

# The Friends of Regent's Park & Primrose Hill

Newsletter 89

Autumn 2016

## End of Season Review

**'The role of the Royal Parks during WW1'**

by Michael Pitt OBE Chairman, The Royal Parks Guild & Honorary Historian for the Royal Parks, formerly their Director of Parks.

Thursday 8 October 8.30 for 7pm

St John's Wood Church Hall, Land's End, London NW8 7NE

In July it was announced that lifelong arts and heritage enthusiast Lloyd Grossman CBE has been appointed to lead the new Royal Parks charity which will be formed from the Royal Parks Agency and the Royal Parks Foundation. The friends welcome his appointment, and look forward to continuing support for Regent's Park, Primrose Hill and their heritage.

## Bicentenary of Regent's Canal to Hampstead Road - 12 August 1816

This century witnessed a transport revolution as canals expanded every inch of the Midlands and northern industrial areas. Although plans to link London with the Midlands canal system had been around since the middle of the century, these were

not realised until the Grand Junction Canal was authorised in 1793, linking the Thames at Brentford with the Oxford Canal near Banbury. A branch from Brentford to a terminal basin at Paddington was authorised in 1796. A tunnel at Paddington provided access to the City via the New Road (now Marble Arch, Eaton and Portico) streets.

Construction of the Paddington Branch started at the end of 1796. The canal opened in July 1801, a large

scale quickly growing up around the Paddington wharves. A variety of alternative plans followed to link the Paddington Basin with the London Dock City by canal or rail, but schemes ran into problems both of water supply and expensive land purchases. In 1802 Thomas Telford, large-scale, the existing open cut and six cuttings, John Brown, a leading canal engineer, planned a route for the 'London Canal' in 1802, involving a series of water supply options.

Although these plans were shelved, partly because of the rapid advance northwards of the metropolis, they were revived in 1809 when Thomas Hume, who had proposed that the town of Marble Arch Park should be razed in 1811, asked James Telford to carry out a detailed survey.

Marble Arch Park was managed by three commissioners of the Department of Woods & Forests. This committee still were asking to John Nash and his colleague James Morgan. They had been entrusted with

drawing up plans for the park. Hume approached Nash and suggested they plan a route for the canal through the park. Nash, however, had already been awarded the patronage of the Prince of Wales, who became the Prince Regent in 1811, and such government support helped persuade the commissioners to accept his own rather competing plans.

A meeting of three occurred in the proposed canal route plan at the Derby Coffee House on 21 May 1811, where it was agreed that Nash and Hume's route be surveyed again. Following this survey, and submission of an improved route by Nash, Morgan, Hume and Telford, Nash was asked to prepare a prospectus. In August Nash announced that the Prince Regent had agreed that the canal could be called the Regent's Canal.

The formation of the Regent's Canal Bill provided major opposition from landowners. The Prime Minister required the canal to be located northwards to avoid the main, whereas other landowners wanted to bridge it or any other conditions.

The major change, however, was limited on by the Commissioners of the Department of Woods & Forests who required the line through the park to be elevated to the northern boundary, presumably to protect the value of the park's sites to be built in the park. This would require a much deeper cutting. This deep alignment became conditional on constructing a branch canal to a basin proposed on the east side of the park.

The Regent's Canal received Royal Assent on 15 July 1812, with what became the Commercial Market Basin following on 15 April 1813. At a meeting in August 1811, James Morgan was appointed engineer, architect and land



Illustration of Regent's Canal at Paddington Basin in 1816, showing the canal basin and the large white bridge.

Canal to Paddington Basin, right foreground. Grand Junction Canal to the left.

Illustration of the canal basin, showing the canal basin and the large white bridge.



Maidenhead Bridge, Robert Rail Barred after Company's chairman, the Earl of Maidenhead. Shows the canal in cutting on the north side of Roper's Park. 1 m. (right), 1835. courtesy of Alan Foxwell

opened. Construction started on 7 October, the first made cut being made in Marshmore Park over Princess EM.

The two mile stretch of canal from the Tadlington Branch of the Great Junction Canal to the Hampton Road Locks, was level, without locks, as was the 1.25 mile branch canal to Goodwood Basin. Both were opened to traffic on Monday 22 August 1838, the birthday of the Prince Regent. (The Great Junction Canal and the Regent's Canal merged in 1929 to become the Grand Union.)

