

# FRIENDS OF HYDE PARK & KENSINGTON GARDENS

[www.friendshpkg.org.uk](http://www.friendshpkg.org.uk)

AUTUMN 2017

FOUNDED IN 1991 TO PROMOTE THE PEACE AND BEAUTY OF THE PARKS

ISSUE 45

## Autumn 2017 Newsletter

### His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Patron, launches new Royal Parks Charity

In July the Prince visited Hyde Park and was welcomed at a mid-morning reception in the Rangers Lodge Garden.



He started his tour with a visit to the new state of the art £5 million flagship nursery, currently under construction, and was introduced to some of our apprentices by nursery manager, Mike Jones.

He was able to discuss The Royal Parks' efforts to tackle tree diseases and enjoy travelling round in a carriage drawn by two of the Parks' oldest Shire horses. They are usually seen managing the grass in the meadows in Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park.

He was escorted on the visit by The Royal Parks Chair, Loyd Grossman, and when he arrived at the Rangers Lodge, met Chair of Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens, Sue Price, who introduced fellow Royal Parks' Chairs Ianthe McWilliams (The Regents Park), Ron Crompton, (Richmond Park) and Colin Muid (Bushy Park).



He sang the praises of the staff, volunteers and apprentices who are the “often unsung and unseen” heroes and the police who help keep the show on the road.

Loyd Grossman also welcomed HRH The Prince of Wales and said “we are absolutely determined that these Parks will always remain the best parks in the world for future generations”.



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We are delighted that the Prince of Wales has become the first Patron of the new Royal Parks charity. With a flourish, the Prince unveiled a Plane tree leaf plaque which was on a temporary stand until it finds a new home.

He clearly loved all the wild flower planting in the Rangers Lodge gardens, and was pleased to receive amongst his gifts, a casket of jars of Royal Parks honey.

Congratulations to the Hyde Park Manager, Rob Dowling, and his team of gardeners for making a truly “rus in urbe” setting for this gloriously sunny morning. A pretty country style canopy, decorated with bunting, on asymmetrically solid wooden poles provided shade and small ornate iron work tables and chairs dotted around completed the picture.

Our members have on several occasions enjoyed refreshments in this garden, but not with quite such splendour.

## News round-up from the Parks

### Kensington Gardens

**Andy Williams, Park Manager**

*This autumn/winter further landscape works at the **South Flower Walk** will take place. Deputy Park Manager Theresa Short will be overseeing new planting to mirror the planting that is establishing around the new kiosk and the alignment of the gates and fencing at the eastern end will take place. We are excited by the prospect of directly involving the Friends HPKG in assisting our gardens team in maintaining this important horticultural feature.*

*The **‘Bronze Oak Grove’** installation has been really well received. The artists have approached Westminster City Council to secure an extension beyond the original 4 month stay. We await feedback with a decision due by end Sept. We will likely extend until the end of the year, but only on the proviso that the educational programme developed as part of the original agreement is similarly extended. The family storytelling sessions and new tree walks facilitated by TRP tree officers have been well attended.*



**Grassland Management.** *We are developing a project to stabilise and reinforce the stand of heather present to the south of the Gardens translocating cuttings from Wimbledon Common to increase the population. Alongside this we are currently trying to define the scope of a new grassland management plan to sit alongside our tree strategy and management plan, setting distinct priorities for grassland habitat. Although our current practices and regimes are clearly good, we note that in some cases we may need to take more decisive action to achieve greater ecological gain in the short-term.*

*The **Peoples Postcode Lottery (PPL)** has funded the development of a new methodology currently being trialled in KG that will assess the condition of grassland habitats at Buck Hill. Rather than undertake a full botanical survey we are looking to produce a more practical assessment technique that assess the transition of habitat quality using some pre-defined indicator species. In time we hope that volunteers will be able to use these survey techniques.*

*PPL also saw the **Mission Invertebrate** programme deliver in both KG and Brompton with both sites playing host to the visiting ‘snail’ attracting many school aged children and families to enjoy the themed educational programme.*

*Having undertaken our **Veteran Tree** survey during in 2016 /17 we will be implementing a number of the recommendations raised to fundamentally enhance the management of these historic, living assets. Some access and controls may restrict access to certain individual trees or groups of trees.*

**DPWMP and Old Wilderness.** *TRP Project Approval group have granted £45,000 for detailed design works for internal playground refurbishment during 2017/2018. This will allow us to better estimate cost of required restorations that we would hope to tender and commission in the following years. At this stage we cannot progress the wider works associated with creating new improved catering facilities, meadow enhancements, and creation of external natural play elements.*

**BST.** *Road closures for WCD were successfully integrated into KG operations with agreed measures implemented including closure of all east facing road gates. We were able to support the Gallery with mitigations including the use of the Albert Approach Road on nights of planned gallery events ensuring that pre-planned programmes could run*

**Peter Pan.** *We have commenced a project jointly funded by our Works dept and Landscape dept to improve access to, and the setting around, the Peter Pan statue. It's been an ambition to provide full access to the statue noting that only able bodied persons are able to manage the stepped access. Much of the shrubbery and adjacent planting is somewhat ‘blown out’ and requires a re-think. We will require Listed Building Consent and we will look to engage with the Friends during the process of design development.*

