

# FRIENDS OF HYDE PARK & KENSINGTON GARDENS

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

SPRING 2016

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

ISSUE 42



## Spring 2016 Newsletter

1991 - 2016

### *FHPKG celebrates 25 years*



Serpentine Gallery - Summer Pavilion



Philip Joseph



London to Brighton vintage car rally



Lady Riches



Dame Jennifer Jenkins



The Queen Elizabeth Gate



Lady Cleaver



Winter Wonderland



Solar Shuttle on the Serpentine



Princess Diana Memorial Playground



*Cycling, swimming, walking, playing, running...*

*Sketching, relaxing, making music...*

*Enjoying our unique Royal Parks...*

# Chairman's Report

Welcome to our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Newsletter.

I'm sure you will agree that this extra thick newsletter packed with photographs, reminiscences, news and views is an excellent way to celebrate. We have editor Tessa Singleton to thank for the design, layout and creation of this bumper issue.

I'm sure too that you will find our list of special events which we've arranged for this summer extremely attractive and a fit way to help us celebrate. I'm writing this Spring 2015 letter to the Friends and although the sun is blazing outside, the air is still icy. But what a relief after such a long grey and very wet winter.

I shall leave specific news of both Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park in the very capable hands of Andy Williams and Rob Dowling/David Jordan in their reports.

Looking back at my last three letters, the Cycle Superhighway has been an ongoing area of concern. The Superhighway section of the East West route is now a fact (well nearly, as the West Carriage Drive section is under construction and the other legs will follow). Our concern, and as always I have to thank committee members Julian Peach and René Gimpel for adding pressure to our arguments, is the potential increase in volume of cyclists on the shared paths within both Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens.

Mount Walk in Kensington Gardens has for a long time become, at certain times of the day, a dangerous and unpleasant place for pedestrians and in particular for any one with small children or for dog walkers. We have been encouraged by the installation here of rows of granite sets "rumble strips" to slow cyclists down, many of whom have been cycling at antisocial speeds. White lines to hold pedestrians back have been removed. Pedestrians have priority on all paths within both Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. This change in marking and the building work designed to reduce speeds is due to be rolled out over both Parks.

Despite a massive outcry by angry cyclists in social media against the Mount Walk measures, my "eyes and ears" (members who use the Parks daily) tell me they don't see much reduction in cyclists' speed. However, there has been a great increase in visible police activity: slowing down, stopping, speaking to and fining cyclists who are either going too fast, or sometimes on pedestrian paths.

We have our specially designated police officer, PC Steven Barnes, to thank for this. We sent our very best wishes to Steve when he was knocked down in the Park by a cyclist (who didn't stop) and left him with a broken wrist.

We have tried very hard, but failed to get TfL to remove the description "Central London Grid" and "Quiet Ways" from within both Parks. The first term to us sounds as though the Parks are being thought of as part of a London transport/traffic system, and "Quiet Ways" would indicate a cycle route (not a footpath) a degree or two less hectic than the Superhighway. It should never be forgotten that the paths within the Parks are primarily for pedestrians, who have priority and the Parks are places where people come to visit, to enjoy the fresh air, for relaxation, for play and for recreation; they are not an assumed section of a commuter's route into work. Only 7% of visitors to our two Parks are on bicycles, the rest are on foot.

Remember please, if any of you see any activity which is antisocial, or breaking Park regulations, dial 101 and report it. However, in an emergency always call 999. Every incident recorded helps us to prove that we really do need a police presence.

Exciting changes lie ahead for the structure of the Royal Parks management. Andrew Scattergood, Chief Executive of the Royal Parks, is our guest speaker at the AGM and will be able to explain further.

The Foundation (the charitable fund-raising arm of The Royal Parks) will merge with The Royal Parks Agency and a new public corporation (a charitable body) will be formed. This will give the Parks management much greater control over how income is spent and the budget managed. Income will be able to be moved from one year to the next to fund larger projects, there will be tax savings and it is predicted that the new body will be attractive to philanthropic donations, which it is not at present.

Income streams will be managed more efficiently. Further cuts to funding from central government are in the pipeline, reducing the level from the 35% which the Parks receive at the moment. The new café at the Italian Gardens in Kensington Gardens will be part of this new effort to raise the level of income. There are empty properties in other Royal Parks (neither Hyde Park nor Kensington Gardens) and these will be let at a commercial rate.

Some level of commercial activity is going to be a fact of life for the Royal Parks, for without these we would quickly notice a reduction in the quality and standard of maintenance of our two Parks which we have appreciated and enjoyed for years and have grown to expect.

Much of what I have written to you in this letter is perhaps not news at all. I regularly pass on information about important Park issues to members via email, and if you would like to be included in this group (which also means you have a chance to win tickets for events and take part in short notice visits) email us at [contact@friendshpkg.org.uk](mailto:contact@friendshpkg.org.uk).

I look forward to meeting those of you who are able to join us at our AGM, or at one of our many events planned for this summer.



*Sue Price  
Chairman*

*The perils of being chairman of FHPKG - Sue gets on track during the Friends' visit to the old Aldwych Station in November 2015*



**Jacky Hyer** has decided to step down from the Committee, after many years of dedicated service to the Friends, most recently as Chairman before Sue.

*Thanks for her important contribution to FHPKG and a small presentation were given to her by the Chairman at the last committee meeting*

# News round-up from the Parks

## Kensington Gardens

Report from Park Manager, Andy Williams

**Marlborough Gate Cafe:** The contractor, Bolt and Heeks, is making good progress onsite. Works are running slightly behind schedule and we anticipate a completion date towards the end of May. All ornamental plants have been sourced for the new landscaped beds. We have specified a living roof composing native grasses and forbs with the inclusion of bare patches of stone, brick and gravel as a brownfield site for spontaneous vegetation. The roof presents an exciting ecological improvement in the Gardens. The existing catering concessionaire, Company of Cooks, will operate the Cafe until the end of the current catering contract term (November 2016).

