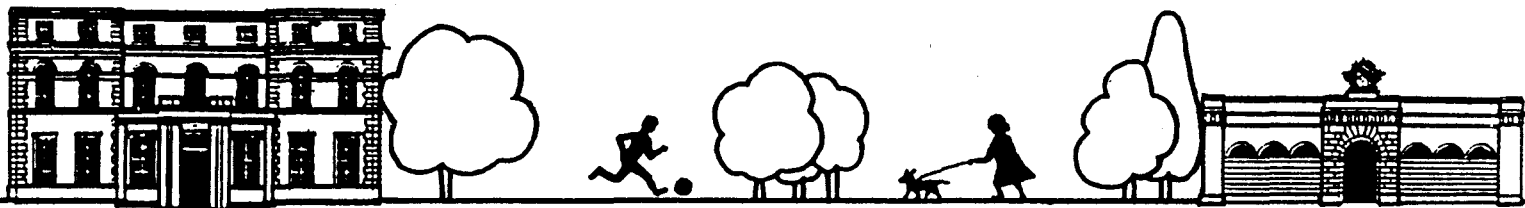


FRIENDS of GUNNERSBURY PARK & MUSEUM

No. 19
August 1986

NEWSLETTER



SUMMER FETE 31st AUGUST

Our Annual Fete is coming round again! Will the weather be kind, or will we get horizontal rain like last year?

This year the Fete will be on a Sunday (31st August). On average the Cafe and the Museum are three times busier on a Sunday than a Saturday, so we have moved the day as an experiment. Also, our other novelty is to have an All-Day Fete, (we will be starting at about 10.30 and finishing at about 4.30) so a couple of hours of rain won't destroy the day. There is so much to do in the Park - pitch and putt, miniature golf, boats on the lake, tennis, visiting the Museum, having lunch and tea in the Cafe, so we are hoping that people will come to Gunnersbury for the whole day.

This year the Brentford & Chiswick Round Table are organising a Fun Run around the Park on the Fete Day starting at 10.30. They are helping to raise money for the Hounslow Multiple Sclerosis Society to build a social centre. Perhaps you would like to find sponsors and join in? The details come from M. Wakeman, 5 Nero Court, Brentford; or join in on the day (£2 entry fee). We hope they will be successful and they will certainly start the Fete off with a bang!

Our Fete will have all sorts of attractions: The Mayors of Ealing and Hounslow will visit us at 11.00; Happy Jacks Steel Band will be playing in the afternoon; The Brentford & Chiswick Times will be bringing their colourful and noisy stall which raises money for the Richard Dimpleby Cancer Fund; we will have a barbecue on the site, with tea, coffee, sandwiches, ices, cold drinks and all you'll need for lunch (and of course the Cafe will be open with home-made pies and pasties, salads, scone, cream cakes, eclairsneed I go on?); we will be selling plants from the Nursery, running Tombola and a Raffle, selling books, toys and bric-a-brac, and organising membership renewals (!); Anne Stead will be bringing her pony for rides; in the central arena Ian Harmer will be organising games for the children (Egg & Spoon Race, Throwing the Wellie, Treasure Hunts, Sack Races etc.); if all goes well there will be a Children's Fun Fair; The Brentford And Chiswick Round Table will be organising a cocoanut shy, skittles, the (impossible) ball in the bucket game and a Lucky Teddy stall; and on top of all that we are hoping for about 30 local organisations to arrive with their own stalls and tables - the NSPCC, the Imperial Cancer Relief Fund, the RSPCA, the Ealing National Trust, the National Deaf Society, Scouts, Brownies, Cats Protection, Wildlife enthusiasts, Animal Rights enthusiasts, all sorts of enthusiasts; and on top of all that the local Fire Brigade will come, and the Homebeat Police Officers; and a disco; and well, how could you stay at home?

Apart from the fun, we are doing it to raise money for the Park (walkie-talkies, the Orangery, 19th century wallpaper for the Victorian Kitchens, etc etc). A few more helpers, for a couple of hours on the day, or gifts (cakes? bric-a-brac?) would be wonderful. Why not phone Joan Catterall (560 4262) or Marion Booth (992 9891).

Dogs

At the AGM, Mike Rowan was asked to describe the experiment he is conducting at Chiswick House Grounds. This is his report:

Mentioning dogs and parks in the same sentence has always been a guaranteed way of getting temperatures and voices raised and furred umbrellas and newspapers

forcibly lowered on to one's head. It seems that whether you are of the opinion that "a park is any place in London where a dog can run free and exercise correctly" or that "all dogs should be banned from all parks" there has been no way of remaining on speaking terms with both sides until now.

With the recent introduction into Chiswick House Grounds of what are affectionately known as 'Doggy Bins' the debate has been settled. Having listened to the evidence of other Boroughs (notably Barking - no pun intended!) we awaited with a degree of trepidation the approach of 'D-Day' - or 'Dog Day Afternoon', as some people christened it. I felt reasonably confident that the dog owning public who use Chiswick House Grounds were a friendly, well-meaning group who had hitherto not had the facilities to remove the waste left by their dogs. Certainly I have got to know a number of dog walkers in the park, but passing the time of day is quite different from passing out pooper scoopers!

