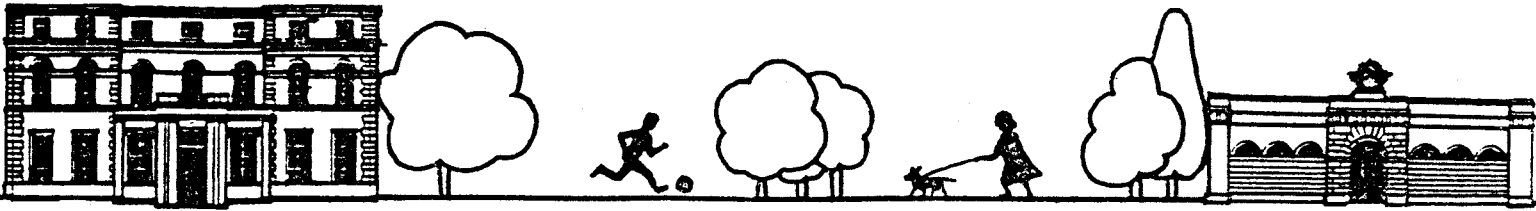


No.21
June 1987

NEWSLETTER



Future Events

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held in the Temple at 4pm on Sunday 5th July to receive the officers' reports, to elect the Committee, to appoint auditors and discuss any other business.

There will be some vacancies on the Committee this year - can you help us? If so the Hon. Secretary, Ken Hawkes (568 2717) must receive nominations before the meeting.

Is there anything you wish us to discuss? Motions for discussion should similarly be with the Secretary before the meeting commences.

OUTING TO KENTWELL, SUFFOLK, 4th July, leaving Gunnersbury Park 9.30am, returning 6pm Cost about £12.00, including entrance fee. Contact Joan Catterall 560 4262. For a few weeks every summer Tudor life is recreated at Kentwell by 200 volunteers who live there as members of the household. Margaret Schofield-Palmer gave us a talk about her extraordinary experiences as one of the volunteers a few years ago! There are also rare breeds of animals, a collection of old farm and craft tools and the house itself to see.

PRIVATE VIEW OF "A STITCH IN TIME" exclusively for Friends, 7.15 to 9pm, Wednesday 29th July. Please join us in the Museum to hear Phil Philo and Julia Shelley give a behind-the-scenes account of this summer's major exhibition. Your chance to see the exhibition, meet the Friends, enjoy refreshments - with the experts on hand to answer questions. Admission free.

THE KITCHENS. This year, with the restoration work done by NACRO, the Victorian Kitchens are going to be a knock-out! They are only open on FOUR weekends each year, from 2 o'clock onwards: 27/28 June, 25/26 July, 29/30/31 August and 26/27 September - please make a note in your diaries. (We also need volunteers to be there when the public are visiting - if you can spare an afternoon, please phone Joan Catterall, 560 4262).

SUMMER FETE Sunday 6th September, all day, details in the next Newsletter.

Miscellaneous News

POP CONCERT: To everyone's amazement, Ron Bartholomew made another attempt to hold a pop concert in the Park. We wrote to the Joint Committee urging them to reject his proposal - he was after a three year monopoly, he hadn't allowed enough time, the idea had not been put out to tender to see what it was worth and so on. They turned him down, decisively.

THE ORANGERY: You may have seen news in the local papers that the company redeveloping the Fiat site on the Great West Road will be restoring the Orangery as 'planning gain'. This is great news, and the officers of Hounslow Council who negotiated it deserve congratulations.

JULIA SHELLEY: Julia has been appointed Assistant Curator (replacing Gareth Griffiths). We welcome her back to the Museum in which she has spent so many hours as a volunteer!

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE: We also extend a warm welcome to some new neighbours to the Park, on the site of the Boys Catholic School. This College will be a mixed school for all ages teaching its pupils in both Arabic and English; it will be opening in September.

FINALLY: Don't forget we are still offering a catering service in the Temple if you are looking for somewhere unusual for your event (phone Tony Marren 992 0543). Please remember to send in this year's subscription. As you read through the accounts you will see that we donated £1417.80 and still ended the year with more than we started! Please accept the Editor's apologies for the long delay since the December Newsletter. Does anybody want to take the job over?!

