

A Walk around

East Barnet



Barnet Walks Series, No. 1 (3rd edition: revised & updated)

Text: Gillian Gear & Fiona Jones; Illustrations: Georgina Oliver

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The description of this walk around East Barnet begins at the War Memorial in the village centre. (The walk includes some steep sections and there are some main roads to cross – at the time of writing there are crossings or traffic islands on these roads near to the route of the walk.)

Numbering of features and buildings in the text corresponds to those on map (p.7).

1. The War Memorial stands in the middle of East Barnet Village (where Church Hill Road meets East Barnet Road). It was put up in the early 1920s to commemorate the dead of the First World War and replaced an earlier wooden structure. Initially sited in the middle of the road, it was later moved a few metres to its current location. In 2010, after a fundraising campaign, a plaque to commemorate the 46 men from East Barnet killed in action in the Second World War was unveiled at a ceremony attended by around 400 people.



East Barnet
War Memorial

2. Behind the War Memorial is Brookside Methodist Church. The current church is made up of buildings from 1930 and 1967, which replaced a 1915 tin chapel. It was built on land given by William Jackson, a local benefactor (see nos. 5 & 19). Over the last ten years a redevelopment project has been underway to refurbish the building and add new rooms and facilities, including a coffee lounge with a terrace on to the street.

3. Across the road (at the junction of East Barnet Road with Cat Hill) are the shops known as *Clockhouse Parade*. When they were built in 1926 the clock tower was taken from the Tudor house (the Clockhouse) which had stood on the site, and mounted above the new shops. (The clock itself is currently being stored at the village clock repairers.) In the early part of the seventeenth century the house was owned by Ralph Gill, keeper of the Queen's lions at the Tower of London.

4. Looking in the opposite direction you can see the *Prince of Wales* pub on the corner of Jackson Road. It was licensed as a beerhouse called the *Black Prince* in 1878, but the building itself is probably older. Timber framing was exposed in the end wall during refurbishment in the early 1990s, suggesting that the building dates back to the eighteenth century. At one time it may have been used as part of a local school (see no. 7).



Houses in
Jackson Road
(see no.5)

5. Jackson Road was named after William Jackson, who had the houses built in the 1890s. This increased the size of East Barnet, spreading the village in the direction of Oakleigh Park Station, which had opened in 1873.

6. On the opposite side of Church Hill Road is a parade of shops called *Jubilee Terrace*. Built in 1890, they were named in honour of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee of 1887.



7. Walk past the shops and offices and on towards St Mary's School on your left. Opened in April 1872, it provided extra school places required by the 1870 Education Act. It replaced an earlier school which had been located in a variety of buildings in East Barnet, including further south along Church Hill Road and on Cat Hill. Many classrooms have been added since the school was first opened.

8. Cross to the opposite side of Church Hill Road and continue along the road. At the foot of the hill is Trevor Lodge, standing forward of the building line. This was the lodge of an 1860's house designed by the famous architect Philip Webb and originally called Church Hill House. It was built for Lieutenant Colonel Gillum, founder of the Boys' Farm Home (see no. 11).



9. At the top of the hill, Church Hill Road briefly divides into two. The road bearing to the right follows the route of the older road. Follow this road, which runs along the edge of the grounds of Church Hill School. The foundations of which were laid between the wars but the school itself was not built until after the Second World War.

Church Hill Road was called Churchway in 1334 and at that time led straight up to the gate of the church.

10.

A little further along is St Mary's Church, generally considered to be about 900 years old. The north wall is Norman (c.1140), as shown by three ancient slit windows (see illustration). There have been various additions and extensions to the building since then, including the addition of the Norman-style tower in 1828 and the creation of a lych gate in 1871 at the entrance to the churchyard. The church was damaged during the Second World War, but subsequently restored.

