



The Market Place, East Finchley. The Andrew Forsyth Collection.

Time-travelling by postcard

By Ann Bronkhorst

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, we were a nation of postcard-buyers. With few people owning cameras, commercial photographers recorded even the unremarkable streets of East Finchley and the resulting postcards were very popular.

Luckily for us, Andrew Forsyth left his large collection of postcards to the Finchley Society. In a talk last year, at Martin School, Finchley Society Chairman David Smith showed slides chosen from the Forsyth collection to an enthralled audience.

A lost landscape

The earliest photographs dated from the late 19th century and revealed a largely rural landscape and a barely recognisable village. Fields stretched south towards Hampstead, Creighton Avenue was a new road cut through ancient woodland, Oak Lane was exactly that and Victorian children played at 'The old pond' (near East End Road) while sheep safely grazed nearby.

Some long-demolished buildings have left us their names (The Grange and Elmhurst), but of others there is no trace. It was good to see again the Black Bess tavern, the Causeway cottages, the Congregational church and, a more recent loss, Alder school, demolished after its pupils were absorbed into Christ's College.

Lido days

Gradually, the trolley buses and milk carts from our own Manor Farm dairy were replaced by more modern vehicles, and recognisable street scenes appeared. David invited us to supplement his

information about each slide, and some in the audience shared vivid personal memories. We were too young to remember the notorious bare-fist fighting at The Five Bells, or Lord George Sanger's final procession with an uncaged lion, but many of us greeted the slide of

crowds at Finchley Lido in 1976 with happy recognition.

The Andrew Forsyth Collection can be viewed at Avenue House, East End Road, by arrangement with Maggie Ferguson, Archive Manager for the Finchley Society, on 020 8349 4283.

Fifty years on in East End Road

By Lorna Roberts

We have lived at 191 East End Road, East Finchley since freezing February 1962 and wonder how many of our readers share our memories or will share the changes in their own patch. No 193 East End Road was one of a row of four cottages in a little lane. At the end of this lane, still called East End Road, was a row of three more cottages.

In one, with a long garden in front, lived Mr Tommy who kept rabbits. Next to him was the Ginn family and the last one had a family of three grown lads who had a huge white van. Alongside Mr Tommy's there were allotments, always busy. Next to them was a path to Stanley Road and the large Holmfield Garage. Every afternoon, my mother would go through it to Stanley Road over the railway bridge to the factory of the Merry Miller. All the broken or not perfect biscuits and cakes were on sale cheaply at a little window and back would come my mother with something lovely for the children's tea. For all of us around, the all-day smell of baking was mouth-watering.

No 193 has a massive wis-

teria that, since it was planted in the 1890s, has captivated passers-by with its beauty and perfume. In 1961, the next four cottages were demolished and houses were built, ours and 189. Next to that was a forge where horses came on Saturday mornings, to be shod. This went in about 1968 and became a carpet warehouse run by Mr Bowers, who later opened a carpet shop in the High Road, now a restaurant {the Cochin}. Now the old forge is a keep fit studio, whence tired people emerge, looking pleased with themselves. When we arrived, 193 was occupied by Malcolm and Peggy Kemp and they told us, when THEY first arrived in the early 1940s, a shepherd drove his flock, morning and evening, along by the Five Bells pub.

Why have they removed those lovely little bells?

A little further afield {in the High Road} was the Conrad Lewis foam rubber shop, where now stands the Santander bank. He was such a lovely man, always helpful. We could buy mattresses so cheaply then and he always had a good suggestion about anything else one wanted. I still have a small offcut he gave me to use as a needle and pin cushion. One day he retired, and told me of the cruise holiday he and his wife had planned. A year or two later, I chanced upon him sitting on a bench in Kenwood. We greeted each other. "And how was your holiday?" I asked. "We never went. My wife died suddenly, the day before we were due to go ..."

Happy memories of Finchley Lido

Trevor Williams, who used to run Williams Sports in North Finchley and Finchley Central, reads THE ARCHER regularly, even though he's now retired and living in Ringwood, Hampshire. He saw our article on Finchley Lido in June's issue and wrote in with his memories of sunny days by the pool in the 1940s.

My early memories include the occasion I was actually allowed to slide down the chute in the children's pool all on my own, and later to sit in the wonderful Art Deco fountains. When I was about 12, I'd learnt to swim (taught by a Mr Cavanagh at the old Squires Lane Pool, now a block of flats) and progressed to the adult pool.

I remember the rather archaic changing rooms, or rather cabins, and obligatory cold showers before entering the water. At least that helped to take away the sudden shock of the cold water in the main pool. The children's pool was always warmer, being shallow, and heated up quicker.

I was also a bit of a gymnast, so it was not long before I was jumping and diving off the 1m springboard; then I ventured up to the 5m springboard and jumped. That was really great fun. One August afternoon I ventured right up to the top of the 10m platform where a

number of youths were congregating, either posing or waiting to pluck up the courage to jump. Several times the tannoy requested that all non-swimmers and divers must vacate the diving boards, and some did. After the third warning, another message came over: "...and would that little boy in the blue trunks also come off the boards!" Well, that did it. I marched straight to the edge of the board and performed my very first swallow dive from the top of the 10m platform.

From then on I was hooked on diving, and the only swimming I did was to swim to get out ready for the next dive. Then, alas, some berk in the council decided to remove all the diving boards, and that was the very last time I ever went in the water at the Lido.

A few years later I was heavily involved in youth work. As President of Barnet's Council of Youth (in conjunction with Eric Burton, Barnet Youth Officer) we organised a grand barbecue with music and dancing on the grass area, and a soft drinks bar, and a few aqua activities for those brave enough to jump in the pool. A great time was had by all, and it was an annual event for several years.

Do you remember the glory days of Finchley Lido or do you have any other memories of life in East Finchley? Write to us at the-archer@lineone.net or The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA.

Hear to Help

Are you having trouble with your hearing aid? Is that little gadget which should help you to hear doing just the opposite? Is it driving you mad, have you stopped trying to use it, or are you just getting by with it but maybe not getting its full benefits?

One thing is certain: you are not alone. This is why a free local service has set up clinics at Age UK Barnet. Hear to Help aims to assist adult hearing aid users to get the best out of their aids.

Clinics are held from 1pm to 3pm on the last Thursday of the month at the Ann Owens Centre, in Oak Lane, N2. There are also clinics on the first Friday of the month at the Meritage Centre, Hendon. To find out more, contact Gil Vamben on 020 8369 5325 or 07423 430383.

Holy Trinity Church Church Lane, East Finchley Church of England

*We're a warm and friendly congregation
who look forward to welcoming you*

Sunday Parish Communion at 10.00 am

Children's Sunday Club ♦ Meet over coffee after church
Michael Stanway is happy to answer any enquiries:

Tel: 020 8346 8591
www.holytrinityeastfinchley.org.uk

East Finchley Baptist Church

Just off the High Road in Creighton Avenue N2

Sunday Mornings at 10.30 am

For more information
please contact the Church Office
Tel: 8883 1544 (Minister: Simon Dyke)

Visitors always welcome