



# Newsletter

Autumn 2014

## From the Chair



We were truly delighted to hear the news that, at long last, Bushy and Home Parks have been approved as a Site of Special Scientific Interest by Natural England.

Less heartening news concerns the future of policing in the Royal Parks. We understand that the Mayor of London's Office is currently preparing a bid for funding which will replace existing policing arrangements. We have not been informed or consulted. This is very disappointing given that the requirements of both Richmond and Bushy (outer London parks) are very different from those of the central London parks. There is already a minimal police presence in Bushy, as there is little crime and disorder, and officers are regularly abstracted to duties in central London. Our priority is to ensure that park regulations are enforced; such as protection of wildlife and the fabric of the park, plus speeding cars. Both Richmond and Bushy Friends groups have long advocated the introduction of wardens/rangers with appropriate powers. We have responded jointly to the recent announcements and involved local MPs, sharing our thoughts on a preferable policing model. I know that many of you share our concerns and we will keep you up to date when we have feedback to our submissions. In the meantime you may wish to write to Vince Cable and Tony Arbour saying just how vital it is to retain the current police strength and to make it fit our needs better.

Further details of both these issues will be posted on our website [www.fbhp.org.uk](http://www.fbhp.org.uk) as they become available.

**Annie Murray**

## Friends' Summer Party



On 20 July more than 70 members gathered in the grounds of White Lodge in Bushy Park. We enjoyed a vintage-themed tea party, a quiz and a guided walk through the Stockyard meadows.

## Dates for your diary

**Thursday 23 October 2014**

### DIANA FOUNTAIN RESTORATION UPDATE

**Talk by Pieter Morpurgo**

St John Ambulance Hall, Park Road, Teddington, commencing at 8.00 pm

Refreshments will be available from 7.15 pm

**Saturday 8 November 2014**

### BULB PLANTING IN THE WOODLAND GARDENS

**Led by Chris Nickerson**

Meet 11.00 am

Pheasantry Welcome Centre, Bushy Park

*Some tools will be available but please bring gardening gloves and spade and/or trowel if possible.*

*The work should be fun and not too arduous.*

**Thursday 27 November 2014**

### LIFE ON TAGG'S ISLAND

**Talk by Dave Raven**

St John Ambulance Hall, Park Road, Teddington, commencing at 8.00 pm

Refreshments will be available from 7.15 pm

**Thursday 27 November 2014**

### TEDDINGTON LIGHTS UP

**Friday 28 November 2014**

### HAMPTON HILL PARADE

## Latest news

On 5 September it was announced that Natural England has approved the designation of Bushy and Home Parks as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), subject to consultation and confirmation. The notification documents and maps can be viewed at: [www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/special/sssi/notification.asp](http://www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/special/sssi/notification.asp)



## Opening of the King's Kitchen Garden



On 25 June the Countess of Wessex officially opened the new kitchen garden at Hampton Court. Originally laid out for William and Mary, it was used for 160 years to provide food for the palace. Queen Victoria moved all the kitchen gardens to Windsor, and the Hampton Court Garden was used as private plots until the 1930s.



Now, based on drawings, it has been restored to how it may have looked in the 18th century. There are over 200 different crop varieties, which will be used to supply the famous Tudor kitchen, and some of the crops are available for the public to buy. The crops are laid out in a way that makes it look like an elaborate flower garden. It is well worth a visit and it is free.

*Pieter Morpurgo*

## Cleaning the Diana Fountain



Five years on from the major restoration of the Diana Fountain, the structure is covered in scaffolding again. This is a planned event to keep the fountain and all the bronzes in good condition. All of it is showing five years' wear and tear. Restorers are inspecting the whole structure and will repair as necessary all of the stone work including the joints. The bronzes are to be cleaned and re-waxed, and the whole fountain will be steam cleaned with a process called "Doff" cleaning. The water jets will be cleaned so that they throw the water away from the stonework. Some of the gilding on Diana is being replaced, but all the work will be done in situ. Much of the deterioration seems to be the bird damage again. The spikes, which were originally on Diana's head, shoulder and arm to protect her from the birds, have dropped off. It is hoped that they can be replaced. The bird scarers hidden behind the sirens will need to be checked to make sure they are still working as the bird dropping damage is quite severe. The pictures show how necessary the cleaning is, and some regilding work being carried out on Diana.

*Pieter Morpurgo*

## Hampton Wick Festival



The Hampton Wick Association took advantage of the road closures for the CycleLondon event on 10 August to hold their festival. A group of Friends' volunteers joined the parade. More photographs can be seen at: [www.hamptonwick.org.uk](http://www.hamptonwick.org.uk)

## Hampton Hill Dog Show

Volunteers from the Friends were present at the show, held in Bushy Park on 5 July, to greet visitors, give details of our activities and sell our merchandise.

