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FROM THE CHAIR

Mark Elliott, Chairman

Summer is coming – at least we hope it is, as May has not been a good start! Summer means long lazy days in our park enjoying the beautiful surroundings, having picnics, enjoying the theatre and music. I have always maintained that The Regent's Park is the 'entertainment' park as well as the 'sports' park. This year the Friends is organising a wide variety of events for you.

Our Music Festival will take place in two locations, as you can see from the poster. On Saturdays you will be able to enjoy our 'Jazz on the Broadwalk' series featuring student bands from the music colleges as well as professional musicians. The season will end with a glorious Mexican fiesta featuring a Mariachi band and dancers who hope you will join them! On the main bandstand, on Sundays, we begin the season with the return of the National Youth Jazz Ensemble, and we will end with the amazing The Jive Aces and the Duke Street Big Band – not to be missed.

As well as the music organised by the Friends we also have our wonderful Open Air Theatre (17 June to 9 September) and performances in the Royal Academy of Music (June/July and September). Sadly, this year COVID restrictions caused the cancellation of the touring Opera and Shakespeare groups, but we will welcome them back to the park in 2022.

In addition, the Friends will be organising a series of events that will include walks and talks to learn about gardens, sculpture, trees, canals and birds, as well as a photography competition to find 'a new view of the Park'. See 'For the diary' for details.

FREE!
SUMMER MUSIC IN THE PARK
REGENT'S PARK BANDSTAND & THE BROADWALK

	BANDSTAND 12.30 to 14.30	JAZZ ON THE BROADWALK 15.30 to 17.30	JAZZ ON THE BROADWALK 14.00 to 16.00
JUNE	SATURDAY 26TH SUNDAY 27TH	NYJO Jazz ensemble London Metropolitan Brass	Robin Porter Trio
	SATURDAY 3RD SUNDAY 4TH	Rock Choir Here to Havana	The Flaming Alligators
	SATURDAY 10TH SUNDAY 11TH	Harrow Concert Band Barnes Concert Band	Mared
	SATURDAY 17TH SUNDAY 18TH	Bandstand Memorial Day Buglers at 11.30 Central Band of the British Legion	Joshua Walker-Martin Quartet
	SATURDAY 24TH SUNDAY 25TH SATURDAY 31ST	Chiltern Hills Brass Band Galaxy Big Band	Home Brass Cityscape
JULY	SUNDAY 1ST SATURDAY 7TH SUNDAY 8TH	Belvedere Concert Band Greenwich Concert Band	Palumbo Trio
	SATURDAY 14TH SUNDAY 15TH SATURDAY 21ST	Harry Greene Quintet Fulham Brass Band	Danger Goat
AUGUST	SUNDAY 1ST SATURDAY 7TH SUNDAY 8TH	Capital Connection Lewisham Concert Band	Take Twenty
	SATURDAY 22ND SATURDAY 28TH SUNDAY 29TH MONDAY 30TH	Take Twenty Kix Jazz Orchestra	Suzanne Noble Jazz Quartet
	SATURDAY 4TH SUNDAY 5TH	Mardi Gras Jazz Band London City Brass Robin Porter Quartet	Melos Quartet
SEPTEMBER	SATURDAY 11TH SUNDAY 12TH SUNDAY 19TH	Rory Ingham Jazz Quintet Putney & Wimbledon Brass Band	Mexican Fiesta
		Kew Wind Orchestra Capital Chorus	
		Jive Aces Duke Street Big Band	

Performances may be cancelled or changed without notice

Scan the QR code to join the Friends

With thanks to our Sponsors and Supporters

You are members of the Friends and **WE WANT YOU**. To manage the 40 concerts we need volunteers to help supervise each event. It is not difficult and is an enjoyable task. Please contact Richard Portnoy at membership@friendsofregentspark.org to offer your time. We also need volunteers to staff our gazebo/visitor centre that will be in the park on Saturdays and Sundays from 19 June to 19 September. For this we need people who know The Regent's Park and Primrose Hill. Please send the dates you could help to me at chair@friendsofregentspark.org. Please do not disappoint us. Thank you.

In pre-COVID days, the Friends AGM was held in April with an end of season review in October. We had to cancel our 2020 AGM and delay it to October when it was held via Zoom. To keep you informed,

this year we are organising a mid-year review on 23 June. After much debate we have decided this should be a Zoom Webinar, as many people may still be hesitant to attend a live event in a church hall. From The Royal Parks, the speakers at this meeting will be Andrew Scattergood, Chief Executive, and Alister Hayes, Head of Programmes, Volunteering and Conservation. It will be followed by a Q&A session during which you would be encouraged to take part.

I receive many e-mails from you asking questions about the Friends and the parks. I think I have answered them all, but apologies if I missed yours. I hope you enjoy being a member of the Friends. Your suggestions about how we can improve it are most welcome.

Enjoy summer in the park! ♦

MEET THE COMMITTEE - MIKE BAKER

Margaret Elliott

A couple of years ago Mike Baker responded to an appeal by Richard Portnoy for help with the Friends of Regent's Park and Primrose Hill membership cards. He was then invited to join the Friend's committee to set up the new website and is now involved not just with the website and membership cards, but also manages social media and marketing.

Mike was born in East Anglia but was educated and lived in Scotland until he went to Cambridge to study languages. Teaching English as a foreign language took him to Italy, Germany, Japan and Saudi Arabia before he married his Lebanese wife and moved to NW6. His daughter persuaded him to buy a dog, and his association with The Regent's Park and Primrose Hill began when he started walking the dog on Primrose Hill. He now regularly walks his own two dogs there and in The Regent's Park.

