

# FRIENDS OF HYDE PARK & KENSINGTON GARDENS

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

AUTUMN 2016

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

ISSUE 43



## Autumn 2016 Newsletter

1991 - 2016

### New directions for the Royal Parks and the Friends

*The Royal Parks and the Friends of Hyde Park & Kensington Gardens have both become charitable organisations in 2016. Previously the Royal Parks were part of the government Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Under their chief executive Andrew Scattergood, the Royal Parks, together with The Royal Parks Foundation, has become a new entity with fresh horizons and new ambitions. We interviewed Andrew shortly after his appointment last year (Autumn 2015 Newsletter) and in this issue FHPKG chairman Sue Price talks to Loyd Grossman, who has recently been appointed Chairman of the Royal Parks. The benefits of FHPKG's new charitable status are described elsewhere in the newsletter.*

#### **Loyd Grossman's appointment as Chairman of the Royal Parks was announced in July 2016.**

It was a pleasure to meet and talk to Loyd at the Italian Gardens in Kensington Gardens recently.

Loyd brings with him to his new role, a wealth of experience over many years in the history, arts and heritage sectors. Most recently he has been chairman of the Churches Conservation Trust and an English Heritage Commissioner.

Loyd has lived very close to, loved and regularly walked in both Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens since he came to London in 1974.

He shows great enthusiasm for "New Org", the charitable body now officially named The Royal Parks (a combination of the Royal Parks Foundation and The Royal Parks). The Parks encompass everything he's interested in, from history and the natural, as well as built environments.



*"People can come and have a lovely time here, be citizens and part of society."*

Will he be backing an increase in commercialisation? He thinks the Major Events Strategy has got the balance between peace and quiet and events about right, and will not be backing more major events in Hyde Park.

We were talking at the new café at the Italian Gardens, which is a very clever use of a defunct public lavatory block. He is all for creating and improving facilities in similar existing buildings.

He told us in his short speech to the guests on the evening:

*"These precious spaces are not just the lungs of this great city but the heart."*

He spoke passionately about his love for the Royal Parks. We wish him well in his new role and hope very much that he will continue to enjoy Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens as much as we all do.

*Sue Price*



# Letter from the Editor

Everyone wants a bit of the Royal Parks, it seems, and accommodating the diverse needs of the interested parties is not easy. The Friends do their part by supporting the work of the Royal Parks in whatever ways we can, and now that FHPKG has become a charity, we will be in a better position to raise money for worthwhile causes within the Parks. One initiative being considered for 2017 is to put on a concert with the Royal College of Music in the newly restored bandstand in Kensington Gardens.

Cycling and the introduction of the Cycle Super Highway through Hyde Park, plus the perennial problem of litter, remain hot topics for all concerned with maintaining the peace and beauty of the Parks for everyone to enjoy. When we think of Park users, we tend to think of people walking their dogs, cyclists, joggers, mums and children, casual strollers, picnickers. In this issue we talk to a young professional who relies on Hyde Park for his work as a personal trainer, and a French family whose young children love the access to open space the Park provides; at the other end of the scale chairman Sue Price writes about the unlicensed wildcat gatherings that took place in Hyde Park this summer, causing havoc and leaving mountains of rubbish behind for the hard-pressed RP staff to clear up. The new initiatives the Royal Parks are taking with regard to litter management are also described in this newsletter. No easy solutions, but we live in the hope that some sense of collective responsibility may one day penetrate the skulls of those who spoil the enjoyment of the Parks for the vast majority.

Unfortunately we've been unable to fit in all the contributions received and some have had to be kept for the Spring 2017 Newsletter. Elsewhere in this issue you will find an updated list of concessions available to FHPKG members, news of outings and events, a restaurant review and the regular reports from the Parks Managers. We hope you enjoy reading it and welcome your feedback and comments. Please email [newsletter@friendshpkg.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@friendshpkg.org.uk) and do take a look at our revamped website [www.friendshpkg.org.uk](http://www.friendshpkg.org.uk).

Tessa Singleton

## News round-up from the Parks

### Kensington Gardens

Andy Williams, Park Manager



**Italian Gardens Cafe.** Opened on 27th June 2016, trading is exceeding forecasted expectations and many favourable comments have been received. Planting is establishing well and further stock is being planted this autumn. The official opening event (September 14th) was a great success and an opportunity for the parks new Chair, Loyd Grossman, to state publicly his vision for The Royal Parks as we move into next year and the creation of the new public charitable corporation.

**Albert Memorial Kiosk.** We have successfully secured over £100k of internal capital to replace the catering kiosk at the Albert Memorial. We have designed a small, bespoke kiosk to replace the current 'shed' which is no longer fit for purpose. We are at detailed design stage and have taken advice from Westminster that we can proceed on the basis of 'Permitted Development'. Alongside plans for the Kiosk we are looking at landscape improvements to the eastern end of the South Flower Walk including the interface with Lancaster Walk and refurbishment of over mature planting.

**Catering re-let.** We are close to appointing to the new catering concessionaire with a public announcement expected imminently.