BRIC-A-BRAC SALES: On the First Sunday of every month, in the Pavilion Cafe. Any contributions, particularly scraps of material and embroidery threads, please, to Marion Booth (992 9891). A warm 'thank-you' to everyone who has given us things - the accounts reveal the alchemy!

FUN RUN: Watch out for a Fun Run in the Park on 28th June, sponsored by the local paper the Gazette series and an Acton Pub, The Red Lion and Pineapple - all for charity.

Treasurer's Report

TREASURER'S REPORT: APRIL 1986 to MARCH 1987

	<u>RECEIPTS</u>		<u>PAYMENTS</u>
OPENING BALANCE			
Current account	215.54		
Deposit account	562.97		
Cash in hand	.97		
National Savings	1800.00		
		2579.48	
DEBTOR: Cafe		1000.00	
<hr/>			
SUBSCRIPTIONS	617.50	ADMINISTRATION	
DONATIONS	117.00	Newsletter	180.10
		Other printing, etc	111.42
		Telephone/stamps	78.50
		Fees/donations	10.00
			380.02
	734.50		
FUND-RAISING		FUND-RAISING EXPENSES	
Fete	497.04	Fete	266.22
Jumble sales, etc	529.68	Jumble sales, etc	69.21
Victorian kitchens	315.83	Victorian kitchens	21.06
Stalls elsewhere	346.68	Other	198.00
			554.49
	1689.23		
MISCELLANEOUS	278.00	MISCELLANEOUS	156.97
	54.57		
	332.47		
OTHER: Cafe	500.00	OTHER: Cafe	500.00
BANK ETC. INTEREST	704.03	DONATIONS: sign	40.00
		radios	837.00
		kitchens	425.00
		board	115.80
			1417.80
<hr/>			
		BALANCE IN HAND	
		Current account	334.47
		Charities Deposit Fund	744.53
		Cash in hand	16.12
		National Savings	2435.31
			3530.43
		DEBTOR: Cafe	1000.00
			7539.71
	7539.71		

Signed: Andrew Brown (Treasurer)
22nd May 1987

The Stables

The Gunnersbury Park Joint Committee has agreed to the suggestion from Robbie Stoakes, the Director of Hounslow's Arts and Recreation Department, to convert the Stables into a craft centre. He was involved in the craft centre in the stables at Rufford in Nottinghamshire and he believes a similar formula could work at Gunnersbury.

Rentokil, the well-known pest control and wood treatment company, have offered to act as the Council's agent "in undertaking a design, build and fund-raising scheme to implement the development".

Rentokil are at present conducting a thorough survey of the buildings and the Joint Committee should soon know how much their renovation will cost. Then plans will be drawn up and costed for the conversion to a crafts centre.

What sort of crafts centre is proposed? The answer at the moment is likely to be a mixture of "demonstration" studios for the temporary use of visiting artists and craft-workers, a gallery for a programme of changing exhibitions, a shop for the sale of craft goods to the general public and a cafeteria. It will be called "The Coach House, Gunnersbury Park".

The proposal also includes the removal of the Museum's transport collection (particularly the carriages) from the Large Mansion down to the Stables. These carriages are described in the proposal as having "limited interest because they are static, untouchable, immovable and unusable objects, but if moved they may be more valuable in helping to create an atmosphere, as part of a wider attraction".

The proposal has no place for horses or a riding school. In letters from council officers on this subject they have made it clear that, after two attempts at a horse-based operation, they want to try an alternative project.

How will it be financed? There are grants available for the restoration of listed buildings, for the development of museums, and perhaps for the expansion of craft activities. Hounslow Council has allocated £54,000 in 1987-8 and there are hopes that Ealing will match this with a similar sum. Rentokil have had experience as fund-raisers for similar projects and with their reputation behind the scheme there is a good chance that approaches to local and national businesses, appeals to the local community, sponsorship and other fund-raising devices will succeed.