**Wilsons Fun Fair and Gorilla Circus** *have both ended their summer seasons. We look forward to welcoming them back in 2018.*

*KG saw improved **Green Flag** and **Green Heritage** judging scores this year acknowledging the efforts of all of us who contribute to managing the busy park. Again, my thanks to Sue for giving up her time to meet the judges on the judging day.*

*KG once again became the focus for the memorial held on the 20th anniversary of the death of **Diana, Princess of Wales**. We successfully hosted the world's press and media at the Gold (Crowther) Gates and on the Broad Walk. It was a privilege to welcome HRH Prince William and HRH Prince Harry into the Gardens in order for them to view the floral tributes and meet members of the public.*

# News round-up from the Parks

## Hyde Park

Rob Dowling, Park Manager



Now that we are into late summer, our minds turn to the autumn and preparing the park for the winter months. Mowing of the meadows will commence shortly and in a month's time, the summer flower displays start to get replaced with spring bedding. The second half of the summer has been kind to the park with sunshine and showers, meaning the grass is growing profusely and the trees have recovered from the signs of stress they were showing back in June. September sees the park host the BBC concerts followed by Swim Serpentine open water swimming event. Then in October The Royal Parks Half Marathon returns for its 10 year anniversary.

### Meadow Mowing

The annual mowing of the Hyde Park meadow takes place in September. This year we have altered the mowing regime to leave more refuges for invertebrates. We will be using the shire horses to mow a section of the meadow using traditional methods. Over the winter we will sow wildflower seeds in some of the newer sections of meadow to enhance them.

### Swim Serpentine

This September has seen the return of the open water swimming event in Hyde Park. This year Swim Serpentine takes place on the 16 September and is open to everyone. An event village in the cockpit will also include activities for families.



### The Mandarin Oriental Hotel

The refurbishment of the rooms on the park facing façade of the hotel has commenced. To facilitate these works the rear garden is being used for loading and offloading of materials. The garden will be returned to its former glory on completion of these works next year.

### The Tennis Centre

Works to construct the new Padel tennis court will take place this autumn, alongside the laying of the new MUGA (multi use games area) playing surface and construction of the singles tennis court. Services will also be laid for the new floodlighting. The final turf reinstatement will take place over the next month to replace any grass that was damaged by the installation of the Cycle Superhighway.

### Education and Events

The Education Team at The Lookout run a series of events and activities throughout the year in Hyde Park such as bat walks and tours of the pet cemetery. To check what's on, please go to: <https://www.royalparks.org.uk/whats-on/upcoming-events>

### Royal Parks Half Marathon

This year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Royal Parks Half Marathon. This event takes place on Sunday October 8 and uses the same route, road closures and timings as in previous years. On Saturday 7 October The Great Ormond Street Hospital Race For The Kids will be taking place in Hyde Park using park footpaths and utilising much of the infrastructure that is in place for the half marathon.

### BBC Concerts

The annual BBC concerts took place on the 9 and 10 September. Through the Licensing and Safety Advisory Group, there was a full closure of park roads on both event days.

## Letter from the Editor

Our Autumn Newsletter is being published a little earlier than usual, because there are a few events that we don't want members to miss - catch the Serpentine Gallery Pavilion before it disappears and join some October events you'll find on the enclosed Events List. Your new membership card is also enclosed, so don't forget to take advantage of the generous discounts offered - see the Will to Win article and the interview with the Colicci family.

Elsewhere in this issue, you will find articles to make you smile and possibly frown, ranging from Swedish Midsummer to rescued dogs as well as the usual updates from the Parks Managers and accounts of our events held over the summer. We are looking for volunteers and donors, to help us support the Royal Parks in new and practical ways - our Chairman Sue Price gives details in her report.

I hope you enjoy your Autumn reading



Tessa Singleton

# Update on membership

The following new members have joined the Friends since the Spring 2017 Newsletter:

Mr & Mrs Tim & Norrie Buxton  
Ms Antonia Cox  
Ms Margaret Exley  
Mrs Hilary Gifford  
Mrs Maureen Gilmour  
Mr & Mrs Charles & Averil Good  
Mr Julian Hamlin  
Mrs Joanne Harper  
Mr Adrian Harvey  
Ms Ruth Holmes  
Ms Felicity Hudson  
Ms Pauline Hudson-Evans  
Mrs Susan Hunting  
Ms Fatima Kara  
Mr & Mrs Philip & Catherine L'Anson  
Mr Charles Lorthioir & Ms Annabel Rudebeck  
Mrs Brooke Maudhuit  
Mrs Peggy Murphy  
Miss Zina Serageldin  
Mr Martin Sheppard  
Ms Tina Strowman  
Ms Maria Wadham

As of September 2017 we have:

**TOTAL MEMBERS** 595 (including 20 Honorary)  
**LIFE MEMBERS** 150  
**NEW MEMBERS** 28 (of which 6 are joint)  
**Converted to life membership** 2  
**Corporate members** 12  
**Associate members** 12

We are still trying to contact Ann Rosamund Harr and Mr J M Williams, who both pay by standing order.

## AGM Queen Alexandra's House

26 April 2017

Once again the Chairman, Adrian Harvey, and Principal, Anet Brown, were kind enough to invite us back to QAH for our AGM.