**DPWMP and Old Wilderness Project.** We continue to undertake a strategic review to 'future-proof' the playground, its facilities and the immediate landscape to the north-west of the Gardens noting HRP's plans for the Orangery. The first phase of public survey to

*consider catering improvements has been completed with further surveys planned for late Oct. 2017. Detailed refurbishment plans to inform improvements to the Playground will be completed for Spring 2017.*

**Mount Walk.** Monitoring works are complete and an Executive Summary will be circulated in due course. Headline comparisons from the earlier 2015 study includes seeing a reduction in the occasions of cyclists cycling at excessive speed and circa 20% or so of cyclists avoiding the cobble strips. We plan to make repairs to the worn areas where cyclists have ridden off track this autumn.

**The Kensington Gardens Landscape Management Plan** is complete in final draft. It is an impressive and comprehensive plan setting a 100 year vision and outlining our aspirations for the next 10 years. The Friends were one of a number of external organisations to comment on draft copy. We reviewed comments received and amended where we felt necessary. Thank you for providing detailed feedback.

**Storeyard redevelopment.** Successful planning determination was made in mid-September. Funding is in place and we are out to tender in mid-October. The build should commence in 2016, the length of programme is unknown until tenders are returned. The new facility will provide carefully designed accommodation including welfare, office and storage accommodation for the landscape maintenance contractor. Royal Parks will benefit from a larger and better equipped shared meeting room.

**Biodiversity.** Members of the TRP ecology team have installed several Vane Traps to trees within the Gardens. These are used to record invertebrate species within the upper tree canopy. A loggery has been installed on Buck Hill and the meadow has once again been managed with the support of the shire horses and volunteers.

**Water Management.** The new borehole supply to the Round Pond is now operational giving access to a plentiful supply of water for the management of water quality.

We have been retained the award of **Green Flag and Green Heritage for 2016/17.**

# News round-up from the Parks

## Hyde Park

Rob Dowling, Park Manager

### **BBC Concerts**

The annual Proms In The Park and BBC Radio 2 Live concerts took place over the weekend of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> September. Michael Ball hosted Saturday's concerts which included performances by Frankie Valli And The Four Seasons, ABC, All Saints and Rick Astley, amongst many others. The BBC Radio 2 Live Concert was headlined by Elton John and a full line up of artists including Madness, Status Quo and Gregory Porter.

### **The Nursery**

The Hyde Park nursery site has been fully cleared of plants and equipment and Mike Jones has relocated to Regent's Park. In the meantime, demolition works are well underway. These works will be fully self contained and due to on site recycling of materials, there will not be a significant number of vehicle movements in and out of the park.

### **Dry Weather**

After a very wet start to the summer, the lack of prolonged substantial rainfall since the start of July has taken its toll on the trees, shrubs and lawns in the park. The most noticeable effect is on the trees that are taking on the appearance of autumn. However this early leaf fall is a natural way for trees to conserve water in times of drought. We are in the process of identifying winter improvement projects to carry out once the weather becomes more favourable for horticultural works.

### **Swim Serpentine**



This event on the 24 and 25 September fills the slot that used to be taken up by the triathlon event. The event is focused in The Cockpit like the triathlon but with far less infrastructure and a much reduced build/ derig period (build commences on the 21<sup>st</sup> September and leaves site on the 26<sup>th</sup> September). The racing itself is purely based in The Serpentine so road closures are not required. The mass participation event is on the Saturday with elite swimming on the Sunday.

### **Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon**

The annual fundraising event for The Royal Parks Foundation takes place on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October. The event is identical in terms of size, layout and timings to last year and includes the closure of the park roads on Sunday until approximately 3pm. South Carriage Drive will also be closed east from Prince of Wales Gate on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> to accommodate the build of the start/ finish infrastructure.

### **Cycle Superhighway West Carriage Drive**

The West Carriage Drive section of the superhighway is now open, although there are still outstanding works to carry out before it is fully complete. As part of the works, West Carriage Drive has been fully resurfaced, the street lights have been rewired and replaced with LED lighting and the footpaths alongside the road have been surfaced with golden gravel. TjL are on site monitoring the scheme and instructing snagging works.

### **Cycle Superhighway South Carriage Drive**

The works along South Carriage Drive are currently due for completion in mid October. Some works around The Pavilion/ bowling green will take place beyond that period, when the park is quieter. The vast majority of the segregation kerb has been installed with works still required around Edinburgh Gate. Again, this phase of works will see the street lights upgraded, the road resurfaced and some minor landscaping opportunities.

### **Victoria Border Re-landscaping**

The cycle superhighway works have created an exciting new landscaping opportunity at Victoria Border. The pathway leading to Kensington Gardens has been re-aligned to create an improved vista down to Buckhill Lodge. A large area for soft landscaping has also been created. Where this meets the boundary of Kensington Gardens a new shrub bed will be created and include the planting of 4 new oak trees. In front of this will be a formal lawn with a large flower bed in the middle. Victoria Border itself will become more of a mixed herbaceous border with ferns, grasses, bulbs etc along with some seasonal plants to give extra colour and interest. There is also the opportunity for the addition of 6 new benches which is important in an area of the park where there is little seating available.

### **Achilles**

The statue of Achilles at Hyde Park Corner is being restored. As part of this process, inappropriate layers of black paint are being removed and returning the statue to its original patination.

