

FRIENDS OF HYDE PARK & KENSINGTON GARDENS

www.friendshpkg.org.uk

AUTUMN 2015

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

ISSUE 41



Autumn 2015 Newsletter

Ave atque vale!

Hail to Andrew Scattergood



Andrew took over as Chief Executive of The Royal Parks three months ago. He joined from OFCOM the government communications regulator and has held several senior positions in government, including liaising between the DCMS (Department of Culture, Media and Sport), LOCOG (the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games) and TRP (The Royal Parks).

He has always known and loved the Royal Parks and now his children very much enjoy the playgrounds in both

Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park.

Andrew is aware of the fine balancing act between the need to raise income and protect this wonderful environment. Looking ahead he thinks that becoming both a public corporation and a charity is the way forward. (No doubt he will expand on this to members at our AGM, at which he will be our guest speaker).

His challenge, to Sue Price and other members of the Friends' Committee and members of staff of Kensington Gardens, to join him for a swim in the Serpentine sounded fine when it was issued but, he admits, turned out to be colder than anybody was prepared for. I'll finish with a quote from Andrew "... I value... this organisation and what it does to protect such a wonderful environment. It truly is a special place!"

The picture above, taken at the end of the swim, shows Andrew with his hair standing on end. No one is sure whether this is due to the cold, the thought of challenges ahead or simply the towel action.



Waving, not drowning

Farewell to Linda Lennon

Linda came to the Royal Parks from HMCS (Her Majesty's Courts Services) where she had been organising amalgamations and courts closures.



She arrived in her new job and was immediately involved in a maelstrom of activity as planning for the Olympics was well under way. She realised very early on that consultations with the many stakeholders at all levels of the decision making process were essential. Her openness, availability and friendly approach was welcomed by us all. She came to love the Parks and as a keen birdwatcher, was delighted by what she saw every day out of her office window.

The photograph of Linda above shows her on a typical day in action "I (writes Sue Price) came across an agitated, smartly dressed Linda, on her phone standing next to an overflowing bin at the edge of the Serpentine, that had been missed on the Monday morning collections. There was a brisk wind on this sunny Monday lunchtime that was scattering Sunday's leftovers everywhere. While Linda summoned assistance, I scampered around, picking up stuff from the ground and water". This typical anecdote shows her eye for detail and care at all levels of Park management.

We wish her well in her new role as Chief Executive Officer of the London Stadium at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Sue Price

New CEO initiation goes swimmingly - FHPKG rises to the challenge

A seemingly innocuous gauntlet thrown down by Andrew Scattergood and accepted by FHPKG chairman Sue Price at Linda's leaving party proved more challenging than any of those involved anticipated. At the time, a swim in the Serpentine in late July did not appear overwhelming.

In total a group of 5 rose to the challenge: Andrew Scattergood, Sue Price, Andy Williams from Hyde Park, Xander from Kensington Gardens and FHPKG treasurer Simon Walton.

Andrew had swum twice before in early July and said the water was warm, not even bracing and so everyone got in, with Sue leading the way thinking it would be almost warm. Everyone managed to swim two lengths but afterwards discovered the water temperature was a shocking 16C degrees. and felt they were lucky to avoid hypothermia. No one else was swimming except some fit young men in wet suits, which may have been a pointer.

News update from the Parks

Managers

Hyde Park

Report from Rob Dowling, Assistant Park Manager

As summer is gradually drawing to an end, the rains in August have been a blessing for the trees and new plantings within Hyde Park. The areas of parkland have also quickly turned from a parched yellow back to green. We are now looking ahead to the autumn and winter and programming in some exciting new landscape improvement works.

Proms in the Park

The build for the event commenced on the 3rd September. North Carriage Drive was closed from 8pm on the 2nd September and reopened on the 18th September. The concerts took place on the weekend of the 12th and 13th September.

Hyde Park Bandstand Restoration

Works at the bandstand are well underway. A number of old rotten roof timbers have been replaced, the original tongue and groove ceiling has been revealed after many years and restored and a new zinc roof covering has been installed. Works still to be completed include building new steps to the bandstand, installation of new services and repainting of the entire structure.