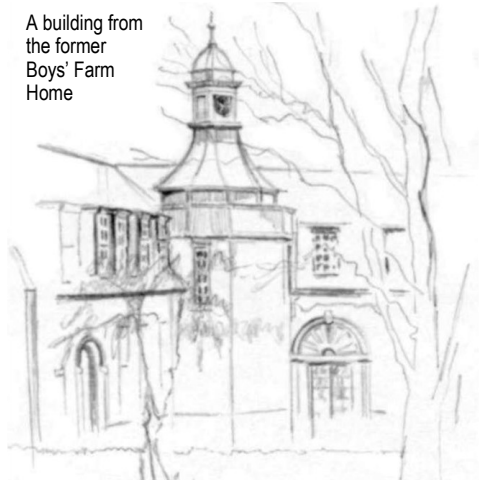
St Mary's Church,
north wall



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Behind St Mary's Church is an area known as Church Farm. It takes its name from a farm that was adjacent to the church from at least the seventeenth century, and which supplied mules to the Army during the Crimean War (1854-6). In 1860 the land was bought by Lieutenant Colonel Gillum who created the Boys' Farm Home Industrial School for poor and unruly boys. This school, which ran until 1938, taught industrial skills such as carpentry, tailoring and farming, as well the usual school subjects.

A building from
the former
Boys' Farm
Home



Many of buildings of the Boys' Farm Home, including the swimming pool, remain and have been used by other schools, and even the ARP during the Second World War. The rest of the site has been developed for housing.

12.

Cross to the other side of Church Hill Road and into Oak Hill Park. Looking across the park you can see in among the trees, a large, white building which is now Oak Hill Theological College. Formerly Oak Hill House, it was built in about 1790 in the grounds of an earlier estate called Monkenfrith. The name Monkenfrith goes back to the Middle Ages and means *the monks' woodland* (see back page). To the left along the skyline, you can see another white building, which is East Barnet School (see no.18). (In the summer you may have to walk a little along the path to see past the trees.)

13. In 1933 part of the Oak Hill estate was bought by the Council, who added it to land obtained from the Little Grove estate and opened it as a public park in November of that year. During the Second World War much of the park was used as allotments.
14. Walk down the hill (in the opposite direction from East Barnet Village). Then turn left and follow the path past the playground (on your left) and the tennis courts (on your right), and go over the bridge of the Pymmes Brook that runs from Jack's Lake in Hadley Woods down to the river Lea at Edmonton. It takes its name from the Pymme family through whose Edmonton estates it passed during the medieval period. In 1200 it was called Medesey, which means *slow meadow stream*.
15. Take the path to the left and a little way along to the right are Oak Hill Woods. These are ancient woodland and still contain plants such as the wildflower archangel and the wild service tree. Many of the hedgerows in the park mark old field boundaries.
16. At the end of the path, turn right up the steps to Brookside and walk along the road to Littlegrove. This latter road took its name from an estate which covered this area for hundreds of years. Little Grove house (built in 1719, although not the first large house on the site) was demolished and the estate sold for housing in 1932. The junction of Daneland and Cat Hill is roughly the site of the old Little Grove house. Some of the garden walls of the former Little Grove estate still exist in gardens. During the First World War Little Grove house and grounds were used by the Army.
17. Walk up Littlegrove hill, turn left along Eton Avenue, right into Bohun Grove and left into Windsor Drive. Just before the road bends round to the right stands Danegrove Primary School. Danegrove was an earlier name associated with the Little Grove estate. It was originally an area of woodland (possibly also a house) owned in 1291 by a man known as Richard at Den. The school was created by the merging of two schools, Littlegrove and Oaklands, and still has two sites, with the other in Ridgeway Avenue.
18. Continue up Windsor Drive and into Chestnut Grove. On your right is East Barnet School. The school opened in 1937 with 200 pupils, and gradually grew in size. Built for 350 students, by 1947 it had 547, and continued to grow, while a number of new buildings were added. For over 30 years the school operated from two sites after it merged with John Hampden School in Westbrook Crescent, New Barnet in 1976. It is now back solely on this present site, after the official opening of a new school building in 2011.