## Tackling the litter issue

### - what the Royal Parks are doing about it

In 2014 The Royal Parks set up a new project to achieve 0% to landfill, reduce litter, achieve a 40% recycling rate and better manage the growing costs of waste for all parks. From research we concluded that the numerous types of bins and signage around the park were confusing; some were not fit for purpose; bin capacities were small as well as noting the very few numbers of dedicated recycling bins.

We also sought direction from other parks and organisations including Central Park in New York. From their example we saw the success of using larger bins located in key high footfall locations where 50% of the bins were for recycling.



*The aftermath of one of the summer "raves"*

The research has led The Royal Parks to develop a number of key principles for the better management of waste.

1. Larger capacity bins at key locations throughout the parks;
2. Reducing the number of bins whilst increasing the capacity for waste;
3. 50% of the bins would be for recycling;
4. Bins should be aesthetically appropriate; and
5. Appropriate and consistent signage used around all of the parks.

In Kensington Gardens we trialled 17 larger oak bins with recycling and general waste units with appropriate signage. The trial during 2015 helped us to customise the design of the new bins to suit all of The Royal Parks. The trial was a success and saw a small jump in the recycling rate. In early 2016 we removed all of the existing bins from Kensington Gardens and replaced them with the new bins.

Recycling rates have increased, doubling from April 2015 to April 2016. The reduction in numbers of bins also leads to less vehicle movements and speeds up the collection times, which on busy days is very important. We are aware that some people still place general waste and dog poo in the recycling bins, exacerbated when the park gets busier. This is why our recycling rate isn't up to its full potential yet.

We are working with the landscape maintenance contractor to better manage litter at peak times as well as to continue to improve recycling. We are also still fine tuning our key bin locations and considering type of bins for dog waste as well as the provision of extra general waste capacity at peak times.

We take issues around litter very seriously, spending a significant sum of the landscape maintenance budget each year. Overall we feel with our principles we can achieve our goals of better waste management and with the public's help we promote environmentally responsible waste management.

*Andy Williams* Manager Kensington Gardens

*Ian Allard* Sustainability Manager

## An Unusual Tail

*My name is Louis and I am a direct descendant of William Hogarth's pug dog, "Trump", at least this is what my Dad Stephen has told me. Actually, I do remember how he said I looked like Trump but I am actually a cross between a Pug and a Jack Russell. My background is a bit of a mystery.*

*My Dad wanted a puppy and found me on a website called Pets for Homes. My Mum wanted £475 for me (that was eight years ago) and said she would only lend me for a weekend. My Dad said that was fine, but in the event she turned up and just handed me over, snatched the money, promised to keep in touch, and left.*

*I was very small and didn't really know what was going on, but I do know she had a new best friend who seemed to want lots of money, he was supposed to be my Dad but I didn't like him. She gave my new Dad the designer handbag which she carried me around in (I wasn't allowed to walk), plus my pink designer harness. I hated that harness, I am a boy and I was ashamed of it.*



*She also gave my new Dad piles of dry food which she said I liked. But I'd never had it before, I hated it too and I couldn't eat it. So after a day or two my new Dad started cooking me chicken breast for my dinner and my goodness it was delicious.*

*My Mum, before she left me, said she would deliver all my inoculation certificates and other paperwork, but she disappeared and never came back again. I ask you, what kind of mother would do that to her son?*

*So my new Dad made a guess and says that I am eight years old and my birthday is on Christmas Eve. But I ended up like a pin cushion because I had to have all my inoculations all over again to be double sure.*

*I do love my Dad, I can hardly bear to be away from his side, and I make sure that when he is at home at no time is he alone.*

*Louis and Stephen were talking to Sue Price and posing for Paul Shelley*

# Out and about with the Friends

## Tour of Buckingham Palace Garden



*The select (and lucky) group that gathered on 10 August just outside the palace not only had the fun of being taken in through the main gates like VIP's, but were given a comprehensive tour of the garden by the most expert guide possible. Head gardener Mark Lane has worked at the garden of Buckingham Palace for the past 37 years and his knowledge is unrivalled.*

*He explained how since 1992, the garden style has moved from a 'park' look to the planting of traditional herbaceous borders, that the garden contains the national collection of mulberries, that bio-diversity is actively encouraged, that recycling and a green approach are top priorities, that 50 plants are usually in flower on Christmas Day.*

*We found out that wool pellets are used as slug deterrents, that the garden contains 4 beehives and the palace is self-sufficient in honey.*

*Mark showed us many parts of the garden not open to the public, including the wonderful rose garden. We learned about the history and original design of the garden and its landscaping by William Chambers in 1770.*

*Asked about the challenges the garden faces today, Mark said that they are planning for the next 5 years and that the biggest problem is to stay ahead of the developers, in order to maintain this special island of privacy and tranquillity in the heart of the city.*



*It was a wonderful tour and the Friends are most grateful to Mark Lane for sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm so generously with us.*

*Security was tight so photo opportunities were few, but we did enjoy tea in the Buckingham Palace Garden Café afterwards!*

*Tessa Singleton*

## Annual General Meeting

The 25th AGM took place on 13 April 2016 and was attended by about 80 members, plus guests Andrew Scattergood, CEO of the Royal Parks, mayoral representatives from RBKC, Historic Royal Palaces, the RP Foundation and the HP and KG Managers. The meeting took place in the historic surroundings of Queen Alexandra's House, by kind permission of the Chairman of the Trustees, Adrian Harvey and the Principal, Anet Brown.