A large group of members and guests enjoyed spectacular presentations from both Parks Managers, Andrew Williams from Kensington Gardens and Robert Dowling from Hyde Park. Both talks were illustrated with beautiful, interesting and, sometimes shocking, photography. Steve Barnes "our" dedicated police officer, gave useful information on how to stay safe.

After the business, the presentations and a short Q&A session, there was a reception and a chance to see the important tiled walls in the dining rooms for those who were first time visitors to this hidden treasure in the heart of Albertopolis.

Next year, we are delighted to have been invited back to Queen Alexandra's House again for our AGM.

It will be held on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 7.00 pm.  
Please note in your diary.



## Donations

As outlined in the chairman's report, we are actively encouraging members to make donations to support specific initiatives connected with the work of the Royal Parks. Next year, one of our first projects will be to sponsor concerts at the Hyde Park Bandstand.

### NEW FOR 2018 - "Music Month" at the Hyde Park Bandstand.

August 2018 is set to be "Music Month" at the Bandstand - an ideal way to bring this very underused facility back to life. The Friends will be represented on the organising committee and, most significantly, will be sponsoring three key events: Sunday afternoon concerts on August 12th, 19th and 22nd. Dates for your diary?

### Don't forget Gift Aid!

Gift Aid makes a big difference to us as a charity by enabling us to generate additional revenue to support the Parks through tax relief.

Members' donations qualify for tax relief, provided they have completed the Gift Aid form.

You can make a donation via the Friends' website [www.friendshpkg.org.uk](http://www.friendshpkg.org.uk) - click the Donate button and follow the instructions. Thank you!

In addition to our Patron, **Dame Jennifer Jenkins**, whose death at the age of 95 in February 2017 was reported in the Spring Newsletter, we have recently received news of the death of two other members, **Patricia Holland of Sussex Gardens**, who had been a member since 2015 and **Mrs Lisa Von Clemm of Bedford Gardens**, a member since 2004 "who spent many loved hours in Kensington Gardens."

# Chairman's Report

## Stand up and be counted!

*It's time to help the Parks in all sorts of ways. Many members have experienced our behind the scenes events, even more have daily walks or occasional enjoyable visits. It's time for us to give something back.*

### **Now, and How, we can help**

*The very smart, architect designed kiosk beside the Albert Memorial in Kensington Gardens opened in early summer. It has been extremely popular and is a lovely place to sit especially as it is now surrounded by spectacular new, very large, mostly herbaceous flower beds. If you haven't seen them it is well worth a visit. There are plans for these beds to be extended to the other side of the South Flower Walk, and they are all part of the planned improvements to this area. However, there is now a much greater need for help with their maintenance. Would you be willing to put in a few hours once a week or so to do some dead-heading, watering and pulling out occasional rogue plants which shouldn't be where they have sprung up? In addition passers-by like to chat, to admire and ask questions.*

*A little bit of friendly conversation would also, therefore, be a help, although extensive knowledge of Latin plant names is absolutely not necessary. You would be working alongside the regular gardeners in that part of the Park and support would be provided by the garden contractors.*

*We already have two volunteers who, by the time I write this, may be up and running (or snipping and tweaking). Hyde Park management does not want to miss out on possible volunteers either, along the same lines.*

*If you live closer to the Rose Garden, would you be willing to do some dead-heading there? Our members will know how densely planted it is. The chatting element is important here too, and visitors really appreciate some friendly faces to pass on their congratulations. Please email: [contact@friendshpkg.org.uk](mailto:contact@friendshpkg.org.uk)*

*At last, and with all your help and support, mainly through our events, through donations given in connection with these, and thanks to our new charitable status, we are able to help in a small way with some funding for both of "our" Parks. Your subscriptions go towards running the Friends, producing the newsletter and the AGM. But the funds we have raised in the way I've described will be used for a smallish project for each Park, which would be outside the normal budget. The Park managers are deciding and I know it will make interesting reading in next spring's Newsletter to see what they've chosen to do. And then, finally, as you will see elsewhere in the Newsletter, the Friends will help subsidise some concerts in August 2018 on the beautifully restored Hyde Park Bandstand.*

*Rob Dowling, Hyde Park's manager, has wanted to see music back on this spot for a long time. But, sadly, there has been nothing in the budget and I think we are all aware that funding is tough.*

*At our visit to the Police Horses in July I was able to explain how your donations are now making such a difference and I hope you'll agree that they are being put to good use. I look forward, in our spring edition, to being able to include photos and more details.*

Sue Price



## The Serpentine Gallery Summer Pavilion

*Every year since 2000 the Serpentine Gallery has commissioned a temporary summer pavilion by a leading architect. The series presents the work of an international architect or design team who has not completed a building in England at the time of the Gallery's invitation. Each Pavilion is completed within six months and is situated on the Gallery's lawn for three months for the public to explore. I was fortunate enough to be given a ticket by our Chairman for the opening of this year's Pavilion.*

*The architect, Francis Kéré who is the first African architect to be invited to design the Pavilion, took inspiration from a huge tree from his hometown in Burkina Faso, where the community gathers to hold meetings. Kéré's oval-shaped structure features a courtyard enclosed by curving walls made from stacked wooden blocks, sheltered by a large, slatted timber roof.*