It is not only mad dogs and Englishmen who go out in the midday sun, so, armed with a broad smile and some scoopers, I ventured out to meet the local dog owners. My reception? Well, I wasn't savaged; chased? not even a throaty growl. As for the owners: 'great idea', 'long overdue'; I was greeted with 100% support, for which I gratefully acknowledge the help of the dog owners of Chiswick in making this scheme successful.

But, I hear the doubting Thomases proclaim, it's all very well handing them out and people saying 'what a great idea', but did people use them and were the footpaths noticeably cleaner? The answer to

both questions is Yes; in fact, within a week the foot paths were 70-80% cleaner and this standard has been maintained for some weeks now. People are asking where they can buy their own supply of scoopers and others have made their own arrangements.

What is particularly gratifying is that the dog-owners have proved themselves to be responsible users of the park and the problem of dog-owners (because it isn't the dogs' fault) has virtually ceased. All they needed were the facilities. So the heated debate has ceased to be contentious and joggers and the parents of small children are delighted with the footpaths. So what next? - vandal-scoopers? vandal bins? Suggestions on a postcard please!

Still on the topic of dogs, I was speaking to a blind lady who walks in Chiswick House Grounds with her dog and she told me that the main problem for her in the park is other dogs off the lead who want to play with her guide dog. The owners don't realise that the guide dog is working, not out for exercise or taking a stroll - it must learn to disobey commands if the command is wrong and has to suppress enough distractions without a playful dog demanding its attention. So if you see a guide dog, please call your dog to heel or even put it on the lead so that everyone can enjoy the park.

Future Events

We have found that events we put on soon after a Newsletter is published are well-attended and no-one comes to the ones a couple of months later so please make a note in your dairies NOW if these events attract your interest:

Thursday 2nd October in the Museum at 7.30: Phil Philo, the Curator, will give a talk on a very important Brentford company which closed last year: Bands, a firm that made vellum and parchment. This firm started in the 19th century and made vellum and parchment by old-established methods. When they were closing, Phil visited them, made notes, took photos, conducted interviews and 'rescued' some of the equipment, which is now on display in the museum. I have heard Phil give this talk before and I can assure you that it really is extremely interesting. He will be showing slides and getting out the equipment (knives, stretcher frames etc) during the talk. We will be serving refreshments. Please invite your friends as well.

Thursday 13th November, 7.30: An Evening With The Costume Collection, in the Museum. Not many people know that the Museum has the most superb collection of costume, mainly late-Victorian women's clothes, and this is going to be displayed in next year's major exhibition, from June to October. It will be called 'A Stitch In Time'. Not only will there be a major exhibition, but there will also be a research project, in which the Museum will investigate the way clothes have been made and sold in West London over the last 100 years. By this method the museum will build up an archive of today's evidence for the future - tape recordings, video recordings, photos, and examples of the clothes themselves. To be successful the museum will need considerable sponsorship, and some local firms have already been most generous. The whole project is very exciting, and a lot of the costume will be out on this evening for us to see. Again, refreshments will be served and the evening is open to everybody.

A date for your Diary: Wednesday 17th December - a Christmas Party in the Museum; details in the next Newsletter.

The Museum's exhibitions:

2 Sept - 5 Oct: 'Electrical Energy' - an exhibition from the Science Museum. Come along and see how much electricity you can generate!

Now until 23rd September: 'Stop the Rot' - all about the way rot attacks the things we value from the past (like the Mary Rose, favourite teddy bears and buildings in Gunnersbury Park); a fascinating exhibition sponsored by Rentokil.

October 10 - Nov 1: 'West London Craftsmen' - displaying in the Museum, demonstrating every Sunday in the Temple.

And don't forget: The Victorian Kitchens (which the Friends are gradually restoring) will be open for the last time this year on Saturday and Sunday, 27 & 28 September.

The Friends' Committee

At the Annual General Meeting Marion Booth, John Brace, Peter Dawson and Mike Rowan were elected on to the Executive Committee.

Eva Swann, who has done so much in Fund-raising for the Friends, has retired to a spot nearer the Equator - we wish her all the best and thank her for so much work and time.

We have made a small donation to the Park - the direction sign-board near the Large Mansion.

We are still being annoyed by attempted thefts and broken windows in the Pavilion Cafe, so some money is going to have to be 'donated' to strengthen the security of that building.

Last summer we redecorated the Coronation Chalet (the cafe for the footballers in the winter); this year we are going to have to do some internal reconstruction to make the place work better - that will be another 'donation'.

We are still trying to find walkie-talkies for the Park Staff. The last models we tried, which worked and were 'cheap' (£200 each) turned out to be not Home Office approved (= illegal) and from a firm which was going into liquidation! But four at £300 each are going to have to wait until we have had a Great Fete!

