Barnet Legends

1 Birt Acres
1854–1918. Built and operated the camera that filmed Britain's first motion picture, here in Chipping Barnet. **Chipping Barnet Library**

2 Cecil Belfield Clarke
1894–1970. Doctor and Black civil rights activist. Developed the formula for children's medicine dosage. Lived in Barnet. **Chipping Barnet Library**

3 Shirley Meredeen
1930–2022. Co-founder of New Ground, advocate for women and pioneer of senior co-housing in the UK. **New Ground Housing**

4 Gwyneth Cowing
1899–1987. Chair of Barnet Press newspaper, artist and Vice President of the Local History Society that became Barnet Museum. **Barnet Museum (indoors)**

5 Charlotte 'Lotte' Reiniger
1899–1981. Created the first feature-length animation. Silhouette films from her New Barnet studio inspire filmmakers today. **New Barnet Library & Leisure Centre**

6 Lester Finch
1909–1995. Born in Barnet and instilled pride in the local community as Captain, then Manager, of Barnet Football Club. **New Barnet Library & Leisure Centre**

7 Winifred Atwell
1914–1983. Renowned Trinidadian ragtime pianist and the first Black musician to reach UK No.1. Lived in Whetstone. **Osidge Library**

8 Daulat Jiwa
1923–2020. Founded Barnet Asian Women's Association to empower and advocate for women in the local community. **Friary House**

9 Oliver Postgate
1925–2008. Created popular children's television programmes: Bagpuss, The Clangers and Ivor the Engine. Lived in Finchley. **North Finchley Library**

10 Tommy Nutter
1943–1992. Grew up in Edgware and became tailor to the stars. Designed suits for Elton John and The Beatles. **Edgware Library**

11 Celia Fiennes
1662–1741. Trailblazing woman who wrote about travelling through every county in England on horseback. Lived in Mill Hill. **Mill Hill Library**

12 Edmundo Ros
1910–2011. Trinidadian-Venezuelan bandleader who made Latin-American music popular in the UK. Lived in Mill Hill. **Mill Hill Library**

13 Muriel Matters
1877–1969. Activist who boarded an airship from West Hendon to drop 'Votes for Women' leaflets over London. **Brent Cross West Station**

14 Cheridah de Beauvoir Stocks 1887–1971. Trained to fly in Hendon. Often the only woman pilot to compete in air races held at Hendon Aerodrome. **RAF Museum**

15 Vera Lynn
1917–2020. Singer, known as 'The Forces' Sweetheart'. Her music lifted spirits during the Second World War. Lived in Barnet. **RAF Museum**

16 Eileen Colwell
1904–2002. Founded the first children's library in the UK, on this site, and transformed children's reading globally. **Hendon Library**

17 Denis Compton
1918–1997. Born in Hendon and became one of England's greatest cricket batsmen. Also played football for Arsenal. **Hendon Leisure Centre**

18 Jean Simmons
1929–2010. Lived on the Golders Green Estate and attended Aida Foster Theatre School before becoming a Hollywood film star. **Golders Green Library (indoors)**

19 Henry Beck
1902–1974. Designed the London Tube map and influenced the design of transit maps in cities worldwide. Lived in Finchley. **Finchley Church End Library (indoors)**

20 Amy Winehouse
1983–2011. Critically-acclaimed singer and songwriter who wrote her first album 'Frank' while living in East Finchley. **Finchley Youth Theatre**

21 George Michael
1963–2016. Born in East Finchley and became a global pop music icon, philanthropist and LGBTQ+ rights campaigner. **Finchley Youth Theatre**

About Barnet Legends
Barnet Legends is an art trail with a series of 21 handcrafted, commemorative artworks, designed by Edward Crooks for everyone living or visiting Barnet to enjoy. Sited on public buildings, each artwork spotlights an individual who enriched the borough and the world around us through music, film, design, sport, art and more. From unsung heroes through to those with global acclaim, our legends were chosen by the community to reflect the creativity, innovation and diversity of the borough.

Every artwork you encounter is unique – just like the individual it portrays. Use this map to find out more about your local legends, and help us celebrate their legacy and inspire legends of the future.

Barnet Legends was installed in June 2024 and is a permanent reminder of the rich history of the borough. It was commissioned by Barnet Council and curated and produced by Create London.

- Music
- Aviation
- Sports
- Health & Wellbeing
- Film & Television
- Literature
- Design
- Transport & Travel
- Change Makers

BARNET LONDON BOROUGH

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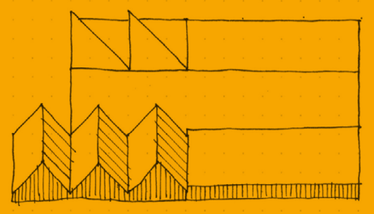
CREATE

About the Artworks
Words by Edward Crooks.

Drawing inspiration from Brockley Hill, one of the earliest known potteries in Roman Britain, I decided to make the artworks from a series of colourful ceramic tiles. Like archaeological fragments, they are reassembled to tell a bigger picture.

I designed each plaque to be unique but part of a wider family. The abstract shapes take inspiration from themes found throughout Barnet's history, reflecting the diversity of stories told. From heraldry to film canisters, records to aircraft hangars; I wanted the artworks to represent the breadth of subjects that have been impacted by the people commemorated.