Will it be self-financing after it has opened? This we do not know yet. There will be an income from the catering and the shop and presumably commission on the sale of work through the gallery. Perhaps the visiting craft workers will pay a fee for studio space, or possibly they will receive a fee for demonstration work - this is unclear from the reports so far. Operating costs will presumably include staff in the shop, cafeteria and gallery. Evidence was given to the Joint Committee of the turnover of the craft shops at Rufford and Cirencester (between £60,000 and £80,000), of gross profits of nearly 40% and net profits of the order of 13%. It is well-known that there is a great and growing interest in craft activities of all sorts, so there is a fair chance that this proposal will be viable.

Undoubtedly these are the most positive proposals made for the Stables so far, and the Friends must welcome the commitment that the council officers and the Joint Committee have shown in putting them forward. We must also welcome the involvement of Rentokil whose reputation and experience will add weight to the scheme.

The Museum

This summer the theme in the Museum will be clothes, clothes, clothes!

The big summer exhibition will be "A Stitch in Time", from 19th June to 25th October. It will be opened by Jeff Banks of "Warehouse" and the BBC's Clothes Show.

The Museum has a large collection of clothing, some of which we saw on our open evening last year. Much of the collection will be out in the galleries and a lot of it has never been displayed before.

But there is more than just an exhibition. The photographer, Ed Barber, helped by the sponsorship of Scotch 3M, has been documenting important aspects of the West London clothing business, in factories, shops, laundries, etc. His work will be displayed and published in a booklet accompanying the exhibition.

There is also sponsorship from the Greater London Arts Association and the Arts Council, amongst others. And Hounslow Borough College student, Francis Harnett, won the competition to design the exhibition poster, sponsored by Printsolve.

For children the Venture Play programme (on Monday afternoons in August) will be based on the exhibition. Special events have been organised for schools - book in advance on 992 1612.

There is also a tremendous list of "Talks in the Temple" on Sundays at 2.30pm. They are all free and open to the general public.

- 23 June The Museum Staff: 'A Stitch In Time - The Making Of An Exhibition'
- 5 July Jeff Banks: 'The Retailing of Clothing Today'
- 19 July Kay Staniland, Museum of London: 'The Rag Trade - 7 Centuries of Clothing Production'
- 26 July Sarah Levitt, Bristol Museum: 'Clothing the Masses - the late 19th century clothing trades'
- 2 August Madeleine Ginsburg, V & A: 'Rags to Riches - the secondhand clothing trade'
- 16 August Linzi Watson, Museum of the Jewish East End: 'Ready to Wear 1900-1930'
- 13 September Vanda Foster: The Care and Repair of Clothing in the Victorian Period'
- 20 September Family activity day details to be announced
- 4 October Ray Batchelor: 'The History of the Sewing Machine'
- 25 October Neil Kearney: 'The History of the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers'

All this is part of the Museum's new "collecting policy" which was approved in April by the Joint Committee. Each year a specific subject will be chosen for research and collecting and will result in exhibitions, publications, talks and so on, as well as additions to the permanent collection.

A common misconception about museums is that they are "single-visit attractions" to which people are unlikely to return frequently once they have seen the displays. In the right hands museums can be creative and vital agencies in the community, collecting and interpreting the past, making sense of the present and contributing to the future. Let us hope that "A Stitch in Time" joins "The Lion of the Punjab" as examples of what even a small museum like Gunnersbury can achieve.

The Kitchens

Over the last few months the Acton Branch of NACRO, which has helped us before with work on the Cafe, has been busy in the Kitchens. The Friends have contributed £200 towards the cost of their work, which has resulted in the opening up of an extra room in the Kitchen Wing for the summer. This is the outer kitchen, with a huge cast-iron closed hearth range. The room was used as an oil store in recent years. Now the tank has been removed, the floor cleaned, the range de-rusted and painted, the tiles cleaned and partly replaced and the door to the main room has been opened up. Now NACRO are working on the Housekeeper's room, but this is more difficult than expected (because of the state of the plaster) and might not be ready for the summer.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL FORM

The subscription rate is £3 per member for the year beginning 1st April.

NAME AND ADDRESS (In Block Letters Please):.....

.....

SIGNATURE:.....

Please send this form to the Membership Secretary, Mrs Joan Catterall, 39, Lionel Road, Brentford.

We sometimes need volunteers for different aspects of the Society's work and we are assembling a list of people on whom we can occasionally call. If you would like to be added to this list, please put your phone number here:

.....