**South Flower Walk - Irrigation.** As noted at the last meeting we have received the go ahead for the construction of a new automated irrigation system. This will deliver water to the lawns around the Albert Memorial and the lawns, beds and borders along the length of the SFW. Work will commence directly after Easter and will take 6-8 weeks. Some local path closures and disruption is inevitable but this will be minimised. Eventually we hope to bring the borehole across from Hyde Park and so reduce the use of costly mains water.

**Mount Walk - Cycle Calming Measures.** Mount Walk is now open again after recent treatments to manage cycle speed and promote the feeling of shared space at junctions. Before these new treatments were designed, The Royal Parks, through Atkins, undertook a study of the Mount Walk cycle route and found there was conflict with other Park users. Additional findings noted that during the week over 60% of cyclists were travelling at speeds in excess of 12mph, the upper limit of

the designated speeds which TRP consider safe on its shared use paths. It was determined that the speed of cyclists needed to be addressed so pedestrians felt more comfortable within the shared space. The cobble strips have been designed to slow cyclists down and to raise awareness of the junctions where there is likely to be a range of different users within the space. The success of the interventions will be monitored again later this year in another study undertaken by Atkins under similar conditions to the original study. We have received few complaints. The MPS team were hugely supportive during the works enforcing 'no cycling' on other KG routes.

**Cycle Superhighway:** We continue to meet weekly (with the Hyde Park team) to oversee the TFL/Conway works on the EW route. Detailed programmes are being sent out at weekly intervals to known stakeholders. We are yet to agree a date for the final surface treatments on the eastern side of WCD. Northbound cycling on west side pavements is causing significant conflict with pedestrians.

**Biodiversity:** Further hedge laying has been carried out along the length of WCD at Buck Hill. The woody margins of the Long Water have been managed through rotational coppice and clearance of some undergrowth to promote a wider range of ground flora whilst retaining a safe habitat for birds.

**Miscellaneous:** We continue to develop and refine briefs for works at the Silver Thimble Shelters, Peter Pan area, improved drainage at the Italian Gardens and restoration of the Queens Anne's Alcove.

## Hyde Park

Report from Assistant Park Manager David Jordan

### Parade Ground Reinstatement

**Works:** Following a series of successful events, we are nearing the end of works to return the Parade Ground to its previous condition, with the work being funded by event organisers.

Work began in January and weather permitting, protective fencing will be removed in early/mid April 2016, in readiness for the Gun Salute to commemorate HM Queens Birthday, which will be performed by the Kings Troop on Thursday 21st April at 12 noon.

**West Carriage Drive:** Transport For London (TFL) commenced work on building a segregated cycle track on the eastern side of West Carriage Drive in November 2015. To facilitate these works, traffic along West Carriage Drive has become southbound only, with this phase of work to be completed in late April 2016.

**South Carriage Drive:** From the end of April 2016, South Carriage Drive will be closed westbound while works are carried out. Vehicles should use Kensington Road as an alternative

Some temporary closures may be required at the Prince of Wales, Edinburgh and Queen

Elizabeth Gates. More information will be provided closer to the time.

**North Carriage Drive** will be closed permanently westbound from 4th April 2016 as part of the final scheme. Some temporary night-time closures will apply eastbound in mid-April, for works at the junction between North and West Carriage Drive. The closures will be in place between 20:00 and 05:00. For more information and travel advice, visit: [tfl.gov.uk/eastwest](http://tfl.gov.uk/eastwest)

**Borehole Water Works:** This project involves the installation and commissioning of a borehole water distribution system, and a new plant room and underground holding tank at the Bowling Green in order to reduce the park's reliance on mains water usage. During these works a pipe run is being installed along the south side of Rotten Row, and then northwards around the eastern end of the Serpentine to the existing plant room at the Reservoir.

**Rose Garden:** We have recently commenced works on the repainting of the Rose Arch. To facilitate these works, the climbing roses required a 'heavy prune', but will grow back and eventually cover the whole of the frame. We are also installing decorative steel fencing

around the perimeter of the Rose Garden to enhance the area and improve security.

### Seasonal soft landscaping works:

Repairs to parkland turf continue across the park, as well as seasonal shrub pruning and the planting of UK native shrubs such as gorse, holly, blackthorn, guelder rose, wild rose and hawthorn to improve bio-diversity, by creating habitat and food for birds, butterflies and overwintering insects.

**Bowling Green:** Sections of the shrub beds at the Bowling Green are also being replanted with selected UK native shrubs, and selected native shrubs planted to screen the Borehole plant room.

**Butterfly recording:** Hyde Park Assistant Park Manager David Jordan has volunteered to become the new 'butterfly recorder' for Hyde Park and hopes to induct Kensington Gardens Park Manager Andy Williams into the same role for Kensington Gardens.

Summer 2015 was the first summer in many years, where butterfly species have been recorded in Hyde Park on a weekly basis, with Meadow Brown being by far the commonest species, along with smaller numbers of Speckled Wood, Comma, Peacock, Large White, Small Heath, Red Admiral and Holly Blue.