19. Go back to Ridgeway Avenue, turn right into Cat Hill and walk downhill on the opposite side. On the right hand side are some of the remaining allotments which were part of 22 acres of land bought in 1909 by William Jackson and sold to the Council for £100 per acre for the benefit of local people.
20. Continue down Cat Hill across the modern bridge over the Pymmes Brook (the brook can be seen to the right). This bridge was referred to in 1406 as Katebrygge. It gave its name to the road and the Cat Inn which stood where La Boucherie is now. Cat Hill was previously called Doggett Hill after John Doget who lived nearby in 1291.
21. At the bottom of the hill on the right hand side of the road you will see East Barnet Veterinary Surgery. Previously a pub, it was built in 1930 to replace an earlier one that had been in existence as early as 1756, when it had stabling for three horses. It has been known as *Kings Head* and the *Drum and Monkey*. It appears to have been known as *The Drum* during World War One because a man would stand outside banging a drum to encourage people to enlist.
22. Continue along the road as it curves round to the right. At the end of the row of shops is East Barnet Baptist Church, which began in May 1910 as a small hut, before a permanent building was constructed in the 1930s. In 1980 much of the building was destroyed in a fire. In rebuilding, the opportunity was taken to considerably redesign the church to make the building more flexible. A further extension has since been added. In 1981 the church started the Friend in Need Community Centre for elderly and housebound people.
23. The road seen on the opposite side of the mini roundabout is Longmore Avenue. Called Longstrete (later Long Street) from medieval times until 1931, it is part of an ancient route from Chipping Barnet to Enfield.

Also available in the Barnet Walks series: *New Barnet; Chipping Barnet*

Barnet Museum has further information about much referred to in this Walk.

Sources

Barnet Museum Bulletins: *Education in East Barnet in the Nineteenth Century; Boys' Farm Home, East Barnet; Little Grove House and Grounds*

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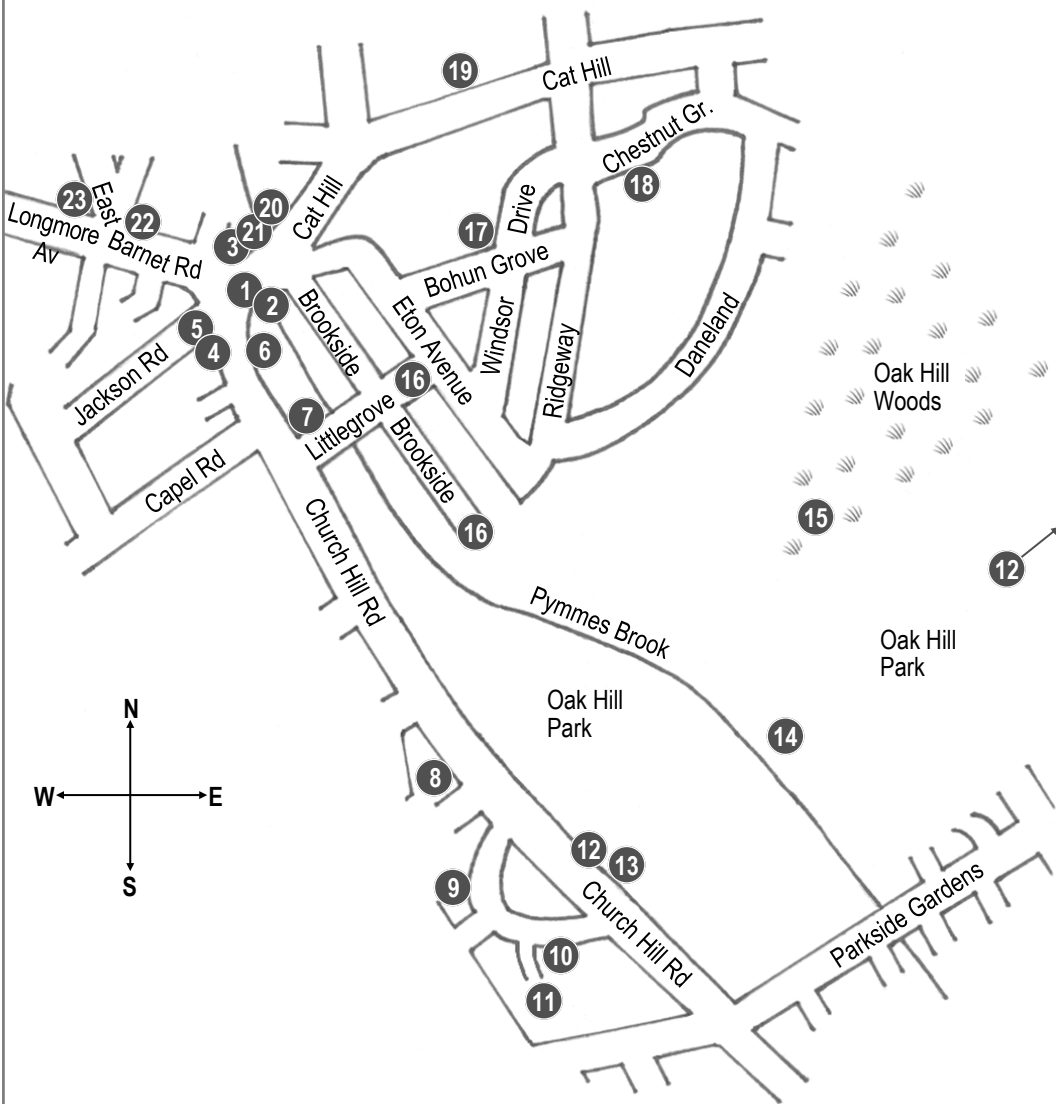
Barnet Museum archive

