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Take a walk through history

Paul Baker, a City of London guide, has been leading guided tours around the Barnet area since 2004. The walks have elicited a lot of interest from residents of Barnet and Finchley and beyond the borough.

Paul says: "I love doing local tours. A particular pleasure is that many of those attending the walks have a deep, often life-long knowledge of the area. They give me insights and anecdotes, which I can then feed into future walks. When you can personalise it, people will prick up their ears."

There are seven walks in Paul's repertoire, including historical walks through the old heart of High Barnet and the unspoilt Georgian village of Monken Hadley. There is also a tour of Mill Hill and, of course, one entitled 'Fabulous Finchley'.

Laughter, love and death

This tour explores 1,000 years of the history of Finchley Central and East Finchley. Along the way, Paul explores lands once owned by the Knights Templar, and a former manor house which is haunted by a suspected lover of Anne Boleyn. He also talks about two famous murderers, and three world-famous comedians who lived in the area. The next Finchley walk will be on Saturday 10 November at 11am.

Two other popular tours are the Battle of Barnet and Barnet ghosts. The Battle of Barnet, mentioned by Shakespeare, took place on Easter Sunday 1471. Paul says: "It's important to make the walks informative but fun. Battlefield tours don't have



City of London guide Paul Baker gives fascinating insights into local history.

to be stuffy and full of names and dates."

The ghost walk is subtitled Things That Go Bump in High Barnet. It embraces Monken Hadley too, England's second most haunted village. The tour is extremely popular with children, especially at Hallowe'en, when there is a prize for the spookiest costume!

Paul also does tours further afield, including Covent Garden, Spitalfields and Jack the Ripper. Keep an eye on our What's On column for future dates. For more information, contact Paul on 020 8440 6805 or visit www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net

Just the ticket for a special day

By Diana Cormack

This former London Transport Routemaster brought a touch of colour to the High Road one Saturday afternoon. It was parked near East Finchley Library, en route for a late summer wedding in Muswell Hill.

The 1961 bus was suitably decorated, with traditional white ribbons on the front and lovely bouquets and other wedding paraphernalia throughout the lower and upper decks.

Clippie Paula Paskell who, like the driver, was smartly turned out in uniform, welcomed me on board to inspect the impressive display. Paula told *THE ARCHER* that her role is to ensure all passengers are safe and comfortable as well as to serve drinks and foodstuffs appropriate to the occasion.

People hire this 64-seater London icon for a variety of events such as birthday and anniversary celebrations, days out and proms nights – the choice is yours! It is certainly an exceptional and memorable means of transport for a special day. To find out more call 0800 1185 848 or 07984 902527 or visit www.davesbuses.co.uk



Paula waits on the platform. Photo by Diana Cormack.

Volunteers for dementia research

By Diana Cormack

Seven years ago I answered an appeal for volunteers to help with research into new tests being developed to determine dementia. The purpose of these was to gather information from healthy individuals aged over 50 to establish how they perform in these tests and to examine the influences of things like age and years of education upon their scores.

Understanding how they manage will help to evaluate whether the performance of those who suffer from neurological disease (such as dementia or stroke victims) in such tests is normal or below what might be expected for someone of their age.

Any information collected about volunteers is kept strictly confidential and will be held for at least five years so that further research may be conducted, if appropriate. The results will be used to improve further medical and scientific research.

Sessions are held at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in Queens Square, near Russell Square or

Holborn tube stations. They usually take place on a one-to-one basis in a small office.

What's involved?

Most tests have included word retrieval, conceptual knowledge and perception. They involve answering simple spoken questions and completing paper and pencil tests. These increase in difficulty and some are timed.

Recently, I have participated in some new tests being developed to help better inform the understanding of different types of dementia. These involved the ability to process complex auditory stimuli and the capacity for cognitive estimates, mental imagery and memory, using a

variety of sounds, music and speech. I found them interesting and thought-provoking.

If you want to be considered as a volunteer for these please email p.fletcher@ucl.ac.uk

Any takers?

Could you spare 30 minutes once a month to deliver *THE ARCHER*?

We're keen to reach readers on three rounds: first, in Blanford Close, Cornwood Close, Greenhalgh Walk and Lytton Road; secondly in Widdecombe Court and Widdecombe Way; and finally in the newly-built apartments in Lancaster Gardens.

Could you volunteer to help us with any of these rounds? We'll bring the papers to your door every month and you can deliver them in your own time. We also require drivers to deliver bundles of papers to our distributors. Please email us at the-archer@lineone.net or leave a message by calling 0844 579 6949 and entering mailbox number 63450. Thank you.

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