### Brian Short

It is with great sadness that we have heard of the death of Brian Short. Those of you who have attended the summer parties at the Stud Nursery and Bushy House will remember how he entertained us so charmingly with his music. He was a very kind man who worked tirelessly for charity and was also a very gifted musician. He will be missed.

*Annie Murray*



## News from Bushy Park

- There has been an important planning application for new facilities at the Pheasantry Yard. This will help improve the amenities for the teams of horticultural volunteers and contractor's staff who do a fantastic job in maintaining the Woodland Gardens and the wider park estate.
- Walking through the park you may notice that the stags have started shedding the 'velvet' that covers their antlers. This is a soft, blood-filled, bone-forming tissue and is very sensitive. When red deer antlers have stopped growing for the year the velvet is shed by rubbing against sturdy trees and posts.
- Chris Nickerson, head gardener of the Woodland Gardens, worked with The Royal Parks Foundation to organise a corporate volunteer day held on 28 August 2014. About 60 volunteers from Goldman Sachs spent the day clearing *Rhododendron ponticum* from areas within the Broom Clumps.
- The annual deer culls have been planned and take place in September and November. The culls are important for the proper management of the deer herds in ensuring the numbers remain at an appropriate level for the park to sustain. The Royal Parks thank the general public for their patience during this time when the Park opens later in the morning at 7.30 am.
- The Royal Parks staff and volunteers worked together again this year to implement control of the invasive pest Oak Processionary Moth. Specialist contractors have now removed almost 700 nests from a total of 240 trees, a significant increase from the 200 nests removed in 2013.



## News from Home Park

- New water plants have been inserted along the edges of the Long Water to improve water quality and provide a habitat for fish and insects to shelter in. The plants are pre-planted into coir matting and then held in place with hazel 'faggots'.



- The sand martin bank that was being constructed at the time of our last Home Park walk in April has been completed and almost immediately became populated. The bank is not accessible by the public so as to avoid disturbing the birds as much as possible. The bird populations are being monitored and we will report on any activity.



- World War I came to Home Park at the Hampton Court Flower Show in July. The 'Lest We Forget' garden, designed by Steve Mann, depicted the growing of vegetables in the trenches and how the troops used their equipment to help them supplement their rations.



## New to the Information Point



You will notice that there is a new picture on the wall at the Pheasantry Information Point. It is one of Sir Michael Tims' limited prints of flora and fauna in the park, which is a painstaking work of considerable skill and is very attractive. Copies are available directly from Michael at [michaeltims149@btinternet.com](mailto:michaeltims149@btinternet.com)

## From the Membership Secretary

We are almost at renewal time for 2015 and you are welcome to renew your membership before 1 January 2015 if you wish - a renewal form for 2015 is included in this newsletter and on the website for those of you who receive your newsletters electronically. Subscription fees are unchanged again this year; £6 for individuals (£4 for concessions) and £8 for couples/families (£5 for concessions). I will send out new membership cards to those members who already pay their subscriptions by Standing Order automatically before the end of the year; so if you have set up a Standing Order you need take no action and please ignore the renewal form. Please note, however, that due to personal commitments I may not be able to respond as quickly as normal to requests for renewals over the next few months; so please bear with me.

Best wishes and thank you for your continuing support to the Friends.

*Jean Smith*

## Events organiser required

The Friends take part in several local events throughout the year, such as Chestnut Sunday, Teddington and Hampton Hill Christmas Lights, and the Hampton Wick Festival. Our presence at these events is very important in raising the Friends' profile and attracting new members, and is also an excellent source of revenue from the sale of our merchandise. We are now seeking a volunteer with good communication and organisational skills to take on the arrangements for our presence at these annual events, including liaising with the various local groups concerned and organising our stand at each event. Everything is already set up; we have the equipment, merchandise, volunteers and all the contacts. If you think this would be of interest and would like to know more, please contact Rosemary MacColl, [rosemary.maccoll@fbhp.org.uk](mailto:rosemary.maccoll@fbhp.org.uk) or Annie Murray, [chairman@fbhp.org.uk](mailto:chairman@fbhp.org.uk) for an informal chat.

### Electronic newsletter

We would encourage as many Friends as possible to sign up to receive the quarterly newsletter electronically. Please email your request to [newsletter@fbhp.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@fbhp.org.uk)

If you have any comments about this newsletter or information you would like to share with us you can email [newsletter@fbhp.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@fbhp.org.uk)

## Advice from the parks

The stags and bucks now sport fully-grown antlers and from the end of September they will have started establishing territories for the rut. Recently the numbers of owners choosing to walk their dogs in Bushy Park has increased considerably. Deer can feel threatened by dogs, even over long distances and when the dog is not behaving in a provocative manner. This is particularly so during the rutting (September and October) and the birthing (May to July) seasons. We recommend walking your dog outside the Park at these times. If you choose, at your own risk, to walk your dog in the Park at these times, it is advisable to keep your dog on a lead and consider an alternative route, such as following the wall line of the Park, close to exit gates.

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