

Snowdrops and Daffodils



The Friends are planning a big planting effort for next spring. 10,000 or more snowdrops and daffodils.

If you would like to participate please contact Kirsten Ng klobennett@gmail.com

Drinking Fountains



The friends are investigating whether it would be possible to support a drive for more drinking fountains in the Park.

Sports teams are keen to provide more water for players and dog walkers would appreciate it. More news as the investigation progresses.

(This is a drinking fountain at St Paul's Cathedral)

Ivor Kamlish 1931-2019

Ivor was the unassuming, humorous, friendly, gifted man who laid out the Friends of Regent's Park and Primrose Hill newsletter for at least 25 years.

Aged 88 when he died before Christmas, he lived with his wife Marian in Park Village East and was one of the



Photo © Malcolm Kafetz

original members who set up the Friends to check the Zoo's ambitions for increasing its territory in the park.

Ivor provided the practical inspiration which made the newsletter look and feel so professional.

He chose the layout

and arranged photographs and copy to fit the four pages and, most important, appeal to the eye.

He put up with the inevitable last-minute changes and additions and really was a delight to work with.

Ivor's father was of Polish origin but grew up in Britain and Ivor was born in Stepney. He spent most of the war in Leeds and studied at Leeds Grammar, the city's college of art and then London's Central School of Arts and Crafts in Holborn.

National service, which had been deferred, saw him join the Royal Army Service Corps where his talents were employed in the Aldershot museum. Once back in civilian life, he worked in the west country for Carter's Ceramic Tile manufacturers, a company which in due course moved him to London and suggested he became freelance, leading to the creation of Ivor Kamlish Associates.

Ivor and Marian were both very much involved in the local community fighting the proposal for a motorway box in Camden, then the possible expansion of the Zoo, which led him to become a founding member of the Friends of Regent's Park.

His design output for this organisation and the voluntary sector generally, continued up until his final illness.

Ivor particularly loved the art exhibitions for *Frieze and Frieze Masters* held in the park and even last autumn he visited daily. He was also a member of *Drawing London*, a convivial group of artists which meets monthly in different locations, drawing and painting outdoors.



Wherever they met, Ivor would pull out his beloved iPad

and make remarkable sketches of the metropolitan scene.

Judy Hillman, Patron

For the Diary

AGM - Wednesday 18 March 18:30 at St John's Wood Church Hall, Lord's Roundabout, St John's Wood, London NW8 7NE.

Visiting and Resident Birds in Park - Saturday 18 April A great walk with Tony Duckett to investigate birds in the Park. Bring your binoculars. Meet 8 a.m. near Bandstand but you must book with Anne-Marie Craven by email acraven9@icloud.com or by mobile 07711 433468

Full day courses organised by the **Field Studies Council**.

4 April: Introduction to Plant Morphology

25 April: How to use Plant identification Keys

2 May: Urban Wild Plants

16 May: Common British and Irish Plant Families

30 May: Tree Identification - Summer

All courses 09.30 to 16.00 cost between £40 and £50 per person.

Book on www.field-studies-council.org/shop/courses

Cancer Research UK Race for Life 2020 - Saturday 16 May 2020 at 10:00 Open to all. Fee £10

Book raceforlife.cancerresearchuk.org/find-an-event

Open Air Theatre

101 Dalmatians - 16 May to 21 June

Romeo and Juliet - 27 June to 25 July

Carousel - 31 July to 19 September

Dragons and Mythical Beasts - 11 August to 6 Sept.

Book at openairtheatre.com/whats-on?by-productions

Members of Friends of Regent's Park and Primrose Hill are entitled to a discount for the season: £35 on Price Band A-C tickets, bookable in person at the Box Office.

Available to purchase from two weeks prior to the performance. Excludes Saturday evenings and Dragons and Mythical Beasts.

Max of two tickets per transaction.

Friends of Regent's Park & Primrose Hill

Park Office: 020 7486 7995 (Mon-Fri 9am-4pm)

Chair: Mark Elliott

Treasurer: Richard Portnoy

Secretary: Adrian Jackson

Newsletter: Anne-Marie Craven



Newsletter - Spring 2020

Issue 103

From the Chair

The daffodils are out so spring is just around the corner - the perfect time to walk in your park.

I am preparing for my first AGM as Chairman, and have decided we should focus on two themes - Traffic and Volunteering.

