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Spike Milligan statue launch

By Erini Rodis

On 12 October outside Avenue House The Finchley Society launched the Spike Milligan Statue Fund, in honour of their former president and co-founder, who had been a driving force against local 1970's developers and a keen conservationist, as well as a prolific writer and comedian.

Amongst those present were Spike's daughter Jane Milligan, who spearheaded the campaign, former colleague Lyndsay de Paul, a couple of documentary film crews, and an assortment of local reporters.

"Most impressive", says David Smith, secretary of the society, "were the six junior reporters, sent by Our Lady of Lourdes, Holy Trinity and Mansoride Schools. What an asset...they brought out things that adult reporters might not have dared to ask!"

Also present was Barnet sculptor John Somerville, who, thanks to serendipity, has been asked to create the piece, which will be set in the mid seventies, around the same time that both



John Somerville with a model of the statue. Photo by Erini Rodis

he and the Milligans lived in the Finchley area.

It was at a meeting just before Christmas when The Finchley Society were exploring ways to honour their former president, that Chairman and ex-scoutmaster Barbara Warren remembered one of her former cubs had become a sculptor. Somerville doesn't expect to pass any nail inspections nowadays! Especially as with the maquette (small model) now complete, work on a life size clay bust is about

to start.

The statue is going to be finally cast in bronze, at a cost of £30,000. The plan is to unveil it by Spike's birthday on 16 April 2006. Over £3,000 has been raised so far, and watch this space for fund-raising events to make you chuckle. Donations can also be made by sending a cheque made payable to 'The Spike Milligan Fund' to The Secretary, The Finchley Society, 17 Abbott's Gardens, East Finchley, London N2 0JG.

Contact

East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact reports a rise in volunteers, including six senior students from Fortismere School, who have been doing "a wonderful job".

So, if anyone needs help with transport, befriending or odd jobs, Contact are now in a better position to help, and would welcome a ring on 8444 1162.

Need funding?

The following details have been provided by East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact:

The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme, 0800 072 0150 - will tell you if you are eligible for a grant towards home insulation.

The Warm Front Team, 0800 952 0600 - can provide grants to install central heating or storage heating, if you receive a qualifying benefit such as Attendance Allowance.

House Proud - 0800 783 7569 - can provide cheap loans for homeowners for downstairs toilets, wheel chair ramps and other adaptations.

The Disabled and Elderly Facilities Grant - 020 8359 7420 - can provide financial help to install a stair lift.

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