

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Friends

Welcome to the September Newsletter.

There are the usual enjoyable events to participate in at the Park and Museum – which will also help us forget what a wet summer it has been!

There are also exciting new developments concerning the restoration of the Japanese Garden. The Gunnersbury Garden Committee is asking for support from both individuals and organisations for this project, so if you can help in any way please let them know.

There is also a progress report inside on the proposed changes to the South Gardens.

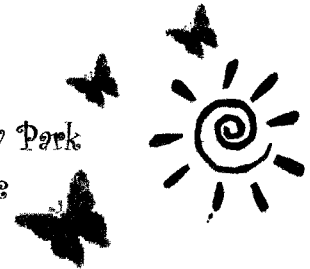
Thanks to all of you who attended the AGM, and who came on the walk afterwards.

I'm really pleased to include a poem *The Gunnersbury Park Boating Lake* by Judith Brierley, one of the Friends, in this edition. Can I have some more contributions - prose or poetry? It's always interesting to know how we individually view the Park during its differing seasons.

Regards,
Ed.

If you would like further details concerning anything in the Newsletter, please send correspondence to:
H. Poskitt
14 Manor Gardens
Gunnersbury Avenue, W3 8JU

The Gunnersbury Park
Boating Lake



The geese sailed by like galleons
Across the boating lake,
Behind them, gulls bobbed up and down,
Cups and saucers in their wake.
A lonely heron watched the scene
On floating island, dumb,
No boaters venturing out today,
The ticket-seller's glum.
I cycled by and 'spotted' birds,
Three mallards and a swan,
'I though they went around in pairs,
Why is there only one?'
A single child was throwing bread,
White slices, one by one,
Poor birds, they all will be so ill
With in-de-gest-ion (!)
I parked my bike and sat and watched
This peaceful winter scene,
Then peddled home and left the birds
To stand and float and dream.



GUNNERSBURY PARK & MUSEUM EVENTS

Museum opening times : April to October 1-5pm (1-6pm week-ends and Bank Holidays). November to March 1-4pm daily. **Admission free, donations welcome.**

WINTER WORK ON THE GARDENS

Work began on the Italian Gardens on 21 August and will continue for eight weeks during which time they are closed. Look out for the fantastic finished result! Work will also be carried out to rejuvenate the shrub border beside the Round Pond which backs on to the walled garden.

PORTMEIRION POTTERY EXHIBITION

Come and see the fascinating new retrospective of Portmeirion pottery at the Museum. As the display dates from 1960 to the present, you may recognise some of the exhibits! Children's worksheet available.

A FEEL FOR THE PAST ...

Experience first hand the lives of Victorian Servants and children! Spin tops, suffer the finger stocks, iron *The Times*, empty the chamber pot - AND this event has had rave reviews from previous participants! Enjoy, learn and laugh at this *free* family event. 2.30 and 3.30pm. 1 October, 5 & 26 November, 3 December.

'Moving In'

Discover the population of Ealing over 1000 years. Who 'moved in'? Where did they come from? An exciting exhibition about the local community - open until 28 October.

WINTER WARMER - SUNDAY 5 NOVEMBER

Meet the Butler, Cook and Housemaids at Gunnersbury Mansion and find the answers to such burning questions as *What favourite recipe involves beetles and calves feet?* Children can dress up and join in with preparations for the Winter festivities.

Victorian Kitchen sessions 1.30, 3.00 and 4.30pm. Cost: £1 adults, 50p children.

No booking required but numbers will be limited so early arrival is advised.

DIWALI CELEBRATIONS

Come and enjoy these in the Park on November 11!

**For more information about any of these events, pl. contact Caroline Gardner
Tel/Fax: 020 8 992 1612. Also e-mail: gp-museum@cip.org.uk**

CAPEL MANOR COLLEGE AT GUNNERSBURY PARK

Don't forget that new Courses in horticulture, garden design, floristry and balloon artistry begin shortly. If you didn't make it to enrol on Tuesday September 12 you can do so on the first day of the Course - so all is not lost! For more information about courses, ring 020 8366 4442 or view www.capelmanorcollege.co.uk.

Queries from the Annual General Meeting, 2000

The Chairman and Committee undertook to find answers to several questions which were raised by members at the AGM at the end of July.

Here are the questions and the answers:

Filming at Gunnersbury - is the money that this earns used for the benefit of the Park/Museum?