Adrian gave details of the history of Queen Alexandra's House and told us it was originally built with the profits from The Great Exhibition of 1881, to provide accommodation for female students, many of them studying at the nearby Royal College of Music, an important role which it continues to fulfill today.

Andrew Scattergood, appointed CEO of the Royal Parks in 2015, outlined the plans already well underway for the RP to become a charity. In its new guise, it will have a contract with the government, ensuring that it maintains the landscapes, and is currently recruiting a board of trustees. The appointment of Loyd Grossman as the new charity's first chairman is reported on the front cover.

In 2016 the Friends have celebrated their 25th Anniversary and have also recently become a charity, a decision which was approved unanimously by the members attending the AGM. Trustee Tom Newman outlined the advantages that this new status will give the Friends, in terms of credibility as an organisation and the ability to raise funds to support initiatives within the Royal Parks.



Chairman Sue Price addresses the AGM

# Out and about with the Friends

There were numerous other events that members enjoyed throughout the summer... here are memories of a couple of them...

The visit to the **Nursery in Hyde Park**, was very popular, but a little nostalgic, since the old Nursery is being pulled down to make way for much-needed

restructuring of the glass houses and introduction of state-of-the-art temperature controls. As ever, our thanks to Nursery Manager Mike Jones and we're looking forward to future developments!



The **Summer Party at the Boathouse** was blessed with a beautiful sunny evening, a

small jazz group played, wine flowed, trips were taken on the solar-powered shuttle across the Serpentine - and all the Friends and guests who attended had a most enjoyable evening.



Richard Price on keyboard with the Horizon Swing Trio



Our thanks to Peter Scott, Director of the Boathouse for hosting the party and to Horizon Swing Trio, for providing the excellent music. You can book them via [kdmckay@live.co.uk](mailto:kdmckay@live.co.uk).



## Update on membership

The following new members have joined the Friends since the Spring 2016 Newsletter:

### NEW MEMBERS

Mrs Valerie Shelley  
Ms Greta Hemus  
Mrs Ellen Moloney  
Mr & Mrs Chris & Kim Hills  
Mr & Mrs Romilly Lyttelton  
Mr & Mrs Martin & Amanda Frame  
The Hon Anna Birkett  
Mr Simon Birkett  
Mr Chris Barrass  
Mr & Mrs Annie Clarkson-Webb  
Ms Mary Ellen Collins  
Mr Darrell Mercer  
Miss Daisy Valencia Bahamonde  
Mrs Ann Dawson  
Sir Peter Middleton  
Ms Jeannie Dixon  
Mr David Harris  
Ms Joan Wlad  
Mrs Barbara Anne Budzworth  
Ms Sandra French  
Mrs Joanna Clark  
Mr John Fisher

### CONVERTED TO STANDING ORDER

Ms Patricia Hithersay  
Laird John & Caroline Pendreich  
Ms Janine Barton

### CONVERTED TO LIFE

Mrs Jacqueline Knight Preiss  
Mrs Juliet Scott

As at end September 2016:

**TOTAL MEMBERS 586**  
(including 18 Honorary)

LIFE MEMBERS 153

NEW MEMBERS 23

Corporate Members 12

Associate members 12

### OBITUARIES

We have received news of the deaths of the following members since publication of the Spring Newsletter:

Mr Anthony Butcher  
Lady Ann Riches  
Mr Stephen Schick

# Chairman's Report

*I'm writing this piece for the Autumn newsletter on a glorious September day which is predicted to be the hottest one for years. The very hot and dry midsummer months have taken their toll in the Parks. Autumn has arrived early, there has been a massive leaf fall as the trees are stressed, and flower beds and any new planting have needed plenty of extra watering. Money saved on grass cutting (it hasn't grown) has been spent on extra watering, though the new bore hole system has helped. However, it's fun to put yourself in a less busy part of either Park, here the grass is long and pale as straw. Is this Kenya? Is that a giraffe stepping in a stately way round that stand of trees? Are we on safari?*

*Trees are not the only things showing signs of stress. Hyde Park has had a particularly tough summer. You may remember "World Cannabis Day" in April which caused a real management problem a few hours before the 41 gun salute for the Queen's Birthday. This was followed by Swedish "Mid-Summer Day" celebrations which were unofficial, but attended by scores of people whose antisocial behavior turned an area of the Park into a no go area for other visitors and resulted in ambulances standing by, police attendance, and part of the Park still unusable the next day as very intensive clearing had to take place.*

*The summer "water pistol" fights, which were in fact groups of about 4,000 youths armed with bottles and knives, were well documented and were finally cleared by Riot Police. These were followed by a murder, the body being discovered in the very early morning by a gardener. The victim has been identified and there has been an arrest and suspect charged.*

*A spate of robberies in Hyde Park associated with Santander cycles resulted in rows of cycles in the Marble Arch Speakers Corner area being suspended. Reports of these thefts have dropped dramatically and there has been greater police surveillance. For emergencies of course dial 999 but for every other infringement dial 101 – your call will be logged and is important.*