*The intention was to create a structure that provides shelter, while allowing visitors to experience the natural elements, Kéré says "The idea was to create a huge canopy that allows the visitors to feel the elements but being protected," he explains. "It is enclosed by wooden blocks which are perforated and allow the air to circulate, which creates comfort inside."*



*The slatted timber roof is lined with translucent panels of polycarbonate, to keep the rain off visitors while allowing light to filter through.*

*The funnel-shape of the canopy is intended to direct rainwater into a well in the centre of the pavilion, which will then be dispersed underground to the surrounding park*

*The wooden blocks that form the walls of the pavilion are a deep shade of indigo blue, which Kéré says has special significance for him.*

*"Blue is so important in my culture," he reflects. "It is a colour of celebration."*

*"If you had an important date in my village in pastimes, there was one piece of clothing everyone was going to ask for. So when I got the commission for the pavilion here in London I said: I am going to wear my best dress, my best colour, and it is blue."*

*The Serpentine Pavilion is open in Hyde Park until Oct 8. For more info about the Pavilion and related events, head to [the Serpentine's website. www.serpentinegalleries.org/explore/pavilion](http://www.serpentinegalleries.org/explore/pavilion)*

*I thought that the design was brilliant and thoroughly recommend a visit.*

Simon Walton

# Out and about with the Friends

## British Summer Time

An ageing rocker member writes:-

*There has been a lot of discussion going on about the separation of a large part of Hyde Park for rock concerts and festivals in the summer. Is it right to remove an area of the Parade Ground for several months from the enjoyment of the general public? On the other hand the Royal Parks must be creative with new ways of raising funds.*

*I had the chance to find out for myself with brother in law, Chris, (see his article on the Rolling Stones shows in the Autumn 2014 newsletter). Chris had a pair of tickets to see Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers and he invited me along. Of course you have heard of Tom Petty – he of a catalogue of songs including ‘Learning to Fly’ and ‘I Won’t Back Down’. Give me a ring and I’ll sing them down the phone to you. Or preferably look him up on Youtube.*

*I can report that this was an extremely well run and professionally organized event – one of the series of British Summer Time shows running over several summer weekends. Tom P was supported by Stevie Nicks – one time member of Fleetwood Mac. I bet you had their Rumours album playing on your record player at dinner parties back in the 80’s.*



*The site had strict airport-style security at the entrance so that we immediately felt safe. A film set of faux Cuban streets had been built for the beer and food concessions. A fun fair was in full swing and thousands of people were enjoying picnics on rugs. The weather was perfect though I can see that the grass would take a hammering on rainy occasions.*

*I just loved seeing people enjoying a communal festival in the middle of London. There was no trouble. An audience of 55,000 and everyone was in a convivial mood with new friendships being made. Smirnoff girl here gave me a nice smile and soon there were two glamorous girls smiling into the camera. I bet they are heartbreakers.*

## The Friends

**summer party** took place in July this year with thanks Steve Riley who organised a bowls and putting competition in the magnificent Will to Win garden in Hyde Park.

*We had a Victrix Ludorum for bowls and a Victor Ludorum for putting. Congratulations to them both and to the numerous runners up. Fruit and Nut case ( sorry I meant chocolate ) bars were their reward.*

*Thanks to John Heywood who helped and advised the putting competitors and passed on his expert tips,*



*to Simon Walton who was an amiable barman dispensing wine all evening very assiduously, and to the attractive young waitresses who circled tirelessly with the canapés. Also*

*thanks go to Sue Heywood, the trustee who made the arrangements for us all, and of course where would we be without Steve Riley who gave us a short tutorial on the rules of bowls after which we of course knew everything there was to know!*

## A breakfast feast fit for a king – and without the exercise

*My companion and I met for breakfast on a beautiful sunny morning in June. We wandered past the massive new flower bed at the Albert Memorial and after long chats to various “Parks people”, our tongues were hanging out for a cappuccino. The nearest place to eat a good breakfast was very close by in the **Will to Win Centre** on the corner of West and South Carriage Drives.*



*My companion, although a member of the Friends for some time, seems to be a beginner at knowing the best places to eat. He had no idea that, even without your tennis whites on and a racquet under your arm, you can thoroughly enjoy the facilities on the inside of this Pavilion and in*

*its enclosed and sheltered sunny garden.*

*We made our way through and found masses of garden tables and chairs dotted about throughout these very prettily planted gardens. The sprinklers were playing on the bowls lawn and having ordered, we collapsed into basketwork armchairs in the sun.*

*There was a wide selection, some of it healthy, of breakfast type offerings. Freshly squeezed orange juice, Greek yoghurt and granola, fresh fruit salad as well as lots of different herb teas and different coffees.*

*We didn’t go for the Danish pastries but I’m afraid we both had a croissant (top notch quality) and cappuccinos while we waited for our Eggs Benedict on bagels, his with smoked salmon, mine with avocodo.*

*The two poached eggs came with masses of Hollandaise sauce and snipped herbs on a lightly toasted split bagel. At £6.55 each we thought them good value.*

*Did we struggle to finish them? Yes, of course we did, but did we regret meeting there for breakfast? Not a bit, and a lovely relaxed way to start the day on a sunny morning in London. And by the way, I should think that in the winter, indoors is a cosy welcoming spot too.*

# Out and about with the Friends

There's an equestrian theme to two of the Friends' recent outings

## Knightsbridge Barracks

Wednesday 3 May 2017

An exclusive group of ten members were invited to Knightsbridge Barracks by Lt. Colonel James Gaselee who is the Commanding Officer of the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment.