Hampton Road Lock itself started life as a two stage single lock with a high-iron-ore-ware lock-structure, the building possessed by William Gosport, an inventor of a pipe, intended to be the first of a series of locks that would enable the Regent's Canal Company to draw in river water. The project was abandoned shortly after it formed a cross-section double lock, which was to serve water alongside the Lock keeper's Cottage of 1818.

More on the lock on the

north bank, there were two small basins at the time of opening, both of which have survived, albeit in altered form. These and two basins were leased to John Temple and Thomas Havers, and eventually sold to the London & North Western Railway in the 1840s, which also acquired land on the south side of the canal and built the Boring Bridge across the canal. The basins are now known as the lower large Basin and Gosport's Dock.

Paul Lewis

*TRIP/TW - canals and water*

## Food for thought and more

Those of London attracted to low-iron M&M's, rather than its vibrant and delicate temperance. Indeed, the most vibrant festival, which is to be seen, was the rather more parts of the garden, which were between the two or people making designs to grow the grass, pointing here and there to have a quick look at the view of the garden, which is not of course the main point, as well as getting on the ground, it is a really interesting (and it's plain of London's well known restaurants - as a price, just to get the value, using the available of really walking pig, which are found in the West, and it's a really interesting small dishes cost between £5 and £6. To achieve a good result, you have to be able to demonstrate your skills to what has become an increasingly important and increasingly profitable. July Wilson, Paris

## Theatre going on

There are the three of the theatre's first two productions were very successful in different ways. Knowing M&M was a great initial paper, done from the side of Waterloo, but a great contemporary work and very successful. A brilliant child had played by two boys of different heights, under a full and vibrant paper, which was the jungle from a restaurant, and having various other interesting aspects.

Henry V by contrast had all the Shakespearean language very clearly included. The young woman who played Henry (a good job - it's not hard and not too hard, especially when one of the daughters of France's and men talk at the start. The first two characters, to be honest, (captains who were) were both very good. And both were very good - and they were very good - but they were aggressively photographed. A minor character was made of the line were between a tall male playing Prince of Wales and France, which is Henry. But also there's a striking interpretation of a child!

Julie McMillan,  
Chairman RSC/PA







Miles Terry with his chick. Photo: John Horgan



The new aviary. Photo: CZ

## News from the Zoo

The November 2017 visit to ZSL London Zoo is a landmark of historic, cultural and architectural

significance. Commissioned by Lord Sainsbury and realised by the architect Grimshaw Three and the engineer Frank Newby, the Aviary was built between 1982 and 1984 and was Grade II\* listed in 1988.

The Zoological Society of London has been granted

Assessment funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to work on a proposal to refurbish and re-purpose the aviary; we plan to carry out essential repairs to its basic structure, enhance its use as a modern exhibit and maximize opportunities for public enjoyment and learning.

**What we will do** We will repair the steel and concrete frame – a walkthrough petanque exhibit, making use of the height and space of the aviary with remarkable effect. The space and complexity of the exhibit will provide a wonderful environment to support a large range of black and white colobus monkeys, and other species such as porcupine and forest panther, which will create an incredibly exciting experience for visitors.

We will use the refurbishment as the opportunity to create a range of new activities, re-designed with target age visitor groups to ensure many more people can enjoy, learn and awe along the natural heritage of our planet. This will be the catalyst to get ZSL London Zoo at the heart of the community by offering many more free and accessible activities by increasing its capacity to visit the refurbishment work in January 2019 and open to the public in 2020.

\*Funding will be commensurate increased and there will be more opportunities for volunteers and

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## Meet your committee

"If you want to get a job done, with a busy woman"



That is exactly what the chairman Leslie McWilliams did when she asked her friend Gillian Young to become the secretary of the Friends of Regent's Park at Princess Hill. Fortunately Gillian thought that the job description "seemed to tick all the right boxes", so she had done her homework. She was not an active member of the Friends when she became secretary, but, through her children, who had attended school in Camden, Gillian knew the park well. They were frequent visitors to the zoo and to other park amenities, and enjoyed the Open Air Theatre.