*The hot weather has resulted in a huge increase in numbers of visitors, to both Parks, many enjoying picnics while they are there. Apart from the many tons of rubbish collected from bins there has been a shocking amount of food and rubbish left on the ground. I'm not talking about bits and pieces being dropped but whole large picnics, plus everything associated with them, just being abandoned.*

*In both Parks the largest single item of expenditure in their budgets is removal of rubbish, and the good weather with increased crowds makes this an even greater task.*

*At a recent meeting of the trustees we discussed with Park Managers the possibility of supporting a campaign to take a fresh look at how we, the public, look after our Parks. We would back an effort to make the millions of visitors feel a sense of pride and ownership, and take responsibility for keeping them clean and beautiful instead of continuing with the assumption that it's always "someone else's problem".*

## Natasha Woollard

*Congratulations to Natasha Woollard, currently director of Kensington Palace and Kew Palace, on her exciting new appointment.*

*Her new role will be Assistant Director Operations for the East of England at the National Trust, with responsibility for Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Essex. Natasha says "I'm really excited about the challenges ahead, but I will greatly miss the Kensington community and will always remember my time here fondly. Thank you for all the support that you have given me and Kensington Palace over the years. I know your strong relationship with Kensington Palace will continue with my successor and I wish you all the very best."*

*Natasha has been a keen supporter of the Friends and has set up some wonderful events for us in the Palace and in the Orangery.*

*She has also kept us in the information loop when there are new proposals and plans and has always been very open about possible new schemes. It has been a pleasure to be able to support Natasha and we wish her well in her new role but will also miss her very much.*

*Kensington Gardens, though also suffering from litter/rubbish problems (dealt with elsewhere in the newsletter) has had the pleasure of the Italian Gardens café opening with its living (not yet visible) roof, the go ahead for a new kiosk at Albert Memorial (the old one was rotten) and planning permission to replace the "temporary" portakabins used for maintenance staff at Kensington Gardens.*



*In Kensington Gardens a smallish percentage of cyclists along Mount Walk have worn away the grass in stretches to avoid the speed calming strips. However, the measured speeds are considerably lower than they were before the strips were created and very much lower than the 34 mph recorded by one cyclist!*

*As the Cycle SuperHighway (CSH) is completed along West Carriage Drive and South Carriage Drive, it is expected (and hoped) that there will be a great reduction in the numbers of cyclists using Rotten Row. Further electronic monitoring after both stretches of CSH are opened will take place to find out exactly what's happening. The cyclists only designated area on shared paths in both Parks are gradually being removed. Pedestrians will have priority and will be free to walk anywhere on the paths. Cyclists should choose to use the CSH but those who don't must slow down to an appropriate speed, and give way to pedestrians.*

*The Friends had a wonderful spring and summer of events to celebrate their 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. None of them were spoilt by poor weather and we were privileged visitors at some very special places (covered elsewhere in the newsletter). There are more treats being lined up for the Autumn/Winter/Spring and I very much enjoy meeting members on these visits. Do make sure you send any photos or letters to our Editor (details elsewhere).*

*And in the long dark winter months ahead hang on to the great memories of a fabulous summer. For me, the highlights were all associated with food and drink which is rather shocking – pizza in the sun in a deck chair at the Serpentine Bar and Kitchen and drinks on the raised deck at the new café at the Italian Fountains on a warm early evening. Both magical.*

*Thank you all for your support, and for being members.*

*Sue Price  
Chairman*

## News from the Volunteers

*Jennie Cleaver, who organises the volunteers, reports that Chris Gates has joined the group on Tuesdays, providing tourist information from the kiosk at Hyde Park Corner. He has taken over from Jeremy Orlebar, who supported the volunteers for several years.*

*Many of the volunteers are FHPKG members and if anyone is interested in helping the volunteers and requires more information, they can get in touch with Jennie by emailing [contact@friendshpkg.org.uk](mailto:contact@friendshpkg.org.uk).*

# People in the Park

## Jordan Swailes and Dotty

*Looking at the photo, you could be forgiven for assuming that Jordan and his canine assistant Dotty were on safari in Kenya, but in fact the picture was taken in Hyde Park in early September.*

*Jordan, 23, is a fully qualified Personal Trainer and licensed Royal Parks Fitness Operator, and runs sessions for his clients in both Hyde Park and Regent's Park. I asked him how he became a PT.*

*"By chance really. I was born in Sri Lanka, where my father worked in textiles, and when I was six we moved to Romania. When I was twelve, we came back to the UK. I was a skinny lad and I got bullied at school, so I started going to the gym and became very focused on it. I took up kick-boxing, then got injured quite badly and it was while I was in rehab that I became interested in understanding more about how the body functions."*

*"The rehabilitation I went through helped me build my emotional as well as physical strength. I had originally planned to study fine art at university, but it didn't work out, so I decided to qualify as a personal trainer. I was eager to gain new knowledge, taking first a level 2 gym instructor's course, then a level 3 personal trainer certificate."*