We were met at 10 am by Lt. Henry Vaughan who was a wonderful guide. The timing was crucial because we watched



an inspection of horses and riders before they rode out of the gates at precisely 10.32 to get to Buckingham Palace to change the guard.

The inspection resulted in one poor fellow failing with "dirty" kit and being taken off the duty to be replaced by a stand-in. We were all rather stunned by the drama of it all, and conscious of our own probably rather poor standards.

The events that morning followed thick and fast, and we felt that we too were taking part in a thorough inspection. Beginners, circling the indoor school trying to keep their swords pressed to their noses and their plumes from whirling round like whisks, drew much sympathy from us watching from behind glass windows.

And adrenalin raced when we crushed into the farriers' workshop. Those horses are huge when you are really close to them. If they hadn't had one foot up, hoof resting in the farrier's lap, we would have been terrified of a flying kick from a back leg.

It was altogether a marvellous way to spend a morning and the dashing Henry an excellent guide.

Sue Price



## Old Police House Stables

Tuesday 18 July 2017

A beautiful warm and sunny summer's day in mid-July, the scent of hay, the sounds of horses' hooves on cobbles coupled with the odd contented whinny, followed by refreshments in a country-style garden with an abundance of beautiful wild flowers.....

Where were 12 lucky Friends on 18 July? On a privileged visit to the Old Police House Stables and the Rangers Lodge Garden, Hyde Park.

Tucked away behind the Old Police House, the impressive, listed stables buildings, refurbished and re-opened by HRH

the Duke of Kent in 2010, are home to six magnificent members of the Metropolitan Police's 100-strong horse contingent, stabled in different locations all over the capital. Sullivan, Olive, Qwertz, Knightsbridge, Quebec and Jensen, each with very individual characters and temperaments, are looked after by ten police staff, including the police jockeys.

Dave Oliver, Stables Manager, welcomed the Friends, showed them round the stables, carefully and lovingly introducing each of his charges, explaining their different likes and dislikes, their strengths and weaknesses. The horses, sourced from all over the country, aged over ten and over 16 hands in height, are fed three times a day and shod monthly. They work almost daily: routine patrols in London's three main parks; attending ceremonial events (Knightsbridge was at the funeral of PC Keith Palmer, killed at Westminster in March); and giving operational support during public order events such as football matches. The horses retire in their late teens.

While the horses happily munched carrots and apples somewhat apprehensively offered by the Friends, Dave - a very knowledgeable and truly fascinating host - believed that the best horses had "a good head and kind temperament". At the end of July, the six horses and their bosses were looking forward to spending two weeks at the Met Police's Mounted Branch training centre, Esher, for annual training and a break from City life.

Following the visit, over soft drinks and bubbles in the Rangers Lodge Garden, Sue Price thanked Rob Dowling, Hyde Park Manager, for giving the Friends the opportunity to see his lovely garden.

Tessa Kūlgour

# Partners of the Parks

Colicci is one of the established service providers to the Royal Parks and has built a strong partnership with them. Through their speciality coffee, fresh food and ice creams, Colicci makes a valuable contribution to the enjoyment of thousands of visitors to the parks. Tessa Singleton met two members of the family to find out how the business started and became involved with the Royal Parks.

The story of the Colicci family business began over thirty years ago when Ernesto (Ernie) Colicci left his native Italy to try his hand at selling ice cream in London. In 1981 Ernie met his future wife Josephine, also of Italian parentage and with a catering background.



Early days: Rob and sister Rosie

They pooled their talents, invested in a second ice-cream van and started trading at agricultural shows. The evolution of the company from those modest beginnings to its success today is a reflection of the hard work, ethical principles and insistence on quality of which Colicci is justly proud. Josephine Colicci and her son Rob, now a director of the company, gave me the lowdown in the comfortable surroundings of the Italian Gardens Café in Kensington Gardens.

“It’s all so long ago now, but when we started, we sold Walls Ice Cream at agricultural shows and race meetings and Walls gave us lots of support in terms of branding and promotional tools and we began to grow,” says Josephine. “We developed a depot in Wimbledon behind the dog track, where we kept the vans and stock.”



1959 Morris J Type ice cream van

Ernie had worked earlier at an event in Hyde Park and met the Royal Parks team. From that initial contact, Colicci was invited to provide refreshments from a kiosk within the Park - and things grew from there. Josephine adds, “We enjoyed working with the Royal Parks and so we decided to make them a key priority for our business. We withdrew from our Events contracts and have retained only three major flower shows - Chelsea, Hampton Court and Tatton, and by reducing the range of our commitments, we have been able to expand our kiosks and cafés within the parks.”



Colicci family selfie: from L to R - Josephine, Rosie, Ernie, Rob

“Our ice cream has come a long way from those early days with Walls,” says Rob. “We now offer Colicci Jersey Dairy ice cream, Gelupo real Italian gelato and Purbeck English ice cream from Dorset. We tend to work with small, artisan suppliers who can provide the quality we require. That principle applies not only to ice cream, but also to our coffee and fresh food.”