# The Serpentine Gallery

*Director Julia Peyton-Jones looks back on the past 25 years under her leadership*

*When I became Director in 1991, the Serpentine was a small institution situated in London's most beautiful Royal Park, loved by those in the know, but in a rather parlous physical condition. Our driving passion from the outset was to make contemporary art accessible to the widest possible public. We are still driven by the belief that it is essential to inform and educate people about the art, architecture and design of our time.*

*The Serpentine's growth has been the result of a committed staff and Board, formerly led by Lord Palumbo, who steered the Serpentine through two major building projects, a six-fold increase in attendance and the significant growth of the institution across all its activities. Trustees are now chaired by Michael R. Bloomberg, three-term Mayor of New York City. Bloomberg served as a Trustee of the Board from 1998 to 2001, becoming Chairman elect in September 2013.*

*I was lucky enough to take over the reins at the Serpentine when the YBAs (Young British Artists) were coming to prominence, which coincided with a sea change in how the arts were viewed in this country. We felt that the only way for the Gallery to achieve its ambitious programmes was to embrace the new model of public/private arts-funding and we set about building a strong base for support, including the notable appointment of the Princess of Wales as Patron.*

*Prior to starting the renovation of the Serpentine's building in 1996, the Gallery presented – often for the first time in a public space – famous names as well as artists who were then less well known – Damien Hirst, Michael Landy, Tilda Swinton and Cornelia Parker. The idea of installing work on the lawn came into its own when the Gallery was closed for refurbishment, with outdoor installations by Richard Deacon, Rasheed Araeen and Anya Gallaccio.*

*The Serpentine's renovation in the mid-1990s created the museum conditions and the flexibility that the Gallery needed in order to present world-class artists. This was followed by exhibitions of artists of worldwide acclaim including Ellsworth Kelly, Louise Bourgeois, Yayoi Kusama and Bridget Riley, as well as those who were coming to prominence like William Kentridge, Andreas Gursky and some of the UK's most significant younger artists, such as Chris Ofili and Cornelia Parker.*

*The renovation also made possible the launch of the Sackler Centre for Arts Education in 1998. The Serpentine and the Serpentine Sackler Galleries are now internationally renowned for developing and delivering long-term collaborative art and social-research projects with local communities.*

*From the time of the building's renovation in 1998, we started to embed architecture in the Serpentine's programme. In 2000, the Serpentine's desire to exhibit architecture in a truly accessible way, gave us the inspiration for the annual Serpentine Gallery Pavilion commission. The Pavilion programme has challenged architects to produce highly imaginative, playful and dynamic structures in a dazzling parade of annual commissions. It started with an invitation to Zaha Hadid to design a temporary structure for the Gallery's 30th anniversary. Every year since, funds have been raised for a new Pavilion to be constructed annually, allowing the public to experience at first hand the work of 'Titans in the field, including Frank Gehry, Oscar Niemeyer, Rem Koolhaas.*

*More recently the commission has gone to younger international practitioners like Sou Fujimoto, Smiljan Radic and SelgasCano. The Pavilion is a democratic space, in effect a new wing that the Serpentine builds every year. This summer we expand the Serpentine's architectural programme with commissions of four 25 square metre Summer Houses, inspired by Queen Caroline's Temple, a classical summer house built in 1734, a stone's throw from the Serpentine Gallery.*



photo Greg Funnell © 2013

*Since 2006, the Pavilion has hosted the Serpentine Marathon, an innovative festival of ideas conceived by Hans Ulrich Obrist who I invited to join me as Co-Director of Exhibitions and Programmes and Director of International Projects. The Marathon introduced practitioners across a wide variety of disciplines, from the arts, to science, mathematics, film, dance, popular culture and beyond to focus on a particular theme, such as Poetry, Memory or Manifesto. The Experiment Marathon of 2007 took the idea further, moving from the conference format to the idea of a laboratory. This event, together with Park Nights, makes summer at the Serpentine a London landmark that the Mayor of London and The New York Times have used to illustrate the cultural life of the city.*

*Throughout H.U.O.'s and my ten-year partnership we have worked hard to develop the Serpentine's vision, reach and ambition. A survey of Chinese artists and architects, including the soon to be globally renowned Ai Weiwei, was followed by Indian Highway, that took place on the walls of the Serpentine, both inside and outside.*

*The third project in the trilogy, initiated in 2008, focuses on the Middle East. Developed with international partners Townhouse, Cairo, and Ashkal Akwan, Beirut, the programme has so far taken place in London, Cairo and Beirut. Over eight years, more than 30 artists from the UK,*

*India, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq and the US have developed long-term projects and artworks, from films, publications, performances and exhibitions, produced with members of the public and local community groups, on issues relating to housing, schooling, gentrification and migrant histories. Many of these projects have gone on to be shown in Biennials all over the world and inspired similar projects in other cities.*

*In recent years we have focused on the work of important figures such as Gustav Metzger, Leon Golub, Nancy Spero, Marina Abramovic and seminal presentations of the work of British artists including Wolfgang Tillmans, Jake and Dinos Chapman and Ed Atkins. The Serpentine's earlier move to place art in Kensington Gardens has been consolidated with further projects, including works by Anish Kapoor (the first presentation in Kensington Gardens for 35 years).*

*In 2010, we succeeded in a hotly fought contest to take over the 1805 Magazine building, also in Kensington Gardens, which we restored and expanded into a new exhibition space. Just as the Pavilion provides a temporary extension to the Serpentine Gallery, the Serpentine Sackler – named in recognition of a major gift from the Dr Mortimer and Theresa Sackler Foundation – provides a permanent means of complementing and expanding the Gallery's programme into new areas. Renovated and with a stunning extension by Zaha Hadid Architects, it offers a nearby sister space for parallel exhibitions.*

*In recent years we have focussed much on the cross-fertilisation of disciplines, widening the net of what can be shown in an art gallery and showing art beyond the gallery. Design, for example, has often been included in the programme, with exhibitions curated by Martino Gamper and Konstantin Grcic and more recently in partnership with la Rinascente for the store's eight commanding windows overlooking the cathedral square during the Salone del Mobile in Milan.*