www.eastbarnet.barnet.sch.uk

www.ebarnetbaptist.org.uk

www.barnetmethodist.co.uk/eastbarnet.htm

Map showing the route of the Walk



Number of features and buildings in the text

Approx 1/4 mile

One thousand years of East Barnet's history

One thousand years ago East Barnet was part of a wooded manor, which in 1005 was given to the Abbey of St Albans by King Ethelred. The manor also included what is now New Barnet and Chipping Barnet, and an early source refers to the area as Barnetto (1070). (The first known reference to *East Barnet* is 1249, and to *Chepyng Barnet* is 1329.) Although the earliest settlement was probably at East Barnet, it was Chipping Barnet which grew more rapidly in both size and prominence. It benefited both from its position alongside a major road out of London (built c.1100) and from obtaining the right to hold a weekly market (1199) and a twice-yearly fair (1588). In contrast, East Barnet remained for many centuries a small agricultural community.

The dissolution of the monastery of St Albans by Henry VIII in 1539 left the King as the owner of the manor of Chipping and East Barnet, which in 1553 was sold by his son, Edward VI. In East Barnet much of the land was divided into substantial estates and bought by members of the new merchant class, who built themselves grand houses. They wanted estates like those of the landed gentry, and with access to London. Although many of these, and earlier large houses, have since been demolished, their names survive. For example Church Hill, Belmont (also called Mount Pleasant and Heddon Court) and Little Grove can be seen in the names of roads and schools. Belmont was once the home of Elias Ashmole, founder of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Later the house became a school and one of the teachers was the poet John Betjeman.

The coming of the Great Northern Railway to the area in 1850 did not greatly affect East Barnet, which remained a quiet village, with a population of only about 300 people. (The nearest station was in what is now New Barnet.) East Barnet underwent some expansion around the turn of the century, partly due to the opening of Oakleigh Park station in 1873. It was, however, completely transformed in the 1930s when the Piccadilly Line brought London within easy travelling distance for ordinary people. It was at this time that many of the large houses were demolished and replaced by schools, shops and semi-detached or terraced houses.



Barnet Museum & Local History Society

email: enquiries@barnetmuseum.co.uk www.barnetmuseum.co.uk

Barnet Museum's collection covers many aspects of life in Barnet, from ancient times to modern day, including objects relating to The Battle of Barnet, both World Wars, domestic life, shops, pubs, sport, leisure, costume and health, as well as temporary exhibitions. The museum has an extensive archive, and is a centre for family and local history research. Founded in 1938, the museum is a charity run by volunteers. Group visits are available by appointment. Admission free.

The Local History Society organises talks and outings.

Barnet Museum & Local History Society (charity no.295950)

Front page main illustration: St Mary's Church

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