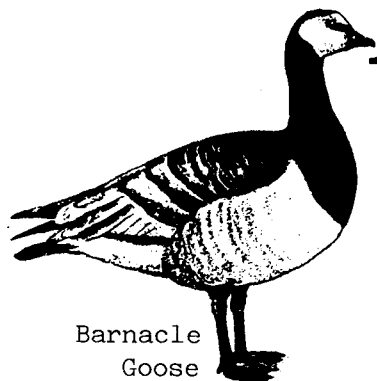
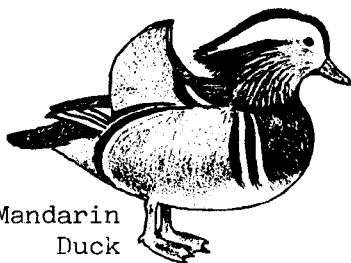


FRIENDS of GUNNERSBURY PARK & MUSEUM

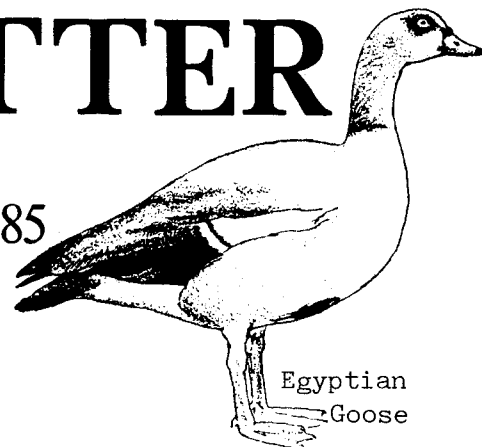
NEWSLETTER



Barnacle
Goose



Mandarin
Duck



Egyptian
Goose

No.16
November 1985

FUTURE EVENTS

THE CHRISTMAS CRACKER! The Friends' CHRISTMAS BAZAAR in the Temple on Sunday 24th November starting at 2.00 p.m. The chance to do some Christmas shopping - you'd be surprised how many stalls we can fit in!

Ann Balfour Paul's LEAVING PARTY. Friday, 29th November. Details below.

THE ROTHSCHILD GARDENS AT EXBURY. Friday, 10th January, 7.30 in the Museum (after the meeting of the Gunnersbury Park Joint Committee at 6.00). A chance to see the Video Film of the remarkable collection of rhododendrons and other plants at Exbury in Hampshire. This film includes shots of Gunnersbury from the Rothschilds' home movies. Refreshments will be served. A good chance to meet and chat - put it in your Diary now!

AT WORK IN HOUNSLOW AND DISTRICT is the current exhibition - ends on 24th Nov. From 30th Nov to 2nd Feb: FINDS FROM YOUR GARDEN. About the surprising and mysterious objects which people dig up in their gardens - if you have anything you want identified, bring it to the Video evening on the 10th January.

DUCKS AND GEESE ON THE ROUND POND

Have you noticed the new residents of the Round Pond? During the summer two pairs of geese moved in - Barnacle Geese (smaller than but similar in colour to Canada Geese, and with white side patches on their heads) and Egyptian Geese (sandy coloured with dark patches around their pink eyes). Recently, several pairs of Mandarin Ducks have joined them - the males are so spectacularly coloured as to need no description to be recognisable. Don't miss them!

NEWS ABOUT THE CAFES

As many of you already know, the Friends are operating the two Park Cafes with two aims: to provide a good service and to raise funds for the Park & Museum. We are not using volunteers, but we are employing staff. As our first Manageress, Mrs. Kate Knight, has now moved on to a better job, we are looking for a replacement. Over the winter, we are opening the main Cafe and the Coronation Chalet (which mainly serves the footballers) at the weekends only. Can you help us find an experienced person to take over as Manager/Manageress? While it is primarily a weekend job at the moment, in the Spring we will be going back to a 7-day-a-week service. Please contact Jennifer Pates (993 2956) or James Wisdom (994 4231).

CHANGES AT THE MUSEUM

Ann Balfour Paul, the Curator of the Museum, will be leaving at the end of November. She has spent nearly 6½ years in this most demanding of jobs, and we will have an opportunity to thank her for her work on Friday 29th November, when there will be a party at the Museum (from 6.00 p.m.) of colleagues and Friends to say goodbye. If any of the Friends reading this would like to come, would they please phone or write to me (James Wisdom, 25 Hartington Road, W4 3TL, 994 4231) so that we have some idea of the numbers we will be catering for.