*I am proud to say that are still the only modern and contemporary gallery in central London to consistently maintain free admission.*

*While the landscape in terms of contemporary art and architecture has changed out of all recognition, what has remained constant is the Serpentine's unbeatable location in the most beautiful Royal Park in the heart of the best city in the world. As well as having the chance to run this gem of an institution for 25 years, I count myself incredibly lucky that my daily commute has been into Kensington Gardens. It's been the best job in the world and I would not have changed it for anything.*



Julia Peyton-Jones

# Out and about with the Friends

## Visit to Aldwych Station

On 24 November 2015, a rare opportunity to visit the station, opened in 1907 and closed since 1994, attracted a full house of FHPKG visitors. The station has been used mainly for filming since it was closed



and we were given a lively commentary by Shirley from London Underground, with plenty of historical anecdotes. Undeterred by the seemingly

endless stairs to reach street level again, somehow we all managed it! Our thanks to Tina Raymond for managing to organise such an unusual and interesting outing



## Winter Wonderland winners

Sam and his family were lucky enough to win the tickets offered by the organisers to FHPKG. He says, "We were very excited to win the Winter



Wonderland tickets and it was amazing that when we went to the box office, there they were."

"We had a really great time at the Winter Wonderland,

the two boys (Freddie, aged 8, & Ben, aged 6) really enjoyed the circus and I thought it quite incredible some of the feats the acrobats performed.

As the boys said

"They were amazing,

the best bit was when one of them wore a blindfold on the wheel. We're going to try that at home."

Dad(Sam): "Oh no you're not!"



## Behind the scenes at the Royal Albert Hall

On 9 February 2016 a sizeable group of the Friends gathered by Door 12 to meet our expert guide Richard, who showed us aspects and told stories of the Albert Hall, which most visitors are not even aware of.



Since its opening in 1871 till the present day, the RAH has been available to hire, a building that operates 24/7. From a fancy dress ball in 1911 to celebrate the coronation of George V to the Cirque du Soleil, in residence during our visit, an unimaginable number of events have taken place there: the Proms, the Chelsea Arts Ball



(1910-1958), the Beatles (1963), Miss World (1969-1986), Sumo wrestling (1991), to name but a few.

We visited every floor of the huge structure, went on stage behind the scenes and our guide kept us entertained throughout. We finished with a much appreciated tea in the Verdi Restaurant.

## Help us solve a mystery! Do you know who Mrs Galpin was?

Richenda Walford from London Remembers has contacted FHPKG in the hope that a member can help shed light on an inscription on the Clock Tower in Kensington Gardens. This memorial is a substantial shelter from the weather, with seats, a fountain, a clock, a weathervane – making a significant item on the Kensington Gardens Broad Walk.

It was erected by a Mrs Galpin in 1909 "to the memory of a beloved son and of one who loved little children." But can we identify "Mrs Galpin"? Or the "beloved son"? Or the "one who loved little children"? No, we cannot - and not for want of trying. We have ransacked the virtual archives, and followed leads, and found some candidates, but no one fits the bill. Like the Serial podcast – an absorbing investigation that, annoyingly, does not, in the end, solve the puzzle. For more info, visit [www.londonremembers.com](http://www.londonremembers.com). If you have any ideas, please email or write to FHPKG or contact us via the website. [www.friendshpkg.org.uk](http://www.friendshpkg.org.uk)



# Meet some of the people...

**Philip Joseph** was the driving force behind the formation of the Friends of Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens. He became the first FHPKG chairman and was subsequently its President, until his death last October at the age of 95.

Philip Joseph was born in NW London and worked in the family business until the outbreak of WW11. He was recruited into the RAF, where despite his small stature he flew huge Sutherland planes. While in South Africa he met the 16 year old Pamela. After the war, when Pamela came to England to study, Philip met her off the boat. They were married two years later and soon returned to South Africa. Philip worked in chemical engineering, while Pamela and her mother bought a secondhand-book shop, which soon became the most popular bookshop in Johannesburg. However, politics soured the atmosphere and in 1978, accompanied by their three sons, they came back to London.

Shortly afterwards Philip acquired the leases and stock of a small chain of bookshops. Adding a coffee bar in each premises of what became Books Etc, they were the best place to come book-browsing and grew to 40 branches. In an interview in 2000, he said 'I'm not a literary person. I wish I was. But if a bookshop or any shop is not run on sound business principles it is doomed to fail'.

Philip was being disingenuous in saying he was not literary; he was on the publishing board of the British Library and was a keen reader himself, but he wanted to sell the books people wanted, not just the improving kind.

In 1991, on realising there was no-one keeping an eye on the administration of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, Philip set up the Friends, co-opted other volunteers, established the first committee and became its chairman.

In 1997, the USA giant Borders offered a

cash deal for Books Etc. So at the age of 75 Philip was free to indulge more fully in his long list of hobbies; which included opera, being a patron of the V&A and the London Walking Group, of which he had been a founding member. Although he had given up the walks, he was at the AGM only a month before he died.

He was able to give more time to croquet, serving as chairman of the Hurlingham Croquet section 2005-8 and was given an award by the association for Services to Croquet in 2014. He was a fiercely competitive player in a sport which requires a keen grasp of tactics as well as an eye for the ball. He attended the Croquet section AGM and lunch two weeks before he died.

He will be remembered for his wit, wisdom and gift of friendship by all who knew him.