- Mat Bonomi who is the head of Transport and Access at the Royal Parks (TRP) will speak about their plans to reduce through traffic in the park.
- Bryony Cross, Volunteer and Programme Manager at TRP will tell us about the incredibly successful volunteer programme that was started in 2018, and now has over 800 volunteers working in the Royal Parks including The Regent's Park.

Whilst we, as Friends, may not be able to do much to progress TRP's traffic reduction plans, there is a lot we can do about volunteering. We have ambitious plans to organise volunteers in Regent's Park and Primrose Hill, partly inspired by the success of volunteer programmes in other Royal Parks. Richmond Park for example has 230 volunteers organised by their Friends.

Volunteering is fun and rewarding. It gets you out into the Park regularly and is an opportunity to meet new friends and learn new skills. And, of course, you get the satisfaction of being part of something worthwhile.

Our volunteering programme will offer opportunities in five different activities in the Park - Gardening, Enter-

tainment, Walks & Talks, Sport and, hopefully in the near future, manning our Kiosk/information booth. In this Newsletter you will find articles outlining opportunities in each of these areas. Do look too at our website www.friendsofregentspark.org.uk or at TRP's website www.royalparks.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer-with-us

I do hope you will attend the AGM at St John's Church - a cricket ball's throw from Lord's cricket ground. We shall be thanking our current committee members, some of whom are retiring, and electing new members including Jonathan Harris. Jonathan lives in Primrose Hill, and was a professional rugby player for eight years, so will be particularly involved with matters concerning Primrose Hill, and opportunities to offer a chance to disadvantaged children to take part in sporting activities.

As I write this newsletter I remember the late Ivor Kamlish, whose skillful artistry helped produce so many wonderful newsletters. He is greatly missed. A celebration of Ivor's life, prepared by Judy Hillman and his wife Marian, is included in this newsletter. Thanks to our volunteer IT advisor, Alan Martin, for taking over his role.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at our AGM on Wednesday 18 March, 6.30 for 7.00 p.m. at the St John's Wood Church. See you there.

So it just remains for me to end the way I began - enjoy your spring walks in our park.

Mark Elliott

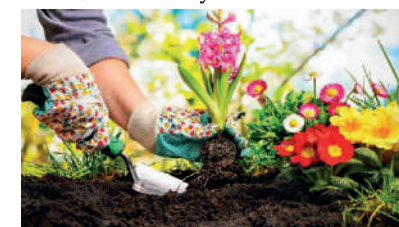
How to Volunteer

Gardening and Wildlife

If you enjoy gardening and would like to meet some like-minded friends, then volunteer to help in the Park.

The easiest way to do this is to go to www.royalparks.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer-with-us and sign on through their registration process.

Currently there are TRP volunteer gardeners working in the Queen Mary's Gardens, the wildlife garden (by the



tennis courts) and other areas as decided by the Park management.

Also, there are over 100 volunteers who work on the spring and autumn hedgehog surveys and others who

help with butterfly surveys and invertebrates (snails, bees etc.).

Bandstand - The summer bandstand concerts are on every Sunday and Bank Holiday Monday from 21 June to 6 September. There will be two bands each day (12:30 to 14:30 and 15:30 to 17:30).

Two supervisors are required for each performance and need to arrive an hour before it starts. Duties involve supervising the arrival and departure of each band, helping

set up the bandstand (banners, PA system etc.), patrolling the changing rooms and toilet at the Hut (50 yards from the bandstand), counting the audience, handing out friends leaflets and liaising with the Park duty officer in the event of problems. It's fun, the music is great, and you get to meet some nice people.

Contact Richard Portnoy: richardportnoy@gmail.com

Opera and Shakespeare - Visiting companies Opera Brava and The Lord Chamberlain's Men perform in the open air as follows:

Tosca on 24 June and **Barber of Seville** on 25 June on the Nannies lawn (next to the Open-Air Theatre).

Volunteers to arrive at 17:30 and stay until about 22:00.

Macbeth on 15 August, St John's Lodge Garden. Volunteers to arrive at 15:30 and stay until about 20:00.

Three volunteers are required for each performance to check tickets and help with the front of house.

Each volunteer will receive two free tickets. For more information and tickets go to www.ticketsource.co.uk/regents-park-events

To volunteer email: edward.kellow@btinternet.com

Walks - Anne-Marie Craven is planning some walks for members of the Friends.

