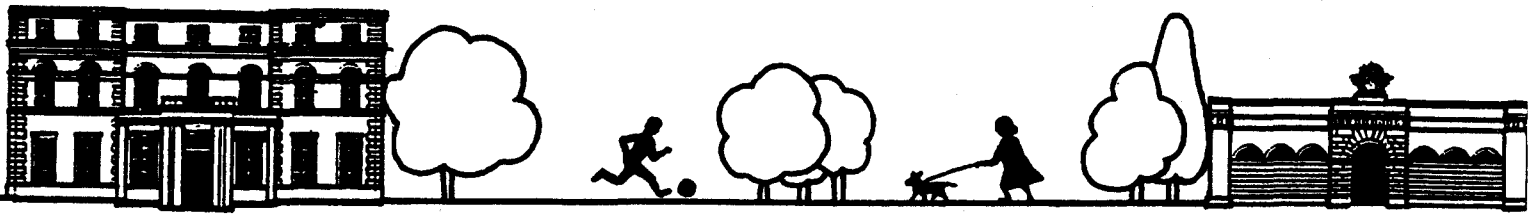


FRIENDS of GUNNERSBURY PARK & MUSEUM

No 44
August 1996

NEWSLETTER



Friends' Fete 1 September

Our annual fund-raising event will be held in the Park on Sunday 1 September from 11am to 4pm. Please come along, renew your membership and meet us on the stalls!

Friends' AGM 8 September

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 3pm on Sunday 8 September in the Museum. We shall deal with the business part of the meeting first, breaking for refreshments, and then we shall hear about the Museum's Lottery bid from Sarah Levitt, the Curator. There will be plenty of opportunities to discuss the proposals and ask questions.

The Bid for Lottery Funding

At the July meeting of the Gunnersbury Park Joint Committee, approval was given for a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to support work on both the Park and the Museum. This is one of the Funds created in 1993 to disburse money from the sale of lottery tickets; it can help to fund a variety of projects under the "heritage" banner including the refurbishment or rebuilding of museums and historic landscapes. In 1996 £50 million has been set aside for the Urban Parks Initiative. For the first time since the Friends were set up a source of funding has become available which is large enough to be able to help deal with some of Gunnersbury's major problems

Applications have to meet a long list of conditions before they can be supported by lottery funding. For example, there has to be a "heritage asset" which will benefit from the project proposed; in this case the park, the historic buildings and the museum collections all fit the bill. Some additional funding has to be available for the project, too. This is referred to as "partnership funding" and a contribution of at least 25% is needed. The lottery assessors have to be convinced that projects they support are both technically and financially viable. Some projects which were awarded funds from the lottery in its early days have still not been able to spend their grants because they have not been able to obtain all their partnership funding. For a big project like ours it is clearly very important to be able to convince the Heritage Lottery Fund's assessors that such funding will be forthcoming. Some of the proposals for the Park could attract support from the Sports Council or the Arts Council which also allocate lottery money but lottery funds from one source cannot be used to match lottery funds from another.

The proposals discussed at the GPJC meeting are summarised below. Work has continued on these so there will have been some changes since then which we will hear about on 8 September.

The Proposals for the Park

These have been developed by a working party on which the Friends were represented. They provide opportunities for dealing with many of the problems which have concerned us over the last 15 years - and new research initiated by the committee has taught us how important some of the 18th century planting was as well as providing detail about more recent garden features like the rose basket beds behind the Large Mansion. You may remember a presentation at last year's AGM on the *Park Development Plan* which covered many of these findings and proposals.

The scheme includes

- Restoring, upgrading and replanting the park landscape taking the opportunity to open up some vistas which were part of the 18th century layout
- Refurbishing the Stables, probably as lettable artists' studios and rehearsal space
- Installing a *camera obscura* for visitors to use in the Potomac Tower
- Creating an open air theatre for a wide-range of entertainments
- Introducing security cameras
- Re-locating the Park Warden's office
- Relocating the golf course

- Upgrading the play area with equipment for toddlers and children with disabilities
- Restoring the Japanese Garden and the Italian Garden
- Providing a kitchen and toilets behind the Orangery to promote lettings and increase revenue
- Excavating and planting the Horseshoe Pond

The Proposals for the Museum and the Historic Buildings

Some of these proposals are based on the Museum's *Development Plan* while others are new ideas. Again the proposals include opportunities for putting right matters which have been of great concern over the years, such as work on the fabric of the Large and Small Mansions identified in the structural survey in 1991.