Rob waxes lyrical if you get him started on the subject of coffee. He explains, “Our business relies on the quality of our coffee; as we offer speciality coffee, we insist on single origin beans and mostly buy up micro-lots from small South American farms, principally in Brazil. The beans are grown at altitude (above 1000m) and not picked until they are ripe and never mixed with unripe beans, something that can happen with larger suppliers. The beans are washed and then roasted in London.”

Over the past twelve months Colicci has grown significantly, so when I ask Rob about future plans, he is clear-sighted but cautious. “We have invested heavily during the last year and increased our workforce by 50%. Our turnover is up, but now we need to consolidate our expansion and refine our approach to the market. Our ambition is to grow slowly, sustainably and within our means.”



1933 Rolls Royce Phantom ice cream van at the Italian Gardens 2017

Finally, I ask Rob how he views Colicci’s partnership with the Royal Parks. “Well, there are two aspects really,” he replies, “first of all, with the Royal Parks you’re a lot more than a caterer - you can be involved in questions ranging from horticultural to WC attendant to coffee provider, and we’re still learning! More seriously though, the development of the Colicci brand has been influenced by the Royal Parks and their concern for the environment. It has helped define who we are as a company, how we present ourselves and where our priorities lie. We enjoy working with them and we’re grateful to them.”

To find out more about Colicci and where to sample their food, ice creams and coffee, visit their website [www.colicci.co.uk](http://www.colicci.co.uk) - and when you go, don’t forget to take your membership card to take advantage of the 20% discount.





# Midsummer with the Swedes

*Richard Price observes a Scandinavian tradition in local surroundings*



Back in June (remember that spell of gloriously settled and sunny weather?) talk in our family was of the forthcoming threat in Hyde Park of another gathering of Nords congregating to celebrate midsummer the Swedish way.

What we had remembered was the previous year's similar event, whose main legacy had been the acreage of discarded litter (and worse in the bushes) left for the parks staff to clear up. Why, we had asked, was this tolerated?

Enquiries revealed that nobody admits to 'organising' the event, no advance liaison with the park management, no contribution towards policing and clear-up; the event 'just happens' as social media publicises the gathering and the crowds (in their thousands) duly arrive to carouse. The Friends contacted the Swedish Ambassador for comment and involvement; unsurprisingly, her (now his) Excellency denied involvement (or even embarrassment) and did not want to get involved.

This year we wrote suggesting that the ambassador might like to attend the event; no joy. Undaunted, a group of Friends decided to join the party - and witness things first-hand.

We were aware that a group of sober-sided antis would be all too obvious (and unwelcome) so we chose to make an effort to fit in; armed with a bottle of Absolut (Swedish vodka), tot glasses and snacks we made our way to the spot where we knew the Swedes would meet. We were prepared for the worst.

Actually, thanks to our terrific parks staff, things were more or less under control. Apart from the sight of large crowds of reasonably wholesome looking youngsters (many of the girls with flower rings in their hair) the principal sight was a huge refuse vehicle and attendant staff. Apparently, this team had been working flat out since the morning. The team was moving among the crowd with transparent bin sacks, trying to recruit the revellers into some contribution

towards clearing detritus. The police were also in evidence (a double shift who had been on duty all day and until late at night). A further 'nudge' were slow-moving police cars making their way around the area.

There was some music and a bit of questionable smoke in the air - and some dodgy goings-on in

the bushes - but, on the

whole, people were reasonably well behaved. Some groups were busy playing a sort of chess-like game involving tossing small sticks at other sticks representing 'pawns' and a 'king'. We settled down with our tots of Absolut and enjoyed the company of the litter-picking parks staff.



The main 'take-away' from the evening was huge admiration for Hyde Park manager Rob Dowling and his staff. I don't think we'll be back for Swedish Midsummer in 2018 - but we really hope the ambassador will make the obvious and necessary offer of a financial contribution to Hyde Park for the policing and cleaning of the event. Who knows, he might even attend...

*Richard Price*  
*Richard Price*

# We three happy girls...

...are so happy to be in Kensington Gardens today talking to you and telling you our story.

Life was not always so good for any of us. I am Chloe, I am about five years old but I do not know my exact age. I lived on the streets in Romania scrounging for food.

Consequently, although there is no longer any need to panic about the next meal, I still cannot help myself being on the lookout for bits and pieces and eating at every opportunity. I was found by a charity "Safe Rescue"



From L to R: Ethel, Chloe and Florence, with their owner Christina.

and lived in a lady's house for a while and I have to say this was a time of very hard work for me as I had to be "house trained". I felt like a pin cushion from all the injections, and something magical also happened because I am no longer bothered with loads of puppies. I was brought to England and after living with another lady I passed their tests and moved to my "forever" home with Christina. I love her, but not so much as Florence who was dumped in a bucket in a MacDonald's Car Park on the day she was born. Florence thinks Christina is her real Mum and likes to stay close by her side at all times. Christina believes that her lucky number is three, she has three children, three cats and then, after having me and Florence, she thought she had better make our number up to three too, so we were joined by Ethel who was a dumped dog from Portugal. We think Ethel is the youngest and I am the most senior. We all wear the same uniform from Amazon which is a snazzy pink and we think we are a good advert for "Safe Rescue" as we all went through the same training so that we could live in a polite house and be fit and healthy too.