Decimus Burton Screen Stone Works

The grand Decimus Burton Screen/Apsley Arch is now covered in scaffolding. This is facilitating the repair of the stonework and a thorough cleaning of the structure. Once this has been completed, similar works (but on a much smaller scale) will take place at Prince of Wales Gate on the stone gate piers there.

Pathway Chipping Works

Over the summer a number of pathways in the park have received a new surface dressing of golden gravel chippings. This includes around the shrubberies by the Cavalry Memorial, outside the Hyde Park Playground and at The LookOut. A number of other pathways have also had the same treatment as part of a cyclical works programme.

Winter Works

We are already looking forward to works that will take place over the winter. This includes completing the shrub bed regeneration project around The Cavalry Memorial. Work will also continue to regenerate the old shrubberies around the nursery with the aim to create better wildlife habitats.

Cycle Superhighway

Works are expected to commence in September on West Carriage Drive. The commencement date is subject to license.

The Meadow

The annual mowing of the Hyde Park meadow will take place in September. This annual job removes nutrients and weakens perennial weeds that may otherwise colonise the area. Over the winter we are looking at ways to enhance the newer meadows with wildflower seeds.



Letter from Sue Price, Chairman

ALL CHANGE AT HYDE PARK



Congratulations to Rob Dowling, Assistant Park Manager on his promotion to Manager of Hyde Park.

Those of you who were lucky enough to join him on his "Secret Tour" in July will appreciate how knowledgeable a plantsman he is and also how skilled a designer. He has gradually, over many years, transformed Hyde Park.

Steve Edwards, Park Manager, Hyde Park has stepped into a new post. Steve, who for many years has combined both managing the Park and supervising major events, will now be able to concentrate on the events. He will focus on getting the very best

deal for the Parks and ensure that the events are run properly and sensitively. I have congratulated them both on behalf of the Friends and we wish them both luck.

Members who receive our emailed MailChimp messages will know that the construction of the Cycle Superhighway across Hyde Park is about to start. Your committee continues to work hard on this. We are not against the Superhighway, but have serious concerns about possible spill-off from this route both in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens.

There's all change too in the Friends. We are, regretfully, putting up our subscriptions. Postage and admin costs including printing do not get cheaper. We are determined to continue to send you an interesting and well produced newsletter and develop what the organisation does for its members. Existing standing orders will be left as they are.

You will find a new membership leaflet included with your newsletter. Please could you help us increase our membership numbers by giving it to a friend or neighbour who you think might be interested in joining our organisation.

One of our Committee members, Tom Newman, is looking into the possibilities of making the Friends a registered Charity. It is unusual that we are not one already. Indeed we are the only Royal Parks Friends organisation which is not already a Charity. There are many benefits possible if we make this move. We will of course keep you up to date on developments.

Sue Price

Kensington Gardens

Report from Andy Williams, Park Manager

Marlborough Gate Facilities

We are expecting to start work on new cafe facilities at Marlborough Gate in October. The new building will involve re-landscaping of the area, and the addition of a new seating terrace.

Queen Caroline's temple

The restorative works on Queen's Caroline Temple should be complete by Friday the 4th of September. The works have been replacing roof materials, to something less valued by thieves, and all materials have been approved by English Heritage.

Green Flag and Green Heritage Awards

We were successful in gaining the accolades of Green Flag and Green heritage awards. The scores were both high and there was lots of positive feedback, as well as some constructive criticism to build on.

Leaf Pen Recycling

We have recently completed the bi annual screening of around 500 tonnes of green waste. This will be used as a top dressing in the autumn months to help enrich the grassland sward.

Trees

Some of the trees have suffered from the contrasting weather types over the summer. Going from very warm and dry, to extremely wet. We have had some branch falls, most notably the Tawny Owl tree (a horse chestnut near Speke memorial), which has now been monolithed to preserve as much habitat as possible whilst also making it safe.

Meet the Park Management Team

Although it seemed that no one came to meet the team in particular, it was still a great opportunity to be out in the park and talking to people. We received many compliments on the newly finished South Flower Walk, and the lots of horticultural questions from various areas of the park. The main issues that cropped up were cycling and issues with the palace gate toilets (operated by Westminster, probably due to our close proximity to them). In general it was a positive event, with lots of good feedback and engagement with tourists and regular users alike.