Money earned from filming is not paid to the friends, but to the Gunnersbury Park Joint Committee. Their annual budget always includes a sum which is expected be earned during the year and the filming income contributes to this total. However, a small percentage will be taken by the Hounslow Film Office, which manages the process of film-making in council-owned premises.

Lamp posts - what has happened to the original lamp posts from the drive?

Recent work in the Park has included the restoration of some old lamps and the manufacture of replicas based upon them. All of the lamps on your left as you walk from Popes Lane towards the Museum are old ones beautifully restored while those on the right are replicas replacing the 1960s "lollipop" style lamps. Two lamps outside the Small Mansion have also been restored and replica "Japanese lanterns" were made for the main gate-posts. All the originals which were removed for restoration have been replaced. The project was very well documented and English Heritage, who monitored the project, even visited the workshop to see the work in progress.

The Chairmen's Trees — what has become of them?

The Chairmen of the Joint Committee used to plant a tree in the Park, with a little commemorative label. Some of the trees survive, but others have died or been vandalised and some labels have been stolen. Today this practice has died out and the policy is that sponsored trees are rarely labelled unless there are very unusual circumstances to justify this. New planting is being done to contribute to the restoration of the historic Park rather than to commemorate the Committee!

The length of the grass — why was it so long in late July?

At the meeting, and on our walk round the Park afterwards, there was divided opinion about the long grass. Some thought it was a mess while others liked the effect of a meadow. The fact is that a very wet period had promoted rather lush growth and because Gunnersbury is on clay, parts stayed wet for some time. Taking a tractor onto the wet ground could cause damage, so the grass had to be left while it dried out. Then it became too long for the usual machinery to be used, so attempts were made to hire other equipment. However this proved difficult as Gunnersbury was not the only place with this problem. Signs were put up in the Park to explain the situation, a problem of the English summer!

The following committee members were re-elected: Joan Catterall, Gisela Gunston, Helen Poskitt, Pauline Tett, Vivienne Winning and James Wisdom. Marianne Booth stood down from the Committee - we would like to record our grateful thanks for all her work over many years, particularly in supporting fund-raising.

NEWSLETTER QUARTERLY ISSUES:

February
August

Spring Lecture details
September Fete details

May
November

Summer events details
Christmas event details

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SOUTH GARDENS

(To be continued in the next Newsletter)

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- 3.1 Preserve the 17th century garden wall and do not allow to become covered in vegetation.
Completed.
- 3.2 Plant an Ivy Garden in the Rest Garden.
Amended following comments of consultants.
- 3.3 Find a suitable use for the Paddock (the Small Mansion Walled Garden) e.g. to build a Japanese Archery Gallery.
Early stages of discussion underway – see separate report to this Committee.
- 3.4 Cut down the nettles and long grass in the Japanese Garden and depending on level of resources restore completely/carry out a limited planting of suitable Japanese plants.
Major fund raising bid underway – target date for work to begin July 2001 – see separate report to this Committee.
- 3.5 Re-furbish the Bamboo Garden.
Work unprogrammed.
- 3.6 Repair and conserve the Gothic ruin.
Funding to be identified.
- 3.7 Excavate to a depth of two foot the Horseshoe Pond and consider planting the resulting 'dry moat' effect with blue flowering bulbs.
Funding to be identified. However, aim is to restore pond eventual.
- 3.8 Remove the circular raised brick rose bed.
Completed.
- 3.9 Remove ivy and other excessive vegetation from the small stone bridge that flanks the paths to the east of the Small Mansion lawn.
Completed.
- 3.10 Transplant the grove of Silver Birch behind the Large Mansion to the tree belt around the Park.
Completed – although on the advice of the Arboricultural Officer these were not transplanted.
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- 3.11 Transplant the grove of Ginkgo biloba behind the Small Mansion to the tree belt around the Park.
Work unprogrammed.
- 3.12 Plant a thin line of Sweet Chestnuts to indicate the original dividing line of the two estates.
Work unprogrammed.
- 3.13 Remove the Cypressus from the Rock Garden.
Completed.
- 3.14 Repair and preserve the Orangery adding toilet and kitchen facilities to the rear.
Subject to next phase of Lottery Bid.
- 3.15 Landscape shrub trees around the Bathhouse and below the terrace steps.
Work to be programmed following restoration of Bathhouse.