These proposals include

- Refurbishing the Large Mansion's exterior and interior, including the fine ground floor rooms
- Finding a more appropriate home for the carriages, perhaps in a new building associated with a better quality café at the kitchen end of the Mansion
- In the Pink Saloon (where the carriages are now) telling the story of the estate which became the park and of its past inhabitants

- Providing a new reception area and shop to give a better service and increase income
- Installing toilets suitable for all visitors in the Large Mansion
- Improving the care of the museum collections by providing better storage with the right environmental conditions and accommodation for larger objects
- Displaying the local history collections in some of the first floor rooms
- Trying to give public access to a larger proportion of the historic house than is possible at present
- Providing special historic interpretation of the important servants' wing around the kitchens, perhaps making it into a tourist attraction in its own right and charging for admission to this wing
- Restoring the fabric of the Small Mansion and removing the toilets from the west end of this building
- Providing facilities for museum educational work and activities as well as conferences in the Small Mansion, both of which can earn income
- Working with the Temple Trust to repair and restore Princess Amelia's Bath House and provide it with an interpretative exhibition about its history and that of the Small Mansion

The success of the bid for funding depends upon a carefully costed Business Plan showing what all this work would cost,

how it would be managed, where the partnership funding for this capital investment will come from and how running costs will be financed.

This has not yet been finalised and it is possible that some of these proposals will prove to be too ambitious for the funds available or more costly to run than the GPJC can afford.

Some work contributed by Park and Museum staff and by Capel Manor students on the implementation of planting and landscaping will count as partnership funding as will funds raised by the Temple Trust towards work on buildings like the Bath House.

There has been a donation from a member of the Rothschild family and money from Friends' funds has gone towards the cost of paying consultants for pieces of specialist work in drawing up the proposals. A commercial partner for the new café facilities might contribute fitting out costs which would count towards the total.

The application will be submitted in the autumn and will be assessed along with other Parks bids and other major Museum schemes. It is likely to be 1997 before a decision is finally made about whether Lottery funds can help safeguard Gunnersbury's future.

Museum Exhibitions & Events

Happy Birthday Gunnersbury Park!
On now until 9 May 1997

Neville Chamberlain opened the Park to the public on 21 May 1926 and this exhibition marks its 70th birthday, telling the Park's life story, beginning with its

purchase from the Rothschilds and ending with a look at how it may develop in future.

Bold Impressions

On now until 8 September 1996

An exhibition of printed fabrics by great names of the textile world in the 20th century, featuring the work of Joyce Clissold of the "Footprints" studio in Brentford. *From Central St Martins College of Art & Design.*

It's on at the Flicks!

On now until 6 July 1997

The Museum marks the centenary of the cinema showing some of the its fine collection of Ealing Film Studios stills and posters.

All Dressed Up

18 October 1996 to 7 September 1997

A variety of clothes - fashion, fancy dress, clothes for special occasions - from "Gunnersbury's wardrobe". The exhibition will include a pearly king's outfit, football strip and even a shroud! There will be a dressing-up box and educational activities for children.

What's It Worth?

30 November 1996

A valuation day and promises auction, 1-4pm. Bring your own objects to be valued (at £2 per object) by Academy Auctions of Ealing and help raise funds for the Museum.

Museum opening hours: daily 1 to 5pm, April to October (to 6pm weekends and Bank Holidays), 1 to 4pm November to March. Kitchens open summer weekends. Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day & Boxing Day.

ADMISSION FREE.

Temple Trust Exhibitions

This historic buildings preservation trust has occupied the Temple at Gunnersbury Park since April 1994. It runs a programme of exhibitions in the Temple which are open to visitors from Thursday to Sunday, 12 noon to 4pm. Often these are exhibitions with works of art for sale and a proportion of sales income goes towards the charitable work of the Trust. If you would like to find out more about the Temple Trust the phone number is 0181-992 2248.

The Elements

Now on until 15 September

The structure movement and colour of the elements in pictures by Sue Locke and Michael Humphrey

New Photography

22 September to 20 October 1996

MARY, an intriguing story conceived by New York City's Edward F Udaverdi, illustrated in black and white by Kew photographer Frances Neale. An arresting thought-provoking celebration of irony.

Capel Manor students' prize

Friends will remember that Capel Manor has expanded its horticultural courses into Gunnersbury Park. Last year they held an awards ceremony for the students in the Orangery and we were very impressed with the quality of the work. The Friends offered to fund an annual prize for the student who had made the greatest contribution to Gunnersbury Park itself during the year. A candidate has now been selected for the first of these prizes which will be awarded on 13 September.

This Newsletter was edited by James Wisdom and Val Bott, 25 Hartington Road, London W4 3TL.