*How has Jordan built his client base, and who are his clients?*

*"Initially through my website that I set up 4 years ago, and now more through word of mouth. The majority of my clients are young professionals aged 26-35, but I've recently had a good influx of over 50's. Many work in offices all day and want to come and train outside in the park, rather than in a gym. This is where Dotty (an adorable cockapoo) helps, as she's a very fast runner and sets the pace for my clients. Many of them ask me to make sure to bring her to the sessions and are really more interested in seeing her than me!"*

*"It's a terrific privilege to be able to use Hyde Park and to have the support of the Royal Parks. As accredited personal trainers, we are all insured, we wear an armband to show we're "official" and the RP list us on their website, which helps promote us."*

*I asked Jordan how he plans programmes and sets goals for his clients.*

*"Some like to get their training done before they go to work, so that means very busy early mornings, as soon as the gates open, followed frequently by lunch time sessions for bankers from the City. It varies widely, but I stick to a fundamental principle: I have to try and make*



*keeping fit part of the life style of all my clients. I teach on a level that ultimately they can achieve and enjoy by themselves - after all, no one wants to have a personal trainer for ever!"*

*We finished our conversation with a few quick-fire questions:*

*Best start to the day?*

*"Organic porridge, brown bread, 2 sunny-side up eggs, carbs and protein to build energy."*

*Time off?*

*"Snowboarding as much as possible - I prefer the cold - Val Thorens, Bulgaria, Whistler."*

*Favourite food?*

*"I love papaya. It reminds me of Sri Lanka."*

*Find Jordan at [www.jordanswailesfitness.co.uk](http://www.jordanswailesfitness.co.uk)*

*Tessa Singleton*

## News of FHPKG charitable status

*The Committee is delighted to advise that FHPKG has become a registered Charity (Reg.No. 1168319) regulated by the Charities Commission.*

*The Friends now have a legal personality and are a legal entity, regulated by the Charities Commission. This gives us greater public credibility and status. We now have the ability to attract charitable donations, including bequests, which can be used to do good works for the parks.*

*Tax benefits: Members' donations will qualify for tax relief.*

*The Friends can reclaim Gift Aid, which will generate additional funds for good works.*

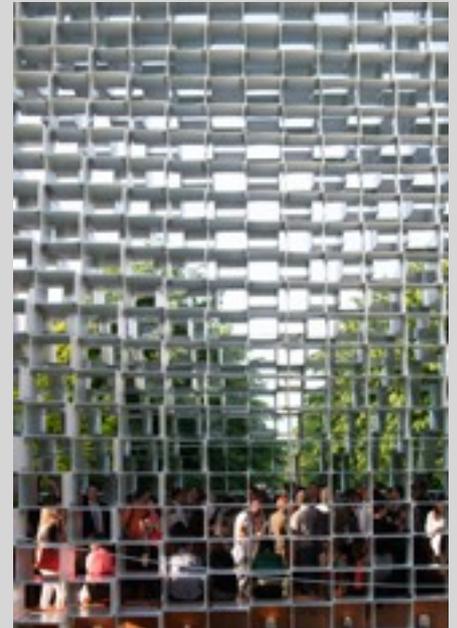
***To enable us to do so, please fill out the Gift Aid form enclosed with the Newsletter and scan it in and e-mail it to the Friends at [membership@friendshpkg.org.uk](mailto:membership@friendshpkg.org.uk)***

***or post it in the envelope provided to Membership Secretary, Old Police House, Hyde Park, London W2 2UH***

# The wall that made its mark in the Park

Is there anybody out there who didn't see this year's Serpentine Gallery Summer Pavilion? With so much advance publicity (and acclaim) it was hard to have an unprejudiced personal take on Danish architect Bjarke Ingels' "unzipped wall". My first visit was made in heavy rain, making it impossible to admire the much lauded play of light granted by sunshine on the fibre glass structure. The vault-like inner space, open to the elements, was home to a Harrods pop up cafe, eclipsed by shrouds of protective plastic against the elements, although in happier conditions this was a welcome pit stop, since the Gallery has no café of its own.

Given the grey skies, one had to make an imaginative leap and then, even in soggy conditions, the conceptual imagination of this world class architect became evident. The humblest and most ancient building material – the brick – had been recast in modern fibreglass on a scale, and according to a dynamic, which seemed completely new. Each brick was hollow, but deep, the mass of blocks forming a structure which achieved a clever crossover from opaque and grounded to airy and translucent, according to the aspect of view. The so-called wall undulated invitingly and appeared honeycombed or latticed from one side and solidly resistant from the other. Restricted in height (no pavilion must exceed the roofline of the Gallery at its highest point) it had an extensive, elongated footprint, the balance and proportion of the whole clearly stated, although not visible in a single gaze.



The Summer Pavilion project was set up by outgoing Serpentine Gallery Director, Julia Peyton – Jones almost 20 years ago. From the start she invited big names in contemporary design to partner the ground-breaking Gallery and make an innovative summer building, and the architect for 2016, Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG, get it?), is no exception. His practice employs 300 architects operating in 25 countries. The eclectic and international nature of this tradition was amplified this year by the inclusion of 4 summer houses on a site nearby. These houses, designed by a German, a Nigerian, a Hungarian living in Paris, and a Brit respectively, were intended as a response to much earlier folly, Queen Caroline's Temple, designed by neo – classicist William Kent in 1734. My own vote was for the refined palisade of white staves surrounding an outsize circular "table" or canopy, by British architect Asif Khan, which seemed to me to best evoke

the idea of a serene and private place, *pace* the original Temple. It must be said though, that the original provides a refuge and place of shelter, whereas the modern interpretations were all wide open to the skies!