Magazine Yard

Planning application for LMC accommodation has been submitted. This could mean a big change to the Magazine Store yard as thought of now, with more space and increased facilities for dealing with waste.

Diana Playground

It has been another bumper summer for the playground, with 456,000 visitors for June, July and August (845,000 for the year so far). The Pirate ship will be closed for a refurbishment of the decking from the 7th - 13th, the rest of the playground will remain open.

Out and about with the Friends

Visits to Hyde Park Nursery



"This is our state-of-the-art digital pot filler"



"Yes, we are in Hyde Park"

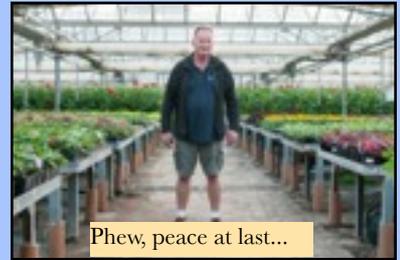
On 11 and 13 May, two lucky groups were able to visit the nursery where plants are grown for most of the Royal Parks and learn from Mike Jones how the plants are nurtured and trained to flourish in the diverse situations where they will ultimately be planted.



"The Ladies is in that direction"

Mike explained the plans for improvements, including the refurbishment of the older greenhouses and the introduction of state-of-the-art temperature controls. The group listened attentively as he pointed out plants of particular interest and told them how geraniums could be grown to a great height for planting outside Buckingham Palace. A glass or two of wine rounded off the visit, but when everyone had left, Mike must have been happy to rediscover the peace and quiet of his domain, hidden in the heart of Hyde Park, where he has worked for the past 23 years.

This regular early summer event, with limited numbers, is much appreciated by members and guests and highly recommended. Our thanks go to Mike Jones, Nursery Manager.



Phew, peace at last...

Secret places in Hyde Park



Willing helpers were on hand to restore flagging spirits at the end of a tour of secret places in Hyde Park, several of them not normally open to the public. On 16 July, Assistant manager Rob Dowling led a group of the Friends on a walk through Hyde Park that was outside the normal run.



The season ended with Robert Dowling (Assistant Manager, Hyde Park) leading us on a walk starting at Hyde



Park Corner and crossing diagonally to Victoria Gate and then back for a drinks party in the Rangers Lodge garden in the centre of the Park.

The Secret Places, and one especially, were a complete pleasure. We won't reveal any more because Rob has very kindly said he might consider doing another one next year.

The gaggle of teenage waitresses poured the drinks and passed the sausages with alacrity. For us, this brought to the end a season of great events and some regret at the thought of the long months until the next Spring/Summer programme.

Our thanks for this last event to Rob Dowling, who led and explained, and to Mike Jones who brought up the tail-end wanderers and made sure they didn't get lost.

Our thanks too to Steve Edwards, Hyde Park Manager, for enthusiastically supporting this event but who, sadly, was not well enough to join us on the evening.

Bumper tea and talk at The Orangery

9 March



What better way, on a cold spring day, to enjoy Kensington Gardens, than from inside the Orangery. An excellent brain-exercising talk by Terry Gough (from Historic Royal Palaces) was followed by one of the most sumptuous teas the Friends have ever enjoyed. It was presented to us by a phalanx of chefs.

Our thanks to Terry Gough and Natasha Woollard (from Kensington Palace)



The 2015 AGM took place at 49 Queensgate Terrace

Sir Vernon and Lady Ellis very kindly hosted our AGM in the drawing room of their Queen's Gate home.

John Curtis, who has taken on ownership of Ventnor Botanic Gardens, gave a fascinating and well-illustrated presentation on what the financial responsibility of running a modern botanic gardens entails. Linda Lennon presented the findings of the consumer research survey commissioned by The Royal Parks.

Our thanks also to Ruth Davies who helped with the logistics of the running of our AGM.

Out and about a bit more



100 Bayswater Road

At short notice, and therefore advertised by email, we were able to organise an evening visit to this fascinating and mostly unaltered house which for generations has been the home of the Kennet family. Thoby Kennet (Lord Young) suggested we might enjoy the chance to look all over the house which was once owned by J M Barrie and his wife, and where Peter Pan was written. Thoby told us about all the people who had lived in, or been associated with, the house.