One of the key themes is the arrow. Look atop Finchley Central station and you will see 'The Archer'— Eric Aumonier's striking sculpture, firing straight down the line towards central London in a gesture towards the progress of the metropolis. However, the arrow is missing. Now look across the various artworks and you will notice that the arrow symbol features prominently— each of these is a symbol of that progress, made in Barnet, and handed to the archer to launch across the world.



Some of the names on these artworks will be recognisable, some less so. It is a great privilege to be able to highlight lesser known figures whose influence has been significant, both locally, nationally and internationally.

As I have developed the project, I have enjoyed learning about the lives of those commemorated, from the incredible 17th-century story of Celia Fiennes, to the more recent brilliant work of Daulat Jiwa, founder of the Barnet Asian Women's Association.

I am fascinated by how histories overlap. The plaque to commemorate Muriel Matters is a reflection of Barnet's significant influence in aviation, by acknowledging Matters' airship flight, while also remembering a history of change making through her dropping Suffragette literature from the airship.

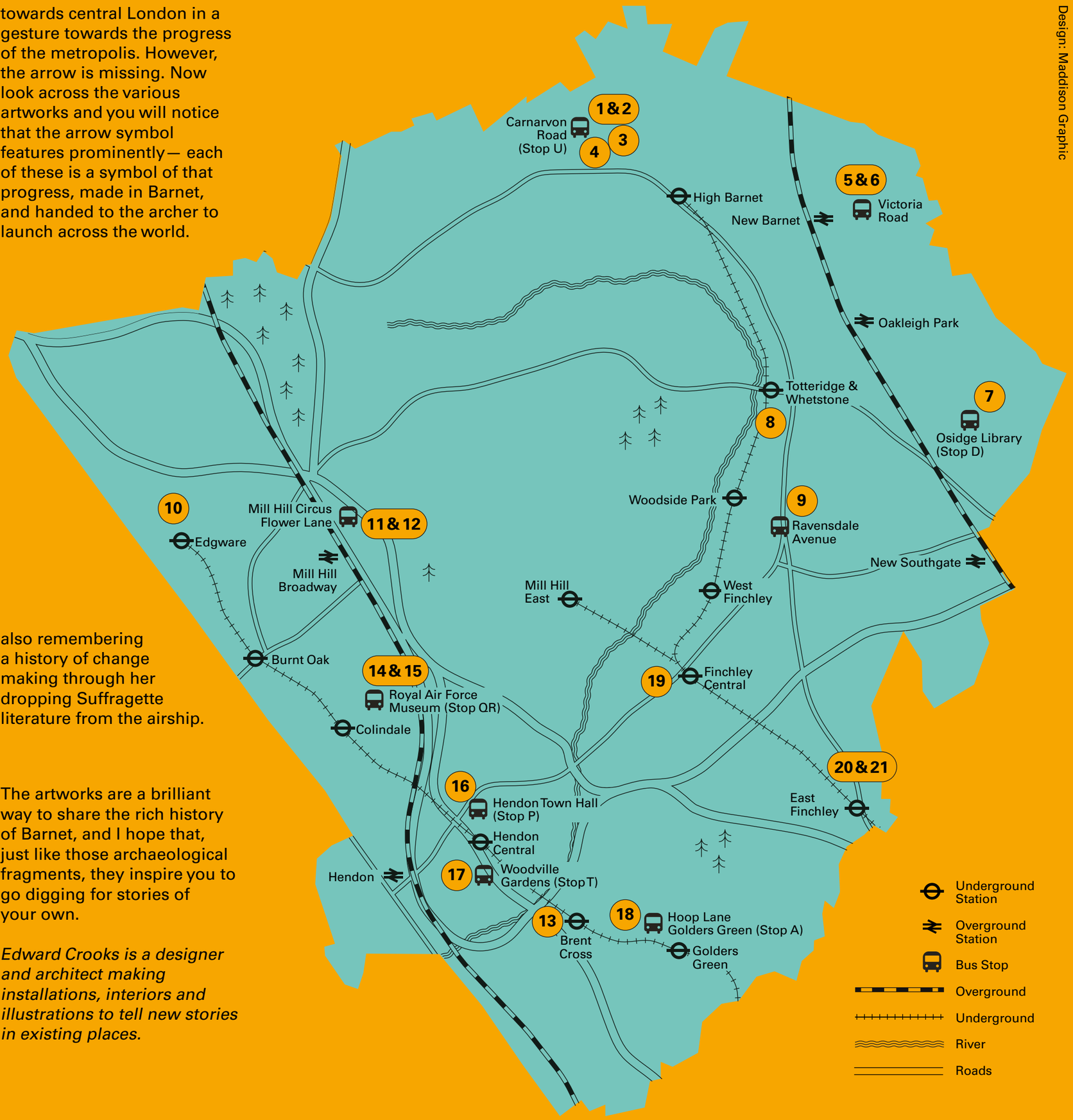
Singer, known as 'The Forces' Sweetheart'.
Her music lifted spirits during the Second World War.
Lived in Barnet.

Vera Lynn

1917 ~ 2020

The artworks are a brilliant way to share the rich history of Barnet, and I hope that, just like those archaeological fragments, they inspire you to go digging for stories of your own.

Edward Crooks is a designer and architect making installations, interiors and illustrations to tell new stories in existing places.



Design: Maddison Graphic