Each year, the Summer Pavilion provides a new destination and a talking point for visitors to Hyde Park. But do we see it as architecture or sculpture? Given the vagaries of our famous English summer and the porous nature of the temporary building, perhaps we should just enjoy it as an exercise in ambiguity and one of the many pleasures of summer on offer in the Park.

Susan Heywood

## Paul Shelley, our resident photographer, had a somewhat different take on proceedings...

*I can report as follows: I turned up at 6.30 prompt, thinking I might be early, to find mobs of trendy young people all over the four smaller summer houses down by Queen Mary's Temple. So I had a nose around the three structures- more giant sculpture installations than pavilions. Interesting and some good angles in the evening light. Similarly there should be some good sunrise perspectives. Apparently one of them can be tipped on its side to produce a different configuration.*

*They were being explained to us punters by very serious looking men of EU extraction in a uniform of dark lightweight suits, open neck white shirts and mullet hairstyles. Goatee beards were optional. A good reason for Brexit*



*would be the banning of mullets from our shores. But I haven't heard Boris mention this.*

*I then moved on to the main pavilion. I am sure most of you will have seen it by now. In my opinion it is fab. A honeycomb of fibreglass shoeboxes going up to a point. This was even more crowded. It seemed you could get a free beer but I passed on that and didn't bother. There was a queue to get in and out with lots of poseurs hanging around in the middle. Most people were looking trendy but not cutting edge. I was getting*

*a lot of looks. I was flattered by the admiring glances at my smart jacket. But after a few minutes of this I realised that the looks were more likely to be because I was the oldest person there by about 20 years. They must have been wondering why I had been let out for the evening, and where was my white coated carer.*

# Restaurant Review

## The Serpentine Bar & Kitchen

Where, in central London, can you sit on a sunny terrace overlooking a lake, tucking into a wood-oven pizza, washed down with a large glass of ice-cold lager?

Oh, and does that restaurant have an unbroken view over the water towards the west?



The Serpentine Bar & Kitchen is such a terrific setting that it's no surprise that it gets very popular on a lovely summer day, right into the evening

So here are the tips to make sure you really enjoy your visit.

**GET THERE EARLY!** 12.15 is not too early for that lunch. Think how much you'll enjoy your drink and some olives while you wait for your pizza to be brought to your waterside table. And don't forget your Friends card to claim your food discount.

You can't book - and there's a slightly quirky table and ordering system. But if you note what follows, you'll easily turn things to your advantage.

All the tables have numbers on them. You have to go to the bar(s) to place your order, which will only be accepted if you quote a table number.

What this means is that it's better to arrive with at least one other person. Let's say you are a couple. Together you first bag a table; then one of you stays there, while the other armed with a table number to quote, goes to the bar to get the drinks and olives and place and pre-pay the food order.

The main bar is in the inside restaurant part, but an overflow outside kiosk near the tables may be up and running and, if so, you may be able to get your drinks and place your food order there.

As to the food, the pizzas are delicious. I always have the Diabolo. Of course, there are healthier options...

Richard Price

## Une vue parisienne - how do our Parks measure up?

Charles and Ines, 9 and 7 years old respectively, came to live in London from Paris when they were very small. Their parents immediately joined the Friends as Life Members.

We wanted to find out what they thought of, and enjoyed doing most in both Parks.

### Ines

Her first memories are of playing in the Princess Diana playground and she loved the baby swings.

This is what she had to say:

"I'm now learning to ride my bike without stabilisers, but I still love to scooter. I've stopped the horse riding because I don't like it very much, I don't go to the park near the pond, it's dirty from the ducks and geese."

"Too much poo?" I ask - lots and lots of giggling from both Charles and Ines, who says "I'd wish for a really really big slide for big children. In Paris where we live there is a small park with a little roundabout with horses, I went on a little roundabout here, there were cars and horses. One only time I had an ice cream. Summer is my favourite time - I like it best."

### Charles

"The first thing I remember was going on a scooter to Kensington

Gardens. My best things are cycling, horse riding and playing rugby and football with friends. In the Princess Diana playground my favourite things are the Pirate Ship and the Music Toy. You play a tune with your feet. My best thing in the park is playing with my friends.

The thing I don't like is there is not much places to cycle. There are lots of paths which you can't cycle on and I can't ride a horse at all in Kensington Gardens. I would wish for more places to cycle.

My favourite times are spring and summer, there are longer days to play with friends.

In Paris there is a small park near us, but it is good because there are lots of things to do."



Interviewed by Sue Price  
Photo thanks to Donatienne - their mother.

# Sunday mornings - racing at the Round Pond with the Model Yacht Sailing Association

On a sunny spring Sunday morning we crept through an almost secret gate within a gate on the far north west corner of Kensington Gardens. We were there by kind invitation of Charles Legg. Charles is the Secretary of the Model Yacht Sailing Association (MYSA) which was formed in 1876 when "working people" were first allowed into the Gardens. A little later in 1884, the London Model Yacht Club was formed to enable the toffs to sail their model boats separately from their artisan rivals. You'll be relieved to know that they are now happily combined and the thirty plus members share a common interest in the owning, repairing, sailing, and sometimes racing of a wide selection of yachts.