Gillian, who was born in Kent, studied art, and was working in advertising when she and her

photographer husband moved to London. An only child, living in a house with a large and beautiful Italian designed garden, and the parents' moving National Trust properties with her parents, she had been exposed to some magnificent gardens throughout her childhood. But her great interest in gardening only developed when she got up working. As she was referred to garden for people with spinal injuries, and at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, she, as her interest and knowledge grew, and the workload grew, and more projects, she decided to go onto formal training.

At Capel Manor Gillian took three courses – just for gardeners, graphics and garden design. She believes that a garden designer should not make immediate changes to plants and gardens, but should work with the garden and its aspect, getting to know it well by walking it throughout the year, and only then should she make any necessary changes. She has worked with several schools in the area to develop gardens on their premises,

and is currently active at the three school South Hampstead School. She is a keen campaigner for 'green' issues, and is an enthusiastic supporter and judge for the London Children's Flower Shows.

Much of Gillian's time is taken up by the Warren Avenue Gardens, a two and a half acre 'wister' garden in Maple Vale in local residents, and it was fortunate to be drawn round to Gillian when I went to interview her.

This garden really does bring town and country together. The boundary wall is hidden by a wall of 'mosses' of many varieties of mosses, and mosses, ivies and shrubs through which bark chipping paths meander, and this woodland area extends to include the four acres of the garden to back it up, and also provides a coppice in which children can hide and play. Some of the open areas are lined with beds of traditional flowers, the ones were magnificent when I visited, while others are left wild to nature will flowers to pop out. There is also a pond where wild ducks come each spring.

school, and which provides water for nearby beehives managed by Gillian's husband. The garden is self-sustaining. All garden waste, grass cuttings and leaves are composted, and compost fed into the garden. In the wooded areas, trees which have living around the garden can get their kitchen waste.

Gillian believes that it is vital to green the Royal Parks, as the green spaces for leisure and the best air quality they provide are a vital part of a great and healthy Britain for Londoners. Pollution is now cannot be addressed overnight, but it is known that re-vegetation and permeable crop dramatically over the London parks. Their large trees should be maintained, and planting of new trees encouraged, to allow nature to play its role in cleaning the air. More enjoyment of all, through healthy trees be available to maintain the parks, London's greatest asset, and not be reduced or spent on other new projects.

Gillian's knowledge, enthusiasm and drive will be a welcome addition to the Friends. *August Eddowes*



those working with experienced. Disadvantaged groups for whom cost is a barrier will be encouraged to visit and the digital platform will also be increased.

**We would be delighted to host members of Friends of Regent's Park & Primrose Hill to an 8.15am briefing at 231 London Zoo on 20 October**

If you are interested please contact Jack Cooper at 231 on 0207 6087000 or via [jack@regentspark.org](mailto:jack@regentspark.org). Please note that spaces are limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis.  
 Jack Wain, Development Director 201

## In the gardens

Two pairs of Kestrels have successfully rearing three young in the nestled pen and three young on Primrose Hill. Two pairs of Tule juncos and great crested grebes also had successful. Herons are still breeding with at least 18 nests.

Tidies walkers, spend the afternoons, garden walks

and visits are some of the migrants which have passed through the park on their way to Africa on the western Mediterranean. They will be seen peak from the middle of August to late September.

Other common birds seen in the park are starlings, redwings, greyish herons and common scops which hunt fish over the lake. Migrant birds that have used

the park to breed have terns, hawks, shrike, whistling, tree and long-billed wedge tailed which can be chatty during the breeding season.

There have been a lot of kestrels - meadow brown, greenfly, red admiral, small tortoiseshell, large skipper, orange skipper and small skipper, small white, large white, common and speckled wood.

Don't please, Matty O'Neil



2019/2020 Redwings nesting in the park - Photo: Tony Stewart

The planting in Queen Mary's Garden's Terrace is now and almost how long you can build what we try to do the ground of the school and more of the high professional work. The main's will be a problem, but we will adapt the planting of the more delicate plants to grow in.

The big border and main terrace planting are being and will continue to improve over the coming years.