Andrew Duguid



**Lady Riches** was involved with the Friends from the beginning and in fact was its No. 1 member. She was approached in 1991 by Philip Joseph, who asked if she would be interested in joining the fledgling Friends. Ann agreed, and so became a key member of the initial committee.

She remembers with affection the early days, saying "All we were there for was to support the general public's enjoyment of the Parks". The Friends were welcomed by the management of the Royal Parks, their advice was sought whenever new ideas or plans were in the offing. Ann recalls that Friends' events were grand affairs, with copious wine and food, financed principally by some wealthy American members. This state of affairs, inevitably, was not permanent and the life of FHPKG continued thereafter on a more modest scale.

Ann's own professional life began as a nurse at the Middlesex Hospital, where she met her husband, a senior surgeon. "We met peering over the masks in the operating room, when I was a theatre sister", she says. Her husband, Sir Eric Riches, was 32 years her senior. Although she has been a widow for more than 28 years, she has not let time hang heavy on her hands. She was awarded the MBE in the 2014 New Years Honours list in recognition of her 58 years of voluntary service helping to improve the health services in London.

She was previously a member of Whitley Council and a member of the Area Health Authority and the District Health Authority for City and East London until the late 1980s. She is still involved with the Royal London Hospital and St. Bartholomew's Hospital. She has been a governor of Christ's Hospital for 40 years and was a member of the Board of Governors for 26 years for Great Ormond Street Hospital with a special interest in Queen Elizabeth Hospital on Hackney Road. On retirement from the Board she became Chairman of Consultant Appointment Committees for a further 19 years.

In 1980 she became a Freeman of the City of London, and in 1989 became the second woman to be admitted as Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Woolmen.

In 2013, the Alice in Wonderland themed Healing Space was opened at The Royal London Hospital, named after Lady Ann Riches in recognition of her long association with children's services in East London. The healing space gives children and their families a chance to climb down the rabbit hole and explore a world outside the every day hospital environment.

As a founder member of the Friends of Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens since 1991, Ann continues to assist at the Information Centre at Hyde Park Corner when time allows.

Tessa Singleton



Photo courtesy of The Hurlingham Club

# ...involved in the early days of FHPKG

**Barbara Abensur** became the second chairman of the Friends, taking over from Philip Joseph in 1994. Born in New Zealand and trained as a lawyer, Barbara represented her country at the UN in Geneva. She and her husband Joe moved to London in 1991, where she soon became

involved with the Friends, initially taking on responsibility for organising events, before becoming chairman for the next 4 years.

Speaking at her flat in Rutland Gate, she recalls with pleasure and amusement the committee meetings of the early days. She says "They were all great characters and probably the only thing they all had in common was a deep love of the Royal Parks. Chairing a meeting was a bit like being the referee of a boxing match."



She added, "But nothing stopped us - whatever bright idea one of us had that could help enhance the Parks, we were quite certain we'd be able to achieve it." This can-do attitude led to some notable successes, in particular in 1997 securing the willing participation of HRH Princess Margaret to unveil a Friends' sponsored plaque to the statue of JM Barrie's Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens. Unfortunately, the day chosen coincided with the date of the general election, but Barbara decided they should plough on. The Princess sailed down the Serpentine on a boat named Peter Pan and apparently much enjoyed her day with the Friends. It was one of the last official events she attended.



Barbara also remembers a grandiose scheme to launch "Pétanque Internationale", an annual Hyde Park Boules Festival. Unfortunately no one knew the rules and despite initial enthusiasm, after a few years the scheme fell by the wayside.

Many of the preoccupations of the Friends in the early days were not that different from now: cycling, noise, commercial pressures, upkeep of the Parks.

Looking back on her time with the Friends, Barbara says that despite occasional moments of frustration, it was ultimately a rewarding experience and she recalls it with great fondness.

**Dame Jennifer Jenkins** first became involved with the Friends when she was invited as guest speaker to address the third AGM of the Friends, in May 1995. At the time, Dame Jennifer was Chairman of the Royal Parks Review Group and in fact the first official recognition of the existence of the Friends was a ministerial invitation to attend the presentation of the work of her group. Their initial report published in 1992, was confined to Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens and served as a prime guide to the formation of Friends' policy.

Many of the recommendations on the final report produced by the RP Review Group, which covered all the Royal Parks, were acted upon by the government, reversing their decline and leading to the standards of excellence which we still enjoy today.



In May 1996, Dame Jennifer consented to become Patron of the Friends of Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens. Born in Derbyshire, Dame Jennifer read history at Girton College, Cambridge. She joined the Labour Club after university, and met her husband Roy, who was to become the celebrated politician, historian and writer. They were married for 58 years.

Dame Jennifer has had long-standing involvement in the conservation of

buildings and landscape. As Chairman of the Historic Buildings Council for England from 1975 to 1984, she helped to organise the recording of parks and gardens which led to the publication of the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England in 1984.

Lady Jenkins was Chairman of the National Trust from 1986 to 1990, and has been President of the Ancient Monuments Society since 1985. She was appointed DBE in 1985.

At the age of 95, Dame Jennifer maintains her interest and enthusiasm for Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. She continues to walk there regularly, lunching at the Serpentine Gallery. She feels strongly that large events in the Parks must be contained and encourages the Friends to keep their enthusiasm going, to counter the ever-present strong commercial pressures.

Her 3 children, 7 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren are all London based, and she sees them often. And of course they give her yet another reason to visit her much loved Parks.

