MAY 1997

### **HISTORY**

Tony Roberts continues his look into East Finchley**ll**s past.

# **East Finchley in Time Immemorial**

An attractive feature of East Finchley today is its closeness to woodland, remnants of a much earlier extensive covering.

Following the retreat of the ice-cap, the Finchley triangle was re-colonised by plants, animals and finally man. Early man would have found the area forested and difficult and there is nothing to suggest any clearing might have taken place before 5000 BCE. Early travellers left evidence of passage, from early stone age flint tools in the centre of the triangle, to late stone age flints around Muswell Hill but there is no evidence of any settlements. The Romans visited the area too, leaving coins and pottery quite close by.

The Romans usually avoided the hilly northern heights, constructing straight roads in the valley either side. Watling Street and Ermine Street, known today as the Edgware Road and Tottenham High Road. Even when the Romans left, the roads they left behind remained in use and most people had very little reason to venture into the woods covering Finchley. The nearest track-way was probably the early route of Hampstead Lane, before it was diverted away from Kenwood House, and which formed Finchley's southernmost boundary.

#### Saxon evidence.

Then came the Saxons up the River Thames to settle in it's valleys. These middle Saxons were a loose group of tribes, dominated in turn by the Kingdom of Essex, Mercia and Wessex. The name Finchley a clearing of finches - owes its name to them.

King Alfred's son Edward introduced the counties of Middlesex and Hertfordshire about 900 CE as a defence against the Danes and the middle Saxons were divided between them, the area now known as Finchley forming the northern border of Middlesex. The county was later

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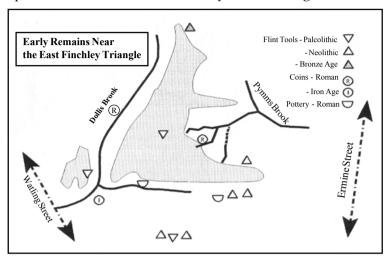
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divided into 7 or 8 administrative units known as "Hundreds" and Finchley was in the Hundred of Ossulstone, centred on London and with its court near Speakers Corner.

Acknowledgements: The Westminster Corridor, David Sullivan, 1994. For a complete list of publications on which this series is based, write to the Archer, History List, enclosing SAE.



# Archer/GLH Quiz

Greater London Hire, East Finchley's car hire, mini-cab and courier company, is offering £25 to the reader who can get the following questions right. This will be added to the £25 from the last Archer/GLH quiz because no reader got the answers right making a £50 prize! If more than one comes up with the right answers entries will be drawn out of The Archer's hat.

Please fill in the answers on the coupon below and send it to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA to reach us no later than the end of this month.

Editor's word of warning: Watch out! The questions are deceptively easy; and your spelling must be right.

- 1. Name the school in East Finchley which is named after a Bishop?
  2. Which station on the Northern line is furthest away from East Finchley?
- 3. Which road in East Finchley is named after a Field Marshall?4. Most of East Finchley is in the Borough of Barnet. In which borough is the remainder?
- 5. Which of the following is the odd one out, and why? Lincoln, Durham, Hertford, Taunton, Leicester

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# **Bypass Operation**

by Ricky Savage, the Voice of social irresponsibility

Welcome to the end of the road show. Why end of the road? Simple, because it is the end of the road and the road is the North Circular and it is very nearly finished. Should we celebrate? Yes, of course we should and in the most over the top way we can manage. That said, we mustn't get too carried away because there is so much more to do to complete the concreting over of England in the name of the great god the car. Where should we start? Not by pussyfooting around with a bit of one way streeting in Baronsmere Road or turning the High Road into a Red Route. No, if we want to do things, we've got to do things properly.

According to one top secret "think tank" working on the project, what East Finchley needs is a proper by-pass to link the new North Circular up with the Archway Road. Naturally this will mean widening of the Archway Road from the junction of the A1 and the A1000 down to the Archway Roundabout, but that is nothing compared to what needs to be done in East Finchley.

Obviously the parking problems need to be done to be solved and obviously getting all the through traffic off the High Road will solve them. Equally obviously, the decline of the Underground and the planned closure of half the stations to save money will mean that no one will need to park in East Finchley to catch the train because there won't be any trains to catch. Instead the station will be franchised out and converted into a 24 hour burger theme restaurant/rave club/rock venue called "The Tube".

Now, let's talk about the bypass... Starting with a slip road off the North Circular, it will provide access to a new shopping centre on the site of Strawberry Vale, before run-

ning straight across what is now the cemetery and Coldfall Wood. It will then approximately follow the line of Durham Road and Summerlee Avenue, before crossing Cherry Tree Wood to join the widened Archway Road just after Woodside Avenue. According to the plans I've seen, a great deal of care is being taken to diminish the environmental impact. Therefore they don't expect to knock down more than about 200 houses. To achieve this they will build the road on stilts about 15 feet high which will give the drivers a wonderful view of the insides of first floor bedrooms all along the route.

The maniacs running the think tank expect to get government approval sometime in early June on the grounds that no one has come up with anything so stupid since the Poll Tax.

But all is not lost... An urgent SOS is going out to Swampy, Muppet Dave, Animal and all the other veterans of the Newbury Bypass campaign. Offers of support are pouring in and the first tunnels should be being dug in Cherry Tree Wood by the time you read this. Shame really, because I do like roads...

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