It was a beautiful sunny evening; the house looked wonderful and it was with pleasure, but with some sadness, given some uncertainty about the house's future, that we were able to enjoy drinks in the house and gardens. Our thanks to Thoby Kennet for offering this event and our best wishes for the future of this historic house.

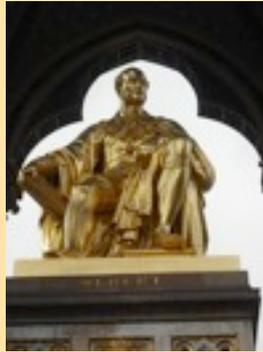
Note: Since this event, we have learned that a dream to transform the house into a Peter Pan Museum was not to be. However, although the house has been sold, it will become home for a new family, which is in accordance with his late mother's wishes if the idea of a museum proved impossible. (See full article on page 5).

Editor

Albert Memorial Undercroft

Eagerly awaited, twenty lucky members were able to plunge into the stygian gloom on a chilly afternoon. Cold and darkish, with uneven flooring, we discovered how complicated and how huge is the space below this world famous memorial.

Members were also able to get up close and personal to the statues above ground and enjoyed hot drinks and cakes to sustain and warm.



Our thanks to Andrew Williams (Manager of Kensington Gardens) and several other members of his staff for arranging this event.

He has kindly agreed to organise another visit for members in April 2016 (see events details).

News of the Friends

Update on membership

Our membership numbers continue to grow strongly. Below is a list of the new members who have joined the Friends since the Spring newsletter.

Ms Janine Barton
Mrs A Coptcoat
Mrs Juliet Scott
Mrs Penny Broadhurst
Mrs Ann Caroline Danos
Mr & Mrs John Curry
Mrs April Cornish
Dr. Michael Crossland
Mr John & Laura Learmonth
Lady Helen Otton
Mr & Mrs Andrew & Emma Giblin
Dr. Charles Legg
Mrs Penny Lakin
Ms Anna Rosamund Harr
Mr & Mrs Charles & Verena Charvet
Mr Stephen Watson
Mrs Christina Shiatis-Conyers
Ms Abigail Day & Mr David Lacey
Mr Williams
Mr Guy Heald
Ms Hilary Birch
Mr John Harkness

Mrs Monkey Chambers
Dr. John Hartley Bowman
Ms Paula Dyche
Mrs Sandra Korner
Ms Chris Elders
Mr John O'Brien
Mrs Rita Apkarian

As at 7 September 2015, the total number of Members stands at 575 (includes 18 Honorary) of whom 129 are Life Members.

Corporate Members

The Friends have for many years appreciated the support of a number of companies and organisations in and around the Parks, who are sympathetic to our aims and efforts.

Our thanks for their ongoing support go to:

The Park Tower Knightsbridge
The Ritz London
Hyde Park Sporting Club
The British Antique Dealers' Association
Royal Garden Hotel
Harrods Limited
Bayswater Road Artist's Association
Park Café Ltd
Lancaster London
Hanover Management & Services Ltd.
Park Lane Hotel
Cadogan Estates Limited

Farewells

Since the Spring 2015 newsletter, we have received news of the death of three members.

The Duchess of Roxburgh.
Mrs L M Mirrey
Mr Glenn Irvine

Leinster Corner - a very London house

The tale of a family home and a boy who would not grow up

A family home....

If you walk along Bayswater Road past Queensway towards Lancaster Gate, you might not notice a discreet house on the corner of Leinster Terrace, unless you were looking hard and spied the blue plaque on its wall. Hidden behind the trees in the walled front garden, and entered through a side door in Leinster Terrace, 100 Bayswater Road is a house with an intriguing history.

Following the death of Lady Kennet last November, the house passed to her six children. Her son Thoby told me about the long relationship of the Kennet family with the house and his memories of growing up there. Of even greater significance to generations of children all over the world is the fact that before the Kennets moved there, the house was the home of the author J M Barrie and the place where he wrote 'Peter Pan', the story of the boy who would not grow up, commemorated by the blue plaque on the wall outside.