# Royal Parks stalwart

**Steve Edwards** has worked with the Royal Parks for the past 36 years.

*A Life on the ocean wave... Or not .....which was how it turned out for Steve Edwards, recently retired manager of Hyde Park and now Head of Special Projects, when in 1978 as an 18 year old lad he considered his preferred choice of career.*

*He told me when I interviewed him recently that his great love was all the Sciences: physics, biology, chemistry and maths and that he really wanted to go into the Navy using some of these. He applied to join a large drug company, a Royal Parks apprenticeship scheme and of course his favourite, the Royal Navy. He received offers from all three.*

*He was nervous, as a young lad, of committing himself to such a long time needed for the RN option. Instead, despite his nervousness about a long commitment, he now finds himself in the Royal Parks as the longest continuously serving member of all the Royal Parks staff. Shortly after deciding against a naval career, Britain became embroiled in the Falklands War. In our conversation we dwelt briefly on what this career choice might have led to for Steve.*

*Steve has had an amazingly varied career, starting with the apprenticeship which moved him around all parts of the Parks and included Buckingham Palace Gardens and the Nurseries in 6 month spells for three years.*

*His first and main interest is the technical side of plants and nursery management and he became the manager of all the Royal Parks nurseries (of which there were many in those days).*

*There followed in 1991/92 a two-year spell in Marsham Street, working on the logistics of contracting out Royal Parks services. Steve worked closely with Ordnance Survey, surveying parks, working on IT and all the systems needed for running this vast estate.*

*In 1997 Steve became Hyde Park Manager. In his latest role as Head of Special Projects he is working on a cashless system for Winter Wonderland where, for example, the Friends could get discounts at off-*



*peak times. He is also focusing on the more efficient running of these events which have become essential to the funding of the Parks.*

*We next get to The Question which apparently he is frequently asked by Park visitors as he comes out of his front door.*

*What's it like to live in the Park?*

*He says, "Living in the Park makes it more of a life and fundamentally not a job. You never go home and*

*leave the job. It's like living on a ship and, which you could say was a disadvantage, you are always at work."*

*"It's quite noisy, especially long light evenings and the Parks are busy in the area where he lives (right into the night. Nobody gets kicked out at night anymore. It's a nice place to live though, and he appreciates that his neighbours pay a substantial rent for the house next door."*

*What's your favourite part of Hyde Park?*

*"The Dell and the areas round it; they are the nicest and most interesting horticulturally. There is something for everybody in Hyde Park, so much variety from high horticulture to wild meadows."*

*Steve ended our interview with this wonderful summary of a very distinguished career.*

*"Being manager of Hyde Park is the most interesting job you could imagine. You do skill sets and different things every day. There is no other job where you could do such a wide variety of things every day. I've no regrets. It's been the best job I could have ever had or achieved".*

*We can't follow that, except to thank him for sharing this with the Friends.*

*Sue Price*



**Kathy Spanos** has been guardian angel to FHPKG since 1994. She worked for many years with Shell International in India, London and the Middle East (Libya + Saudi Arabia) and was in fact in Tripoli, Libya, in 1970 when Colonel Gaddafi, seized power overnight.

*Seeking a possibly more peaceful existence, Kathy applied for the job of secretary with the recently-*

*formed Friends and has been helping ever since to keep tabs on membership, memories and general administration.*

*Chairman Sue Price and Lynden Easton, who manages membership, both say FHPKG would be unable to function as effectively without Kathy. Her experience over the past 21 years is invaluable and has given her a unique perspective on the history and running of the Friends.*

*Tessa Singleton*

**Paul Shelley** has for the past couple of years been the accredited photographer for the Friends and provides us with memorable pictures of events. He also records the changing seasons in the Parks (frequently rising at dawn to capture the light of a particular moment).



*We are delighted to report that two of his photographs have recently been chosen to be part of an exhibition "Points of View" at the Barbican. He is seen here beside one of the photos chosen: "Hyde Park - Wet Friday". We hope members enjoy the wide variety of photos Paul provides us with for the newsletter, website, leaflets and posters.*

## Queen Caroline's Temple



*In the early 18C Kensington Gardens to the west of the Broad Walk were laid out in wondrous Baroque patterns. The 100 acres east of the Broad Walk were a deer park, but the animals were relocated in 1726 and the following year Queen Caroline and her Royal Gardener, Charles Bridgeman, set about creating new garden areas according to the latest Augustan ideals. These took their tone from the lyric poetry of Ovid and Virgil, inspiring people to create a classical Elysium in the English landscape.*

*The resultant style, le Jardin Anglais, with glades of trees, winding streams and scattered temples, ruins and statues which could be 'read' by the connoisseur to show the political affinities as well as the classical learning of the creator, was one of Britain's great exports. They were also far cheaper to maintain than the baroque intricacies.*

*William Kent, the designer of choice of the day, was transforming the interiors of Kensington Palace in the 1730s. It was the work of a moment for him to produce the design for a little outdoor number.*

*The original site was closer to the newly created Long Water, with the Temple backed by a small grove of trees; the view across the water and beyond was delightful but the view from across the water up to the Temple in its nest of trees was truly Elysian. It remained a favourite place for George II, who was not at all fond of gardens, to visit after his wife's death.*

*Today, despite many insults, such as being moved, being used as a Park Ranger's house, and being robbed of the roof at least twice, the sprightly little Temple continues to delight, as well as to shelter us.*

*Dimity Spiller*

## A sad tail with a waggy ending



*Regular readers of our dog interviews in the newsletter will probably remember the autumn piece dictated to Sue Price by Frankie Jones, the pug who lived in Hyde Park.*

*She posed beautifully with her very big sister Lola and we had a lively time with her taking down her view on life and everything going on round her.*

*What readers didn't know that as the newsletter was going to press, very sadly Frankie died. She was not quite one year old and Mike Jones will pick up the story.....*