When Christina and her family go on holiday we stay at home which suits us very well, and someone moves in to live with us and take us out as normal. We meet our friend Archie who is very big and black and lives in the Victoria Pub on the Hyde Park Estate. Thank goodness, the kind people in this country welcomed us in as very needy homeless girls. I worry that after Brexit all those other not so lucky ones may not find it quite so easy to find refuge here.

But Christina tell us not to worry about this, to enjoy our games, and as she is in touch with the charity and lots of pictures go backwards and forwards on Facebook and so on, you never know, will her "lucky three" turn into an even "luckier four"?

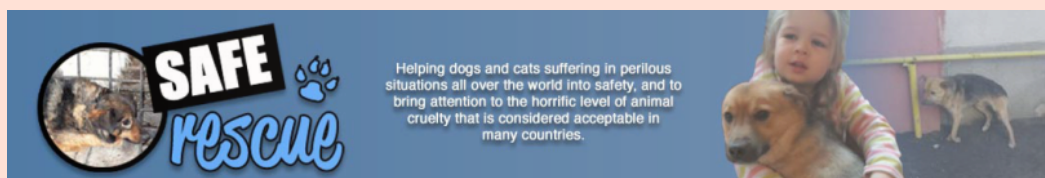
I need to get back now to concentrating on this very demanding photographer. He is lying on the ground, although he doesn't seem tired, and says he is having problems because we cannot stop wriggling about and Archie is trying to distract us too.

It's the beginning of the summer, it's lovely and warm and we are happy to be here talking to you.

*Sue Price*

*If you'd like to know more about the work of the charity Safe Rescue, you can find full information on their website*

<http://www.saferescuefordogs.com>



**Safe Rescue for Dogs** Registered Charity Number 1157320

Email: [saferscue@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:saferscue@hotmail.co.uk)

## Calling all volunteers!

There is a wonderful new flower bed beside the Albert Memorial and which surrounds the new state of the art kiosk in Kensington Gardens. We have been asked if any members might be interested in volunteering to help with a bit of watering, dead-heading and some weeding (rogue plants which are popping up) at this large mainly herbaceous bed.

You would be working alongside the permanent staff based at the South Flower Walk. The commitment would not be for very long sessions or very frequent.

Support and arrangements would be through the Kensington Gardens managers and garden contractors.

It would also be an advantage to be able to chat to, and answer some questions from passers-by who are interested, though extensive knowledge of the Latin names for plants is not needed!

If you are interested and would like more information please get in touch via [contact@friendshpkg.org.uk](mailto:contact@friendshpkg.org.uk)

## Why not flutter by the butterflies?

Assistant Hyde Park Manager, David Jordan, tells us that for the last three years he has been undertaking weekly butterfly transects (surveys) in Hyde Park. This summer he has been joined by some Royal Parks colleagues who are keen to learn more about butterfly species in the Parks.

He emphasises that this is not a "butterfly walk and talk" but is



a way of learning about performing a weekly butterfly transect.

Because it is very much weather dependent, and we are now heading into Autumn with the fine weather probably over, we will have to wait until he re-starts the transects in the Spring of 2018,

Keen members who would like to take part should contact Dave on [Djordan@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Djordan@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk)

## Remembering Saki - 100 years on



Born in Burma in 1870, Hector Hugh Munro was sent to live with relatives in England where he underwent a strict upbringing. Some of the relatives, notably his aunts, became models for his later short stories. As H H Munro, he was a journalist and Parliamentary sketch writer, but it is for his short stories written under the pseudonym Saki, that the author is remembered.

Along with Oscar Wilde, Saki is the great satirical writer of his age and if Wilde captured late Victorian society in his plays and novels, Saki crystallised the Edwardian one. Both writers were peerless in their use of English and gifted repartee, epigrams and bon mots. A contemporary critic labelled Saki 'a jungle boy in the drawing room.' His stories are observations on the middle and upper-class mores of his time, occasionally with a sinister or uncanny overtone. What is of particular interest to the Friends is that a number of stories are set in and around Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park. In *Dusk*, the opening line is specific:

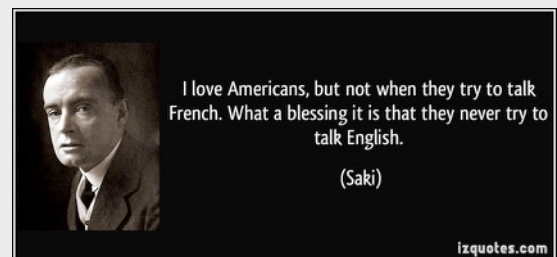
'Norman Gortsby sat on a bench in the Park, with his back to a strip of bush-planted sward, fenced by the park railings, and the Row fronting him across a wide stretch of carriage drive. Hyde Park Corner, with its rattle and hoot of traffic, lay immediately to his right.' Where exactly might that be? Another 'secluded corner of Hyde Park' is the opening setting for *The Romancers*.

Though Hyde Park is not named in *Tea*, it is the walk across it to Mayfair that is catalyst to the protagonist's life-changing decision. In the delicious story *Shock Tactics*, the opening sentence reads: 'On a late spring afternoon Ella McCarthy sat on a green-painted chair in Kensington Gardens,...' In *The Way to the Dairy*, Clovis and the Baroness are likewise seated in 'a much frequented corner of the Park'. Note that the park is unspecified, but is

capitalised as befits a Royal Park and because Saki's readers were expected to be au fait with the location.