Despite his worldwide fame, Peter Pan does not seem to have had much impact on Thoby's childhood. Leinster Corner, as the house became called, was above all home for 90 years to five generations of the Kennet family. Thoby's memories are of the local community in and around Queensway: visiting Porchester Library and Baths, shopping at Whiteleys, eating cakes at Pâtisserie Pierre Pechon. On Leinster Terrace there were visits to the local sweet and newspaper shops, both of which have disappeared. However, the Halepi Kebab House is still there, owned and run by the same family, the Kasolides,

who according to Thoby, offer some of the best Greek food to be had anywhere. He remembers carol singing with his older sisters and playing the trumpet for charity at Notting Hill in the 1960's. Kensington Gardens, directly opposite the house, provided space for endless escapades and gave him the impression of almost growing up in the country.



The house itself dates from 1820 and has undergone little change since it was first built as one of a pair of four semi-detached late Georgian houses, named St Agnes' Villas, in what was then open farmland. The Black Lion pub at the top of Queensway was the only other building nearby. Starting as the home of a plantsman in 1825, the house changed hands several times before J M Barrie and his wife moved into it in 1900. 'Peter Pan', published in 1905, was an instant success and Barrie continued to live at the house until 1910. The few changes he made to it were to extend it at the reception and open up the smaller rooms for ease of circulation and entertaining. He also added some notable contemporary features, which together have been described by experts as "an unknown Arts & Crafts gem". Apart from these, the house is a rare example of virtually untouched Georgian architecture and design, since the Kennet family had no desire to alter it further.

One later addition, which stands at the back of the main house, is the Smithson Pavilion, commissioned by Wayland Young and designed by Alison and Peter Smithson in 1959, an important example of the New Brutalist style. This feature, together with the others mentioned above and the association with J M Barrie undoubtedly helped secure the rare Grade II listing awarded to 100 Bayswater Road in the early 1970's.*

In 1927 Leinster Corner was bought by Sir Edward Hilton Young and his wife Kathleen, Thoby's grandparents. They moved into the house with their own small son, Wayland, together with Kathleen's son Peter by her first marriage to the Antarctic explorer Captain R F Scott. Peter Scott was to become a renowned artist and co-founder of the World Wildlife Fund, who shared with his stepfather his love of nature and of ornithology in particular. Bill Kennet had an illustrious political career with several key government appointments, including Minister of Health and Housing. Key items of legislation to which he contributed were: the Town and Country Planning Act (1932), the Housing Act (1935) and the Restriction of Ribbon Development Act (1935). He was created Baron Kennet of the Dene in 1935. His wife Kathleen was a highly gifted and successful sculptor. They lived at Leinster Corner for the rest of their lives.

Their son Wayland, Thoby's father, grew up there, and with his wife Liz brought up their six children there. Thoby recalls that the house was a busy family home, always full of comings and goings. Like his father, Wayland was involved in politics and in the Wilson government held the post of Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, a ministerial office in the House of Lords, acting decisively to protect listed buildings and slapping preservation orders on old pubs. He was also a theatre critic, wrote a regular column for The Guardian and through his writing helped steer the Lady Chatterly trial in 1960 towards a Not Guilty verdict. Both Wayland and Liz were heavily involved in local and national issues, from arms control to protection of public open spaces in London.

with a secure future....

Following the death of his mother at the end of last year, which we reported in the Spring issue of the newsletter, Thoby and his siblings were obliged to put their much-loved house on the market. A dream to transform it into a Peter Pan Museum was not to be: probate had to be completed and time was too short. Instead, the house will remain a family home, but with new owners. This outcome is in accordance with their late mother's wish for the house either to become a museum or remain a family home. And, as Thoby says, although it is no longer the home of the Kennet/Young family, it stays as a private residence to be loved and cherished by a new family and will continue to be a place of interest to scholars and Peter Pan enthusiasts from all over the world.

Dog days in the Park

Pug's eye view



Lola

Mike

Frankie

“Bark, bark, snuffle, snuffle, lick, lick, wriggle, wriggle”.
Why is this man with the camera laughing and rolling about so much? I'm only trying to make him welcome and show him how pleased I am that he's sitting on my sofa. His neck and ears are very tasty. Not only is he on my sofa, he's in my room, in my office in the middle of my park.