FRIENDS OF GUNNERSBURY PARK AND MUSEUM

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL FORM

The subscription rate is £3 per member for the year beginning 1st April.

NAME AND ADDRESS (In Block Letters Please):.....

.....

SIGNATURE:.....

Please send this form to the Membership Secretary, Mrs Joan Catterall, 39, Lionel Road, Brentford.

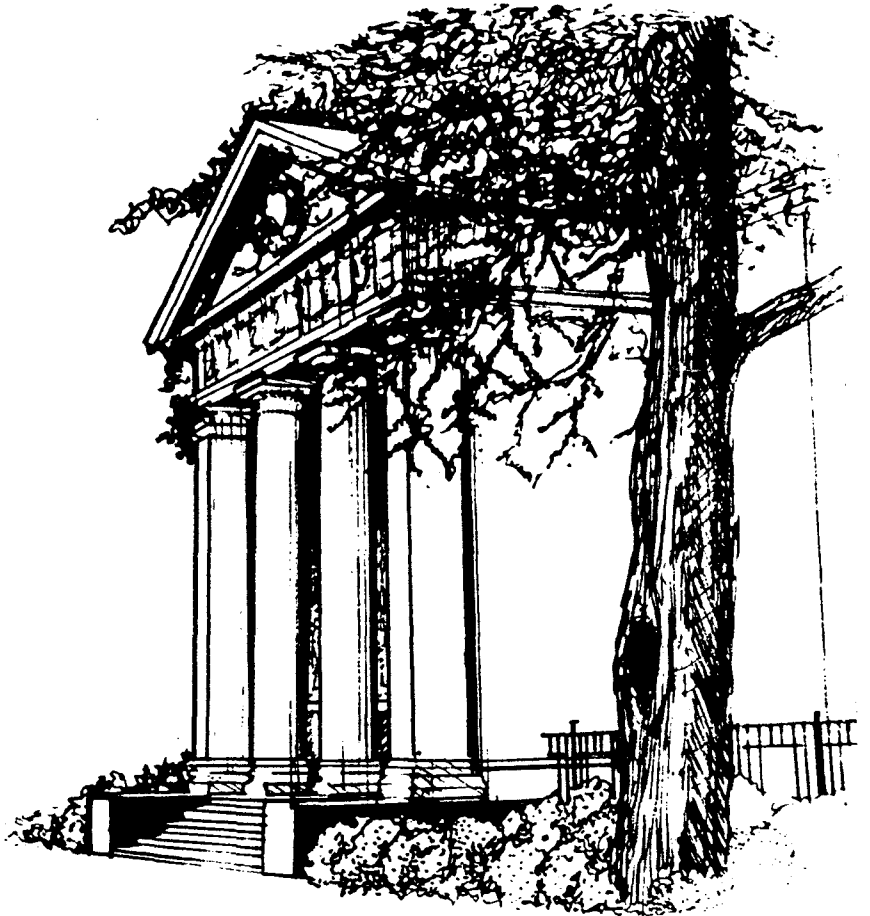
We sometimes need volunteers for different aspects of the Society's work and we are assembling a list of people on whom we can occasionally call. If you would like to be added to this list, please put your phone number here:

.....

The Temple

The Temple, by the Round Pond, was built in the mid-18th century. At that time it was very fashionable to have this sort of garden building. On the side walls there is some evidence that it once had an upper floor. In the 19th century the Rothschilds added an extension (supposedly to make playing billiards easier!). By the early 1970s this building had decayed, but with a grant from the state it was restored.

Although it can be hired from Hounslow Council, it is hardly ever used. When the Friends applied for the licence to provide the catering in the Park (to devote the profits to improving the Park) we suggested that the Temple could be used for holding functions - buffets, wedding receptions, children's parties etc. We have agreed a very reasonable hire fee for these events, and are able to provide alcoholic refreshments if required. Now all we have to do is publicise this service and build up the business. Please spread the word, and contact Tony Marren in the Pavilion Cafe, 992 0543.



FRIENDS OF GUNNERSBURY PARK AND MUSEUM

DEED OF COVENANT

I,.....

Of.....

hereby covenant with THE FRIENDS OF GUNNERSBURY PARK AND MUSEUM that for a period of

years from the date hereof (or during the remainder of my life, whichever is the shorter)

I will pay to THE FRIENDS OF GUNNERSBURY PARK AND MUSEUM on the day of

(month)..... such a sum as, after the deduction of income tax, will amount

to £.....

Signed, sealed and delivered.

SIGNATURE:..... Date:.....

In the presence of:.....

Signature of witness:.....

Address of witness:.....

For your convenience we recommend that you make out a BANKERS ORDER in favour of the Friends of Gunnersbury Park and Museum's account at the National Westminster Bank, Gunnersbury Park Branch, 12, Park Parade, Gunnersbury Ave, W3 9BD, to make a regular annual payment for the same period of years.