If you could lead a walk in any part of the park or surrounding areas, or if you would like to join specific walks please email: acraven9@icloud.com

Sport - The Hub and Regent's Park Sports pitches are some of the busiest outdoor public facilities in England. 10,000 bookings are made every year for football, rugby, lacrosse, cricket, softball, rounders and athletics. All bookings are managed from the Hub. The Park operates a seasonal sports programme with over 250 junior football teams playing on Saturdays throughout the winter sports season in The Regent's Park Youth League. Many junior clubs, schools and universities view the Park as their home pitch. In addition, regular exercise classes are organised from 10:00 to 11:00 **Pilates**: Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. **Yoga**: Wednesday and **Tone & Stretch**: Friday. Weekly learning disability classes are also organised along with weekly walking football sessions in partnership with Chelsea FC for the over 50s. Local children without the means would often like to play in the junior clubs based in the Park but lack equipment

The Movement Strategy and the Royal Parks

An Interview with Matt Bonomi

What is the Movement Strategy and where are you in the implementation process?

We know London is facing a range of urban challenges including increased congestion, diminishing air quality and lack of access to high quality green space.

We also know that London's population is projected to grow to 10 million residents by 2035, and without significant change, these challenges will increase. As this population growth continues to accelerate, and more Londoners use our parks to seek refuge from the busy city, we need to be prepared, informed and willing to play an important role in ensuring that London continues to be one of the world's greatest cities in which to live.

As our parks are commonly referred to as *London's premier green spaces*, we recognise the significant role we play in supporting this city's health, happiness and reputation. The Movement Strategy will be a strategic document that will shape how visitors to our parks access, explore and experience them.

The strategy will seek to guide park decisions and policies and provide a catalyst for some bold and exciting projects. The strategy will be supported by an action plan setting out these projects detailing when, where and why.

What do you expect to achieve specifically in Regent's Park?

The Regent's Park is a very special park. Historically known as the *Jewel in the crown*, it combines large open spaces with tree-lined pathways, formal gardens, and four children's playgrounds. It provides opportunities for both formal and informal sports and includes central London's largest outdoor sports area.

With visitors coming to the park for different reasons, one of our key objectives is to reduce the volume of traffic using the park roads as a short cut on their daily commute. This will ensure a safer environment for all visitors, better air quality and a more enjoyable visitor experience.

Given the political challenge of restricting through traffic as part of CS11, how will you make progress this time?

The key to achieving this challenging but important change is to ensure we work in close collaboration with our key partners to respond in a meaningful way to the

and funds. The clubs support some subsidised places, but The Friends would also like to help some of them by providing funds and leadership, possibly, leading to a youth league or entering teams into established activities based at the Hub.

If you are interested in helping, please email Jonathan Harris: jbrandlingharris@gmail.com

Kiosk - Working with the park management, the Friends are developing a project to install a visitor information centre in the form of a kiosk at the Clarence Gate entrance (Baker Street). Once installed we will be looking for volunteers to staff the kiosk throughout the summer and on some days in the winter. This is similar to the kiosk at Hyde Park and visitor centres at Richmond and Bushy Parks, and soon, at Greenwich.

If you have any suggestions or questions about this, please contact Mark Elliott at chair@friendsofregentspark.org.

concerns of park visitors. Our key partners are the Crown Estate Paving Commission, Transport for London and the neighbouring boroughs of Westminster and Camden. Developing solutions together that seek to solve not only our shared issues but also realise shared benefits, is the key to grappling with the political challenge.

How will you define success?

Whilst we are yet to determine a detailed metric for success, which will be determined on a project by project basis, the strategic principles set out to achieve the following aims:



1. Protect the parks' special qualities
2. Enhance the visitor experience
3. Make walking in the parks as safe and enjoyable as possible
4. Reduce the volume of private motor vehicles commuting through the park

What will The Royal Parks do to encourage more sustainable modes of transport?

Whilst we acknowledge that travelling to the park by car does sometimes make sense, we will continue to support and encourage alternative modes of transport where possible. This comes down to having the right facilities in the right places to make it easier for people, including:

- Always putting accessibility and equality at the front of all decision-making
- Safe and convenient road crossings
- Improved signage and information (digital and physical)
- Adequate cycle parking

As stakeholders for Regent's Park, how can the Friends of Regent's Park and Primrose Hill help you with your movement objectives?

As we develop each individual project, we will seek input and collaboration from our park stakeholders, including Friends groups. This will be a further opportunity to help shape the outcomes of our Movement Strategy, and to ensure we always remain true to our principles of protecting these unique green spaces and supporting the health and happiness of park visitors.