*She went to bed the previous evening, her usual lively self and full of beans. However, early the next morning she did not seem at all well. She was taken to an emergency vet north of the Park and after running a few tests, lung worm was diagnosed and she was transferred to a specialist vet hospital in Cambridge for scans. These revealed that she had a bleed on her brain and sadly she died that evening.*

*Mike and his family were devastated; she had become such an important part of their family.*

*Now we move on and meet Maisie who is a replacement for Frankie and I think you'll agree bears a great similarity to her. She too is a lively little thing; much visited by everybody and has become a firm favourite. Even Lola has groaned a bit but has consented to becoming a dog mattress and lets Maisie sit and sleep on her back. She is also used as a dog ladder. Maisie is too small to jump up onto the forbidden sofa, so uses Lola as a stepping stone.*

*We wish both Maisie and Lola a long and happy life in their Hyde Park and Leamington Spa homes.*

*The regular dog interview format will return in the autumn and if any members have a dog which would like to tell me a story and pose for a photo, please email us at [newsletter@friendshpkg.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@friendshpkg.org.uk)*



Keith Butt, our neighbourhood vet

*Sue Price*

## Lung Worm

*(the French heartworm)*

## Danger or Just Hype?

*Known here as lungworm (*angiostrongylus vasorum*, this parasite has been reported in England since the late 1980s.*

*In my practice we have had 2 deaths in puppies from Richmond in the early 1990s and four further cases since that time in dogs exercising in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. The other five practices around the park have reported even fewer cases, so compared with dog fights, bicycle accidents, and stick injuries etc, the risk is very small and the parasite needs a terrestrial mollusc (snail or slug) as an intermediate host, in order to become a danger.*

*In Central London most dog owners are aware of the various parasite risks lurking in their environment and are able to afford the quite large costs to protect their pets. The larger number of cases seen amongst dogs on the periphery of London may be because of non-compliance due to expense.*

*Protection from lungworm and other parasites is provided by Milbemax and should be used according to manufacturers' instructions.*

*So the sum up, the risk to our pets from lungworm is small but potentially devastating. It is best to do a risk assessment with your veterinary practice and react accordingly.*

*Keith Butt  
Kynance Vet Clinic*

# News of the Friends

## Update on membership

### NEW MEMBERS

Mrs Yasmine Rees-Evans  
 Ms Maria Hadjipateras  
 Mrs Rosemary Carawan  
 Lady Catherine Faulks  
 Mrs Fiona Mates  
 Mr David Banks  
 Mrs Harriet Jarvis  
 Miss Elizabeth Harvey  
 Mrs Smita Ul-Haq  
 Mrs Anna Mathias  
 Mrs Sally Stone  
 Mr & Mrs Keith Butt  
 Mr David Hodgkinson  
 Mr Harry Reid  
 Miss Jaqueline Barry  
 Mr Stephen Butt

### CONVERTED TO STANDING ORDER

Mr & Mrs Richard & Angela Haw  
 Mrs Ann Larke  
 Mr Stephen Gray

### CONVERTED TO LIFE

Mrs Morella Cottam  
 Mr Stephen Waring  
 Mr Carl Richardson  
 Mrs Fiona Enthoven  
 Mr Philippe Beaufour &  
 Mrs Donatienne Beaufour  
 Miss Elizabeth Taylor  
 Mr & Mrs Peter & Dimity Spiller  
 Mrs Sophie Massey-Cook  
 Miss Barbara Streimer

### TOTAL MEMBERS 585

(Including 18 Honorary)

### LIFE MEMBERS 146

### NEW MEMBERS 21

### CONVERTED TO LIFE 11

### CONVERTED TO STANDING ORDER 4

### Corporate Members 13

### Associate Members 12

**Anna Rosamund Harr** has kindly paid her standing order again this year, but we still have no contact details for her. If any member knows her, please ask her to get in touch with FHPKG, so that we can send her information!

## Farewells

Since the Autumn Newsletter, we have received news of the deaths of the following members:

**Joe Abensur Philip Joseph Dr Klaus Leist  
 Sir Ralph Dodds Dr Sam Lawson  
 Mrs Maureen Stainton Mrs Fiona Barratt**

- **Dr. Sam Lawson** died on October 10 which was 9 days after his 96th birthday. His medical practice was for many years in Victoria where the patients were often from Buckingham Palace. He was very well respected in the medical field. A member since 1998.
- **Karl Leist** died Sept 2015 A member since 2002. Both he and his wife, Elizabeth have volunteered over the years for the Friends.
- **Joseph Abensur** died Dec 2014 A LIFE member since 1992. His wife Barbara became Chairman after Philip Joseph - see interview on p 7.
- **Philip Joseph** died November 2015. A LIFE and generous member since 1991 First Chairman of the Friends - see full article on p6.
- **Sir Ralph Dodds** died May 2015 A member since 1994. His wife, Lady Marion, writes 'As a family, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens have played a very prominent part in our lives. During his last months, Ralph enjoyed the fresh air, wonderful peace and feeling of freedom on every visit. We are grateful to everyone involved in keeping this very special part of London so perfect.'
- **Mrs Maureen Stainton** of Wetherby Gardens, recently moved to Cranbrook. A member for 12 years.
- **Mrs Fiona Barratt** died November 2015. Life member for 23 years. Her daughter, Sophia Massey-Cook, told us of her mother's memories of the war years, describing flocks of sheep grazing in Hyde Park and the Norland Nannies meeting in the Flower Walk, surrounded by enormous, elegant prams. Fiona was a keen walker who loved the 'rus in urbe' of Kensington Gardens and who looked upon this green lung as a vital part of the area.