My sister Lola is sitting, as she always does, very calmly beside us. You may not think that she could be my sister and I'll agree that she doesn't look like me in any way at all but I can assure you that we are sisters.

Lola, who is a 7 year old Golden Retriever, lets me sleep on top of her and she also, on occasions, agrees to swap bowls of food. As I'm an 11 month old pug, my food is quite different, but I find hers pretty tasty.

We live together with Mike in the nursery in the middle of Hyde Park. This is how we know the Park is ours. We are a happy threesome Mike, Lola and me Frankie.

Loads of people call in to see us and I agree with Mike that I can get a little over-excited and distracted.

Once, when I saw some kind of boxing contest going on outside our gates, I barked like crazy and ran out to attack. The “personal trainer” whoever that may be, called the police and they all turned up to hunt me and Mike down. Mike was wearing his black shorts and fleece and the police thought he was an intruder – what a hoot, and I was his attack dog

Lola just sat there calmly looking at us all getting very excited. She really is a bit too calm and brainy for her own good.

In these situations when she's acting all grown up I have to show my strength a bit and drag a few large pots around. If the pots are full of compost and plants, that's even better. Mike looks a bit cross with me for a couple of seconds, as he's nursery manager and thinks his plants are pretty important.

You'll never see us in the south part of the Park amongst all the teeming crowds of people. We prefer it up here where we have a lot of space and grassy meadows to ourselves to run in.

Although my sister and I don't make too much of it, we are actually terribly grand because most of our relations were Crufts' Champions.

Mike thinks that if we go running out amongst the crowds on our own I might get stolen. I suppose someone could bundle me in a bag and take me off, but I'd like to see them try that with Lola. She'd need a supersized suitcase on wheels. Oh I am naughty! I'm sorry I said that.

I'll stop being silly and try to settle down nicely so we can have our photograph taken.

Frankie Jones (as told to Sue Price)

Postscript

Regular readers of our dog interviews will be sorry to hear that Luca, the miniature dachshund, who was interviewed in the Autumn 2014 magazine, died in the Spring. She was spokesdog for her sister Bina, and the two wild girls Poppy and Bella who miss her very much, as do her personal trainer and The Lap.

Keeping up traditions

Hedge Laying in West Carriage Drive

I am fascinated by hedge laying - cutting and splitting and flattening shrubs so that, come springtime, they sprout in all directions, even if in winter they look decimated.



I have noticed this craft in the countryside but I spotted it for the first time in London when I was strolling along West Carriage Drive. Intrigued, I decided to investigate. Andy Williams, manager of Kensington Gardens explained that hedge laying is a centuries old woodland craft. Farmers could create a stock-proof boundary using natural woody species to regenerate from dormant buds.

Andy went on to point out that if allowed to grow straight up vertically, woody plants generally have a single main upright with some side branches developing. By laying the hedge, the vertical leaders are pushed over to an angle of about 45 degrees - and dormant buds that lie along the laid stems break through, ensuring a thick mass of upright stems. In the countryside the farmer then has a lovely thick hedge that keeps in livestock. In the case of Kensington Gardens the laid hedge provides a welcoming habitat for nesting birds.

Andy Williams intends to complete further sections of the hedge along the road over the next 2-3 winters. So there you have it – a fascinating piece of country

craft brought right into the centre of the capital city. See if you can spot it as you stroll north of the Magazine!

Paul Shelley

Meadow mowing at Buck Hill

The photograph shows Tom and Murdoch, shire horses from Operation Centaur, mowing the meadow on Buckhill, which is between West Carriage Drive and The Long Water, just south east of the Italian Gardens.



Operation Centaur who traditionally carry out conservation work with the shire horses in Richmond Park, offered to carry out a trial cut of the meadow using horse drawn equipment in Kensington Gardens this September.

This type of sensitive meadow management results in a rougher cut and gives the grassland a more traditional appearance. These working horses also provide other conservation benefits as they make little noise and don't compact the soil. Working the land with horses keeps a fundamental part of our heritage alive, and demonstrates skills rarely seen in the heart of London, but it is more labour intensive - which is partly why they have disappeared. However, with the help of the Royal Parks Foundation, a group of dedicated volunteers proved to be as effective as a combustion engine! The aim is to learn from this pilot and replicate the work on a wider scale next year.