Adrian Jackson in conversation with Matt Bonomi

Statues at St John's Lodge Courtyard

Four listed cherubim dating from the 1890s have been removed from the rusticated piers in the courtyard of the St John's Lodge Courtyard.

The decision to allow the application to remove the statues for a period of ten years was taken by Westminster Council in July 2018.



According to plans that are available to view online at Westminster.gov.uk/planning, the cherubim are to be replaced with urns.

The four cherubim were part of a group of six that until January 2020 bookended the sunken lawn in the St John's Lodge garden.

Part of the garden belongs to the lodge, and the other part is managed by the Royal Parks, and open to the public all year round. Arguably the cherubim had an important role in creating the illusion of a single garden adjoining the house.

St John's Lodge was one of the first houses to be built in the park. However, the garden, or the 'secret garden' as it is known to some, was designed in 1892 for the then leaseholder, third Marquess of Bute, by architect Robert

Weir Schultz as a garden for reflection.

Schultz also worked extensively on the lodge itself, designing a chapel and a library for the Marquess, who was a devout Roman Catholic. Both the chapel and the library were destroyed when the lodge was occupied by the Institute of Archaeology.

Visitors to the St John's Lodge garden can still enjoy the two remaining cherubim that stand on identical listed pillars near the steps by the basin with the statue of Hy-las. Like the removed statues, these cherubim hold armorial shields with a Scottish theme, possibly connected with the third Marquess of Bute.

According to the Royal Parks website, three of the cherubim were designed by Sir William Goscombe John in 1894, one by Harold Youngman in 1938 and the remaining two are undated. However, in an essay written in 1981, the well-known architectural critic, Gavin Hastings suggests that the cherubim by the steps were possibly modelled on the ones already standing in the courtyard of the house.

The four cherubim that have been removed were visible to the public from the 'secret garden'. According to documents on the Westminster planning pages, the cherubim are to be relocated in a part of the St John's Lodge private garden that is not accessible to the public.

For more information about the work Schulz carried out on the lodge and its garden for the third marquess of Bute, consult Gavin Stamp's 1981 essay, 'Robert Weir Schultz, Architect, and his work for the Marquesses of Bute'. *Ed Kellow*

In the Gardens

Stormy Weather - Storm Ciara was given an amber warning from the Met Office for London and south east England with potential danger to life and limb from flying debris. Consequently all of The Royal Parks were closed to the public on Sunday 9 February. Storm Dennis presented a lower level of threat and so plans were made to close if the situation worsened, which fortunately it did not.

Storm Ciara brought down two trees and caused significant damage to another while storm Dennis felled a small hawthorn on Primrose Hill. Both storms brought extraordinarily high levels of rainfall as well as high winds.

Gloucester Gate Playground



It's been one of the wettest winters in recent years, but Gloucester Gate Playground in

The Regent's Park is beginning to take shape.

Weather permitting, this natural and inclusive playground will open in May,

and there will be a play programme to accompany it to encourage more children to play outdoors and connect with nature.

Using natural materials such as wood, rope, bark and willow and planting hedges trees and flowers, the new playground will blend seamlessly into the historic landscape of The Regent's Park.

Accessibility has been at the forefront of the design, and a wheelchair accessible roundabout and bridge will feature, as well as a wide slide and raised tables for water and sand play.

Our New Recruit

Following Phil Edward's promotion to Park Manager at Bushy Park (see previous Newsletter) The Royal Parks are pleased to have recruited Dan Steel from Windsor Great Park to follow on from Phil.

Dan starts at Regent's Park and Primrose Hill on the 30 March.

New Year's Eve

The usual uninvited gathering took place again on Primrose Hill this year to watch the fireworks on the Thames.

The display was much lower than last year so barely visible, but the crowd remained in very good spirits throughout and the evening without incident.

Pup Aid

This event which ran for a number of years on Primrose Hill was not only a free and friendly community dog event, it had a mission: to change the law to ban third party puppy/kitten dealers.

That mission has been achieved through what has become known as 'Lucy's Law'. The main force behind the campaign is Marc Abraham and he has recently published a book about it.

He tells me there's a chapter about Pup Aid in the book which, he says "was the cornerstone of the whole campaign!"

Primrose Hill Café

At the time of writing the café is opening as follows:

Monday to Friday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

However, as the weather improves and the days get longer, so will the opening hours which will be posted in the café and on The Royal Parks' website.

Nick Biddle, Park Manager