**Jim Spillius**, whose death at the age of 92 was reported in the Spring 2015 Newsletter, was Vice-Chairman of the Friends in the early 1990's and also heavily involved with the establishment of SEBRA. However, he is also remembered for his close relationship with the Royal Family of Tonga. His son Alex takes up the tale.

"Thanks to my father, there is a small part of Bayswater that is forever Tonga. On 25 November 2014 a plaque was unveiled at No 25 Cleveland Square to George Tupou V, the late king of Tonga. My father's residence for 50 odd years, the house was also home to the then prince for much of the 1960s. In attendance were King Tupou VI, his successor and younger brother; the Duke of Gloucester (a friend of the Kingdom), lords of the realm (both British and Tongan) and several dozen guests. It was an unusual thing to do on a November

afternoon, but my family has had a special with the Pacific kingdom since the 1950s. The monarch in those days was Queen Salote, who made a huge hit and captured hearts in Britain at the 1953 Coronation. Despite persistent rain, the 6ft 3in queen refused to raise the roof of her carriage, smiling and waving to cheering crowds with magnificent Polynesian radiance.

Five years later my parents found themselves living in Tonga and drawn to Salote's irresistible personality. They hit it off. My father, commissioned by the World Health Organisation, was overseeing the first piped water system on the islands. As a mark of their acceptance, they were given Tongan names by the queen. After they returned to London, Salote shrewdly decided that her rather mischievous teenage grandson Taufu would benefit from a watchful eye as he attended school, Sandhurst and Oxford. Hence his arrival at the age of 16 in my parents' Bayswater flat in 1963,

and my father's appointment as his guardian. The young prince became fond of jazz and loved dressing up in colonial garb for murder mystery games. Army officer training at Sandhurst came as a shock to him: he wasn't used to being yelled at. He later confided that it had taught him the invaluable lesson of not taking life too seriously! Later as king, he used a London taxi as his official car, not least because of the ease for getting out of it with sword and spurs.

It is no easy business to arrange a commemoration. Austerity had forced English Heritage to suspend its blue plaque programme and at 91, my father couldn't hang about. He opted for a Westminster Council green plaque, which was, we think, the Borough's first one to a king. It was dedicated to a 'Reformer, Traveller, Anglophile', but should also have said 'friend'."

Alex Spillius

# The Royal Parks will be hosting their very first Horticulture Show

when Barclaycard presents British Summer Time Hyde Park (BST Hyde Park) on 5 July this year and you are all invited to take part.

Are there any members who are excellent cooks or gardeners or have children who would like to make a miniature garden? This is, as far as we know, the first really central London Horticultural Show that is being run along the lines of a traditional country one. It would be wonderful if some members of The Friends were amongst the prize winners.

## Entries now open for the inaugural Horticulture Show!

**Closing date Thursday 21st April 2016**

Working with our partners AEG Live, The Royal Parks Guild and The Royal Parks Foundation we are calling for entries from budding horticulturalists, bakers, jam makers and photographers. Entries are open to all in the Royal Parks family including: staff, volunteers, friends and resident groups, contractors, concessionaires and partner organisations.

The event, which will be held inside the BST Hyde Park site, will showcase a range of talents and give our closest partners the opportunity to share knowledge and skills in horticulture techniques, ornamental displays and allotment cultivation.

The aim of the horticulture show is to build relationships, share knowledge and increase understanding of the work that takes place in The Royal Parks, reaching out to a wide and diverse audience. It is an opportunity for the 'One Team' of The Royal Parks to illustrate horticulture techniques, increase your interest in the environment and illustrate skills in horticulture, it is a chance to network with your colleagues, share your baking and jam making skills, photograph your best spots in the parks and show how great you are at gardening.

An entry form which lists the 31 categories of plants, baking, jam making and photography which you can enter, can be obtained from **Lisa Stanford Tel: 0300 0612181, email: [lstanford@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:lstanford@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk)**

There are a large number of people associated with the parks so the planning group welcomes entries to all the categories.

Anyone from the following organisations may enter:

- a) The Royal Parks including police officers based in the parks
- b) Friends of the Parks and local residents associations
- c) Volunteer organisations
- d) Royal Parks Guild
- e) Royal Parks Foundation
- f) Royal Parks Volunteers and staff
- g) All Concessionaires based in the parks
- h) All Contractors and Landscape maintenance staff working in the parks
- i) AEG Live

The categories are:

- A. Flowers
- B. Vegetables
- C. Fruit
- D. Children's mini gardens
- E. Photography
- F. Baking
- G. Preserves
- H. Potted House Plants



The format of the day, including directions will be forwarded to the entrants closer to the day

**Entry forms need to be returned to: [Edcomeng@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Edcomeng@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk)**

**By: 21st April 2016**

Photography exhibits must be submitted to the Education and Community Engagement team office by 20th June 2016 so they can be put into displays

All other categories must be submitted from 4 pm on the 4th July or for perishable goods submitted by 10am- on the 5th July 2016

Judging will take place from 10 – 12 noon 5th July 2016 by celebrity judges who will decide category winners and best of show winners. Judges decisions are final.

VIP and corporate reception 12 – 2pm - 5th July 2016

All entrants and other visitors 2 – 6pm - 5th July 2016

Prize giving 5 – 6pm – awards presented by the Director of Parks

We look forward to receiving your entries and to you being part of an exciting project, whilst joining in the fun of a traditional horticulture show.

Colin Buttery, Mike Fitt OBE  
Deputy CEO & Director of Parks Chairman, The Royal Parks Guild

# FHPKG Concessions 2016

*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 Tessa Kilgour ([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 2016 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

Broadwalk  
Palace Gate  
Albert Memorial  
Italian Fountain  
Ice Cream Vans

*10% 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 Café 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*