Our thanks to Clare Bowen from the Royal Parks Foundation for the information above. Tractors may be more efficient, but I for one prefer the beautiful spectacle of Tom and Murdoch at work.

Simon Walton

Restaurant Review

The Honest Sausage Kiosk

Kensington Gardens

It's a nice day and you decide that a brisk walk in the Parks would be just right. Let's say your route, like mine, starts at Palace Gate.

Even before you set off you'll be a little distracted by the bacon-sizzle aroma coming from the Honest Sausage kiosk just inside the park. Ignore it. Zero your digital fitness gizmo and get going.

Your machine will later reveal that a full, clockwise, circuit of the Long Water and Serpentine has amounted to around 6000 steps or 5km. By the time you get back to Palace Gate you will be feeling good about your beautiful Parks and about yourself. A hint of spring in the air, perhaps. All's well with the world. You feel virtuous.

Unfortunately, your route will have returned you to that earlier mild distraction. Worse, you've worked up an appetite; the little tables by the Honest Sausage are in the sun. You can smell fresh coffee. Your Friends' membership card is in your pocket; a 20% discount awaits.

So give in to a guilt-edged experience: welcome to the Honest Sausage.



Actually, the fact that the sausages are organic and the bacon free-range means your doubts soon evaporate. The bacon baps are just terrific; warm, crispy bread with loads of freshly grilled bacon. There is real, yes real, squeezed orange juice and a table awaits.

There may be just time to spend 50p in the nearby comfort facility offered by the Borough of Westminster and for your cook to slice your bap into two pieces (a good idea since you never know when paparazzi may be lurking, and a whole bap is an undignified mouthful). While you enjoy your second breakfast/brunch/early high tea in the sun spare a thought for the confused tourists just in front of you wrestling with the technology as they attempt to get saddled up on the nearby Boris Bikes.



Finish your bap, wash it down with fresh coffee. Offer your compliments to the nice guy who cooked your treat. My guess is that, once experienced, you will find an excuse to revisit the Sausage before too long; perhaps an incentive to take more Parks exercise....



Richard Price

Would any member like to write a restaurant, café, kiosk or playground review for the newsletter, from either Hyde Park or Kensington Gardens? Do you have views on other aspects of the Parks you'd like to express? Please submit them to newsletter editor Tessa Singleton by email to newsletter@friendshpkg.org.uk All contributions gratefully received!



Kensington Gardens wins Green Flag and Green Heritage Award

Great news! In June, KG Manager Andy Williams and his team recorded a splendid set of results and feedback for the Kensington Gardens entry in both the Green Flag and Green Heritage awards this year, achieving the top overall band score of 80+ in both awards.

The judges declared the Operations Plan and integral annual Action Plan a very well written, clear working document which contained an appropriate balance between background context and strategic overview and updates on projects and progress. Their

detailed assessment covered all aspects of the work of the KG team, including health and safety, maintenance of equipment, buildings and landscape, litter and vandalism, environmental sustainability, conservation of heritage and nature, community and overall management. Andy was delighted with the award and the very positive comments, which he said were a testament to the commitment shown by many people who collectively contribute to managing this rich, historic landscape. Conscious that despite the achievement, nothing is ever totally perfect, Andy says that he and his team will be working on recommendations made by the judges to achieve still better results.

Tessa Singleton

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, 13th April 2016 at 7 pm

(doors open at 6.30pm and all FHPKG members are welcome to attend)

to be held at **Queen Alexandra's House, Bremner Road, Kensington Gore, SW7 2QT** (by kind permission of the Principal, Anet Brown)

The AGM will this year be held in the drawing room of Queen Alexandra's House. For those who haven't visited this private venue it is of great interest in its own right. Our guest speaker will be Andrew Scattergood, the new Chief Executive of The Royal Parks, and the meeting will be followed by a reception.

FHPKG Concessions

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) 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 Road
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 Jjang Bar

Park Deck Chairs

www.parkdeckchairs.co.uk

On completion of a season ticket 30% discount.

Non-concessionary Rate Season Ticket £77

Concessionary Rate Season Ticket £31.50