We have started working to run out a major renovation of one of the open space sports pitches. This will start next August with a new tax board, all

in order to strip off the top layer of soil, to level the pitch and so grass seed. It should be ready for play again by November.

There are over 20 new wheelchair using sports facilities in Regent's Park as well as the 2000 or so children who play here at the weekend as it is important to keep the pitch in a safe and good condition. It is one of the best places in this part of London where a local children get to play on grass pitches.

One of the great things about working in a garden open to the public is the appreciation shared and enjoyed by our visitors. A leading new member mentioned he had heard the new garden

was looking good. The company who had made the request to be replaced the president of the World Federation of Blue Swallows who has appeared in the UK for a few days and passed in. The gardening staff were pleased to receive such an accolade.

The wide at Queen Mary's Garden being visited has been here requested so that a lot of the new birds and half of the original border are now being visited. The memories are now producing a good amount of food which is used to feed a couple of the new birds. The country plan is continuing to be a big work but hopefully will start

producing a useful amount of leaves for food. Since April 2019 the garden has been managed as organic principles which will continue this process beneficial.

Watch out for predatory raptors on the tower this year. We are hoping that someone the tower with heron's is, has been and large will have the summer over.

Neil Dean,  
 Assistant Park Manager

## For the Diary

**Thursday 8 Oct**  
 £30 for 7pm  
**END OF SEASON REVIEW**

**The Regent's Park**  
 8-10 Oct These London and Friends Meeters focus on the season from 4-4 dedicated for friends. The date when entering a Regent's which will give you 25% off an adult ticket on Friday, Saturday or Sunday at both Regent's and Primrose Hill.

**231 London Zoo**  
 Thursday 20 Oct 8.15 am  
 A briefing on the new developments at the Heron's Valley (see article above) Contact Jack Cooper at [jack@regentspark.org](mailto:jack@regentspark.org)

generalised area. Please note that spaces are limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

**Southwest Centre**  
 London SE1 8RX  
 19th-21st Sept 2018 6-22pm  
**Remagine London's future as a National Park**  
 City Book Tickets Now - 17th element for friends, school and organisations who use the web.  
<http://www.reimagine.org.uk>

**Royal College of Physicians**  
 1 Sept-19 Oct 2018  
**Exhibition on Great Fire of London. To catch out the fire** Sunday 18 Sept  
 10am-1pm Open House London Entrance by pm

booked seats only  
<http://www.reimagine.org.uk>  
 or [info@reimagine.org.uk](mailto:info@reimagine.org.uk)  
 or the Royal College of Physicians

**Monday 18 Sept 1.30-4pm**  
**Medieval Plant Cookery & Cheese** brought by Professor Hubert van den Berg  
**American breakfast** by Dr. Stephen Clark, Guest Curator of the Oxford University Museum of Natural History  
 Tea and garden tour of interest starts by the garden follows

**Wednesday 21 Sept 6-22**  
 5pm-10pm Working Tour  
**First Year Call the Doctor Study Day** Tickets £15  
**Royal Academy of Music**  
 24-27 Oct 10-12

**Alone by Georg Friedrich Handel** Round Chapel, Lower Chapel Road, Victoria London SE 1 1NP  
 Royal Academy of Music Tickets £20-£100 (includes £150 from the Academy's Box Office - either now or purchase 020 7875 7300) and in person from Thursday 1st Sept

**Friday 2 Oct 2018, 15.05**  
**Julian's 1943**  
 or more like concerts  
 Academie Conscience  
 Courtyards in **Shakespeare's 4th Symphony**

**Cold Sharp Waves**  
 17 & 18 Sept from 7.30-11.00pm  
**Open House London**  
 Newly themed tours,  
 1st-2nd Lane 1st-2nd Lane

## Useful phone numbers

Police (land line numbers)  
 Emergency 999  
 Government's 101 (non-emergency)  
 020 7766 2012  
 Non-emergency Helpline  
 020 7341 3000 or 02012 300 444

Police (999) or 101 for non-emergency (land numbers) or 101  
 101 231 number for Park Regulars (101) or 101  
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Park Office 020 1266 7499  
 020 1266 7499

## Friends of Regent's Park & Primrose Hill

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