Their hidden headquarters were once used by spooks listening into neighbouring Russians, but are now packed with the most beautiful and some very valuable antique yachts, as well as trophies, competition boards, maps and a collection of prints and paintings.

On Sunday mornings, members enjoy a long session of chatting about and looking at each other's boats before a selection are loaded onto ancient trollies and wheeled through the Gardens to the Round Pond for a sail about.

Thomas Deinet, who has been Commodore for two years, started as a young boy by building a boat entirely made of corks from a local wine festival. He sailed this boat, held together by straps, off an island in the North Sea.

When he relocated to London for work and was living near Kensington Gardens, he was delighted one Sunday to see a man with a "huge sailing boat". That was it, he was hooked all over again, "...got onto the website and took it up again..."

The most senior member, Robin Redhead, joined in 1938 aged 12. In those glorious days there was a Junior Section with its own hut.



Robin was the skipper for his doctor father, the boat builder.

Robin has a collection of wonderful yachts "Babbie" (early 1940's) with vane steering (not radio controlled) and "Daddie Longlegs" (late 1940's) also vane steered. He has owned, since he was 12 "Infanta" which is now radio controlled.

As a young doctor, he progressed to sailing various family sized boats in the Solent, but told me that his interest in all the tiny pieces involved in running the small model yachts never left him. His career at Queen Mary's Hospital in Woolwich meant he was able to continue to design and make all the "bits and pieces" needed by amputees in helping their rehab. He comes to the club most weekends but no longer sails the boats.

Vane sailing involves the fastest of sprints round the Pond to collect the yachts as they all fetch up on the opposite shore having been taken entirely by the wind with no control over the steering from the land.

Do join these keen sailors, they will encourage you to have a try, on Sunday mornings at about 11 am, but not in the height of summer when there is an annual outbreak of weed in the water.

Learn all about 10 raters, buying them is an expensive business, they are like hen's teeth. Discover the 1 metre class, with lots being built and made, and understand the mysterious formula of the area of sail to the waterline area of the boat.

There's a whole magical mini marine world waiting for you.

Email: MYSA. [Roundpond@gmail.com](mailto:Roundpond@gmail.com)

Web: [www.mysa.org.uk](http://www.mysa.org.uk)

Sue Price

## Update on Concessions

You will find the full list of concessions available to the Friends on the back page of this newsletter - all existing concessions have been maintained for 2017 and below we draw your attention to some highlights:

- THE KENSINGTON WINE ROOMS are a new concession, offering members a 10% discount on lunch from Monday to Friday throughout 2017
- WILL TO WIN Tennis and Bowls Centre is making improvements to its facilities, both sporting and catering, and welcomes members, offering 20% discount on food and drinks, as well as 10% on court fees off-peak. Why not drop in, even if it's just for a drink?
- ITALIAN GARDENS CAFÉ in Kensington Gardens opened in the summer, giving members 10% discount on snacks and drinks. Open from 7.30am and offering a delicious range of fresh food throughout the day. The Cafe is a fitting back drop to the formal Italian Gardens and features a living roof which supports biodiversity in Kensington Gardens.

## Obituaries

**Lady Ann Riches**, founder member and stalwart supporter of the Friends, was featured in our Spring 2016 Newsletter. She died aged 87 on 25 June 2016. Her extensive obituary in *The Daily Telegraph* spoke of her "remarkable record of unbroken service to the National Health Service in East London, stretching back to 1955 and continuing until only 2 years before her death". Lady Riches was appointed MBE in 2014.

**Sir Ronald Arculus**, FHPKG member, together with his wife since 1999, died on 28 August 2016 aged 93. He was ambassador to Rome, who (to quote *The Telegraph*) "relished the city's pleasures and later campaigned to protect Kensington". On retirement he developed a portfolio of business and other interests. He became chairman of the Kensington Society in 1999 and its president from 2001 to 2011. Ronald Arculus was a man of refined tastes in music, art and antiques. He was brave enough to speak out against the plans to build a memorial to Diana Princess of Wales, on the grounds that it would attract "hordes of tourists". He was appointed KCVO in 1980 and was also a Knight Grand Cross of the Italian Order of Merit.

# FHPKG Concessions 2017

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

## Will To Win

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

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

*20% off food and beverages*



## Urban Meadow & Café Bar

150 Bayswater Rod  
London W2 4RT  
020 7792 7066

*20% discount on food and  
beverages*



## The Serpentine Lido

Hyde Park  
London W2 2UH  
020 7706 3422

*15%-20% discount- to be confirmed for next 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

Italian Gardens Café - NEW!

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 Cafe Bar (at Door 12)*

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

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

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

*38% off Behind the Scenes Tour*

*20% off Story of the Proms Tour*

## Royal Garden Hotel

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

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

## Park Deck Chairs

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

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

*Non-concessionary Rate Season Ticket £77*

*Concessionary Rate Season Ticket £31.50*

## The Kensington Wine Rooms - NEW!

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

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

