initial conclusion in the autumn of 1954.

Some gems emerge from the Finchley Press reports of the time, such as Cllr. Enright’s hope that ‘a more silent gun’ could be used and the ‘private sleuthing’ by members of Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents’ Association, one of whom was advised by a small boy to climb a tree in order to see the slaughterhouse.

Backyard bacon?

The MOH’s annual report, however, refers to the fining of an unnamed slaughterhouse for various offences and the cancellation of its licence, so perhaps the outraged Neale Close residents finally prevailed.

Even so, one year later, in a yard in Prospect Place, someone was keeping 25 pigs and 200 fowls. I wonder when livestock-keeping on this scale finally ended in East Finchley – do any *ARCHER* readers have memories of backyard pigs and home-grown ham?

Finchley County

Did you start at Finchley County School in 1947? Old Fincunians Joan Brown, Joan Oram (nee Buckenham) and Geoffrey Batten are hoping to organise a reunion for people who entered Finchley County School in September 1947.

The proposed date is Saturday 6 August 2005 and it would take place at East Grinstead, West Sussex. Approximately 60 girls and boys entered the school that year and contact has been made with about half of them to date.

If you are one of those who hasn’t yet been contacted and

you would like to know more about the reunion, please telephone Geoffrey Batten on 0121 475 6604 or email him on grb@batten.eu.org. If you are in touch with anyone who might have entered FCS in 1947, please pass Geoffrey’s details on to them.

Barnet Normandy Veterans

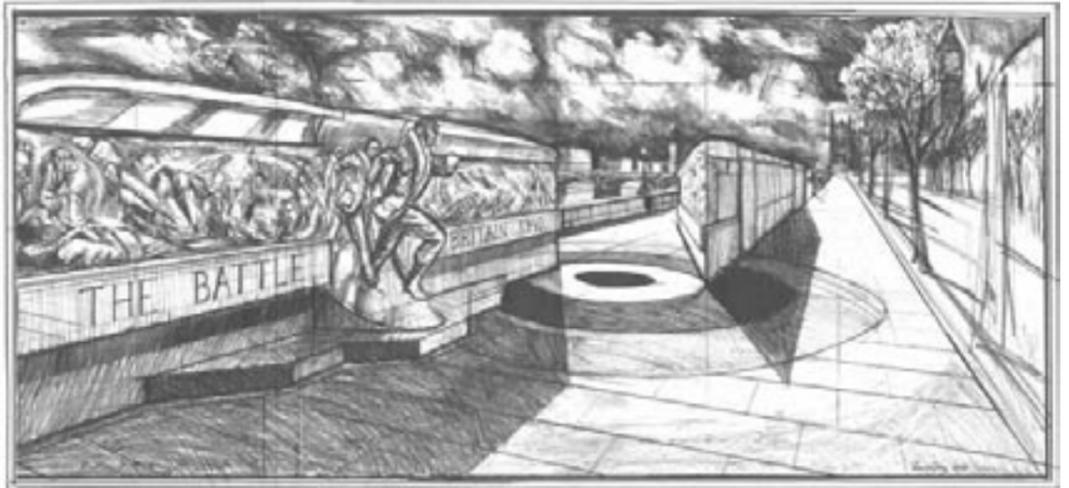
By Daphne Chamberlain

Anyone who landed on the Normandy beaches between 5 June and 20 August 1944 is entitled to become a full member of the Normandy Veterans Association. That timespan defines the official Normandy campaign. People who served elsewhere, or who were in the area but not at that time, can become associate members.

Jack Clabburn, Chair of the Barnet branch, told *THE ARCHER* that Barnet currently has 28 full members and nine associates. This summer they spent six days revisiting the campaign sites for the 60th anniversary of D-Day, commemorated for them by the BBC, who sent them 40 videos covering the entire anniversary celebrations.

At this year’s Remembrance Day ceremony, the Normandy Veterans will lead the march past the Cenotaph.

The 95 (Barnet) Branch meet on the last Friday of every month at 7.30pm at St Mary Magdalene’s Church, 6 Athenaeum Road, Whetstone. For further details, contact Mr Clabburn on 020 8245 6931.



A Paul Day drawing of the planned monument taken from the monument web site, address below

Remembering “The Few”

By Diana Cormack

“Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few.” Winston Churchill paid this tribute to the 2,936 fighter pilots who took part in the Battle of Britain, which lasted from 10 July until 31 October 1940. During those four months, 544 of them lost their lives and 795 were to die before the end of the war. Owing to their amazing courage and tenacity, the Germans abandoned plans to invade our country, though it was to be another five years before the enemy was eventually overcome.

Monument to courage

That final victory is to be celebrated in 2005, sixty years after World War Two ended and, next year too, a memorial to ‘The Few’ is to be unveiled. Westminster City Council has donated a site near the RAF memorial on the Victoria Embankment. The original idea for a monument came from Bill Bond, who founded the Battle of Britain Society, which launched the initiative three years ago. Based on an existing granite structure, it is being fashioned by sculp-

tor Paul Day and will carry the names of all the airmen involved, who came from many countries. Sculpted panels will show pilots in action, along with the men and women on the ground who made their activities possible, plus rescue services and civilians in bombed areas of Great Britain. In fact, it serves as an honour to virtually all who took part and who deserve our thoughts and our thanks.

Public honour

Having been refused Lottery assistance, the monument is to

be paid for entirely by public donations. It will cost £1.65 million. At the time of writing £1.3 million has been raised so another £350,000 is needed.

Donations

To make a donation, send a cheque payable to *Battle of Britain London Monument Ltd* at 11 Greenland Road, Barnet, Herts. EN 5 2AL

Telephone 020 8440 5422, fax 020 8440 3676 or visit donations@bbm.org.uk. For general enquiries use info@bbm.org.uk or www.bbm.org.uk.



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