Bayswater is the starting location for *Cross Currents*, in which the unfortunate and unfortunately respectable Vanessa Pennington laments that 'to be beyond reproach was one thing, but it would have been nicer to have been nearer to the Park.' Which reminds me of a voice-over in *Kind Hearts and Coronets*, where the villain says of someone he dislikes: "He lived in Bayswater. It was typical of him that he should choose the wrong side of the Park." On a personal note, I understand the sentiment. For years I lived on Inverness Terrace and my late mother, who lived on the right side of the Park, refused to visit.

In 1913 Saki published a novella, *When William Came: A Story of London under the Hohenzollerns*, in which the author imagines Britain under German occupation. The Hohenzollern of the title is the Kaiser Wilhelm II. Like Erskine Childers' *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903), the story is predictive of the war to come. At 43, Saki was too old for active service, but turned down a commission in order to join the troops in the trenches. Many of Saki's stories featured recurring Knufs: vain, self-absorbed dandies and world-weary adolescents who go by the names Reginald, Clovis or Bertie Van Than. Like Saki, these young men would be swept up in the Great War and their world would disappear. As did their author in 1916. His last words, uttered before being killed by a sniper, were: "Put that bloody cigarette out." His body was never found.



# FHPKG Concessions 2017/18

*The discounts on the latest list below are available to the Friends on presentation of a current, personal membership card. Please get in touch with ([contact@friendshpkg.org.uk](mailto:contact@friendshpkg.org.uk)) if you find any discrepancies or have any queries.*

## Will To Win

South Carriage Drive  
Hyde Park  
London W2 2UH  
020 7262 3474

*10% off court fees off-peak  
(Monday - Friday up to 5  
pm)*

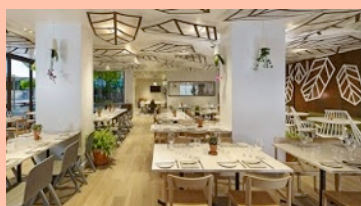
*20% off food and beverages*



## Urban Meadow & Café Bar

150 Bayswater Rod  
London W2 4RT  
020 7792 7066

*20% discount on food and  
beverages*



## The Serpentine Lido

Hyde Park  
London W2 2UH  
020 7706 3422

*15%-20% discount- to be confirmed for next 2017 swimming season.*

## The Orangery Café

Kensington Palace  
Kensington Palace Gardens  
London W8 4PX  
020 3166 6113

*10% discount on food and beverages*

## The Lodge Café

Hyde Park Corner  
London W1 7NT  
0203 058 1224

*20% discount on food and beverages*



## Palace Café

Kensington Gardens  
London W8 4PX  
020 3166 6127

*10% discount on food and beverages*

## The Lido Café

Hyde Park  
London W2 2UH  
020 7706 7098

*10% discount for up to 2 people, of whom 1 must be a member*

## The Boathouse

Serpentine Road  
London W2 2UH  
020 7262 1330

*Hire of all boats at children's rates*

## Serpentine Bar & Kitchen

Serpentine Road  
Hyde Park  
London W2 2UH  
020 7706 8114

*20% discount on food and beverages*



## Lancaster London

Lancaster Terrace  
London W2 2TY  
020 7551 6000

*Become a complimentary Friend of the Lancaster London for 10% off in restaurants and bars and 10% off best available hotel rate.*

## The Magazine Restaurant

Serpentine Sackler Gallery  
West Carriage Drive  
Kensington Gardens  
London W2 2AR  
020 7298 7552

*10% off food and beverages for up to 6 people at lunchtime.*

## Hyde Park Kiosks

Hyde Park Corner  
Speakers' Corner  
Triangle  
Boat House  
Playground  
Diana Memorial  
Diana Memorial Ice Cream  
*20% discount on snacks and drinks at  
each of the above kiosks*

## Kensington Gardens Kiosks

Italian Gardens Café  
Broadwalk  
Palace Gate  
Albert Memorial  
Italian Fountain  
Ice Cream Vans  
*20% discount on snacks and drinks at  
each of the above kiosks*



## Royal Albert Hall

Kensington Gore  
London SW7 2AP  
020 7959 0500

*10% off at Cafe Bar (at Door 12)*

*10% off Retail Unit (at Door 12)*

*20% off at Verdi Italian Kitchen (Tuesday to Sunday 1200 - 1600)*

*33% off Grand Tour, Inside Out Tour, Secret History Tour*

*38% off Behind the Scenes Tour*

*20% off Story of the Proms Tour*

## Royal Garden Hotel

2-24 High Street Kensington  
London W8 4PT  
020 7937 8000

*Check with restaurant staff for 10% Discount Card in Park Terrace  
(A la Carte menu), Bertie's Bar and Min Jiang Bar*

## Park Deck Chairs

[www.parkdeckchairs.co.uk](http://www.parkdeckchairs.co.uk)

*On completion of a season ticket 30% discount.*

*Non-concessionary Rate Season Ticket £77*

*Concessionary Rate Season Ticket £31.50*

## The Kensington Wine Rooms

127-129 Kensington Church Street  
London W8 7LP  
020 7727 8142

*10% off entire bill for lunch Monday to Friday*