This party will be a good opportunity to present the Museum with the cheque for £400 which we promised as part of the cost of adapting the Board Room for exhibitions by fitting wall panels. It will also be an opportunity to welcome the new Curator, Phil Philo (at present the Assistant Curator) to his new post.

SUMMER FETE

Do you remember the summer? Yes, it was wet. For our fete day we chose, not the wettest day, but one of the least pleasant. The setting up went well, from 10 o'clock, but as the public arrived at two a fine drizzle started to blow horizontally across the field. They stayed! For a full half hour the great British public stayed in the hope that it would pass. It got stronger, and they went. By the late afternoon, dismantling time, the sun was shining fit to bust. But the wind had blown everybody away. Still, we salvaged about £500 from the wreckage, and we drew one moral for the future: The Park is much busier on a Sunday than a Saturday, and a 'long' fete stands more of a chance than a 'short' one - so next year we will open at 11 a.m. on a Sunday, run till 5.00 and bill it as 'Come and spend a day in Gunnersbury Park - there's always something to do'. Many thanks to all the volunteer helpers, and to any stall-holders reading this - in future, it can only get better!

THE POTOMAC LAKE

During the last few months we have been litter-picking on Sunday mornings round the Potomac Lake, and these are our findings:

Although a lot of planting has been done by Mr Stockdale and his staff, the full benefit to the Lake and its environment is lost to a large degree by the amount of rubbish left, presumably by the fishermen. This is not just paper, tins and plastic but fishing lines, hooks and lead sinkers. The line in particular is the biggest problem as it is clear plastic and cannot be seen by the waterfowl.

We have been involved in the rescue of two ducklings. One had swallowed a hook attached to line caught in lilies. The other was tangled in line caught in a branch overhanging the water. The fishermen who helped us blamed the mischief on the 'cowboys' who do not care about the birds and the environment. Also, one of the baby grebes was killed by a fisherman because it ate his bait. Considering the size of the lake, the amount of line we collect each week is amazing, and we know that Park Staff find a lot when they clear the area. The RSPB notices get torn down and spoiled so that we can't put them up again.

To deal with the rubbish we have arranged with Mr Stockdale to submit for his approval a new style of rubbish bin that can be made cheaply out of wood and donated by Friends, so that no fisherman need walk very far to a bin.

Vandalism is a much more difficult problem, of course. We are constantly having to retrieve the lifebuoy from the water, and the litter bin is often thrown in as well. The birds and trees also suffer damage. However unattainable, what is needed is a Park Keeper based in the Tower to act as water bailiff, sell fishing permits, bait and refreshments. People might behave better if they thought someone might be watching!

Mrs Joan Catterall and Mrs Anne Stead.

VENTURE PLAY IN THE VICTORIAN KITCHENS

In August the Museum ran two 2-day sessions of 'Venture Play' in the Victorian Kitchens. At the start of each session the children were greeted by the 'Housekeeper' and the 'Butler' (Janet & Phil Philo) as if they were prospective employees. After 'stern' instructions on their duties in the house, the new 'servants' were then marched to the Kitchens with their buckets, brushes and cleaning equipment to start work.

The children were given jobs ranging from sweeping-up (with tea leaves to keep down the dust), scrubbing the floor, black-leading the iron work, washing down walls and dusting to making a Victorian bread-and-butter pudding. On the second day they had a simple mid-day servants' meal (bread & cheese, home-made lemonade and the pudding). After they had finished their tasks, the children were encouraged to explore the kitchens and the various gadgets, either using quiz sheets or through their own observations. They made drawings, paintings, rubbings and even needlework samplers; some of this work was later displayed in the Museum.

35 children (some even dressed as Victorian servants) came to the two sessions and 20 (with some parents) came on the trip to Ham House to see the newly restored 17th century kitchens there. It was a very successful project, all made possible by the hard work of the Friends in restoring the Kitchens in the first place. Some of the children are already making plans to come back next year!

Janet Philo (Play Leader) and Phil Philo.

AND.....The proposal for a Pop Concert to raise funds for the repair of the Orangery was thrown out at the last Gunnersbury Park Joint Committee Meeting.....The plans for an Art Gallery with Studio space in the Small Mansion are moving forward.....We are expecting soon to have some very good news to report about the future of the Stables and the Riding School.....Watch this space and don't forget to renew your subscription!