Like everyone, Mike appreciates the beauty of The Regent's Park and Primrose Hill. He is particularly fond of the trees and is concerned that so many have been felled in the interest of public safety. A natural optimist, Mike believes that our large open spaces are safe as they are vital for the mental health of the general population, connecting people in the city with nature.

Mike has two major concerns in The Regent's park. The first is the lack of enforcement of the no cycling rules, and the danger this poses to pedestrians and dogs alike. He would like to see more people fined to discourage others from breaking the law. The recent popularity of electric scooters has seriously exacerbated the dangers. His other concern is the amount of litter dropped by visitors, particularly at the north end of the Broadwalk, and during his walks he will often pick up some of this himself •



CAROLYN WILSON AND HER BEASTIES

Anne-Marie Craven

The allotment garden is lucky to have a new dedicated manager and gardener in Carolyn who took on the 'task' for Capital Growth last November. She needs to divide her time with the same role in Kensington Gardens. Thankfully her volunteers have been allowed to return to their duties since the middle of March and the results will be very evident when this newsletter is published. I met two of them in early April: Monia and Terry.

Carolyn's previous role was running the Community Harvest project, Grown in Peckham, teaching people about permaculture, organic food-growing and composting – her great 'passion'. You may remember that her predecessor, Elena, was a 'worm' lady. Carolyn also hopes to encourage

more 'beasties' into the garden along with the means to cope with drought which has become an ever-increasing issue over the last few years. Fortunately Mission: Invertebrate is providing some of the necessary funding.

Not surprisingly Carolyn is a keen cook and was involved in running a wholefoods co-op for more than ten years. She also spent 15 years as a cycling instructor, which is just as well as she has a 35-minute cycle ride to The Royal Parks.

Let us hope that with the end of lockdown she will be able to resume the twilight sessions in the allotment garden as well as the many lessons for young people to learn about the plants and how they grow •



Carolyn (centre) with volunteers Monia and Terry

ZOO NEWS

James Wren, Director of Fundraising and Engagement

Firstly, everyone at ZSL London Zoo is so pleased that we've re-opened and we want to once again thank all our neighbours and local members for their support during what has been such a difficult year for us all.

We've been so heartened to see so many of your happy faces at the Zoo since lockdown ended in mid-April, and we are now fully focused on the future, with lots of exciting things in store for everyone over the summer.

We recently celebrated opening our newest indoor exhibit, 'Tiny Giants: From Coral Minibeasts to Coral Reefs', a celebration of the smallest but mightiest animals on Earth, which had to be postponed as a result of the pandemic. Designed to shine a spotlight on the planet's smallest superheroes – from underwater corals and the aquatic wildlife they support, to industrious leafcutter ants, spiders and beetles – the exhibit celebrates the species we quite literally couldn't live without, encouraging visitors to make changes in their own lives to reverse the decline in these species' numbers. The exhibit includes a stunning seven-metre-long reef aquarium tank, filled with corals rescued from the illegal wildlife trade by London Zoo's experts – the living ecosystem will grow and change over time, so it will be different every time you visit.

Although overseas travel might still be somewhat limited, this summer at London

Zoo you'll be able to travel the world without leaving the city. Colourful travel-inspired activities and themed food and drink throughout the Zoo will create a sense of journeying to far-flung locations: head to Indonesia to come face to face with Sumatran tigers in Tiger Territory; India to meet our newest arrival, Arya the Asiatic lioness, in Land of the Lions; or enjoy the lush humidity of a South American rainforest to meet our sloths in Rainforest Life.

Brand new this summer, our three giant Galapagos tortoises Dolly, Polly and Priscilla will be moving into their new Giants of the Galapagos home, so you can even visit the Galapagos islands on your staycation 'travels'.

Especially for the grown-ups, every Thursday and Friday evening in July, London Zoo will be extending opening hours until 10pm with a special 'Twilight Ticket', offering the chance for adults to explore the Zoo without the kids. With drop-in arts and crafts activities, global food market and a South American-themed chillout zone on our lawns, we look forward to offering a fun, new and unique way to experience the Zoo in the evenings.

I hope to see you all in the Zoo very soon •



ZSL aquarist Jeremy Simpson meets clownfish Nemo

WILLIAM ROBINSON AND THE ART OF CALLING A SPADE A SPADE

Edward Kellow

From Dublin Botanic Garden to the heart of London Society

William Robinson didn't leave much of a footprint on The Regent's Park, but The Regent's Park left its mark on him. Robinson's life-long aversion to carpet bedding and Italian style gardens can be traced to his stint from 1861–1866 at the exclusive Royal Botanic Society (RBS), The Regent's Park. Working there must have been a culture shock. Coming from the Botanic Garden at Glasnevin, how did Robinson cope in an environment where flower shows and partying were at least as important as botanical research? A photograph of Robinson aged 26, shows a dapper young man in a well-cut suit, complete with watch chain. Bearded, his dark hair swept back from his high forehead, and with a pensive expression, Robinson is every inch a hipster. Perhaps he went down better with the posh RBS crowd than one might imagine.



Royal Botanic Society garden plan c. 1886, courtesy Wellcome Collection

Robinson at the RBS: Learning from Doing

In 1863, Robinson made the first of many educational gardening trips that fed his future articles and books. He saw alpines at Hull, ferns and orchids at the famous Backhouse nursery in York, and gladioli at Manchester Botanic garden. He approved of the 'tasteful' ribbon borders designed by David Thomson at Dalkeith House near Edinburgh. We know this from Robinson's regular column in *The Gardeners' Chronicle*, (today's *Gardeners' World Magazine*, perhaps?). Robinson's career as a gardening writer began while he was at the RBS.

'There is no beauty among bedding plants at all comparable with that of irises, lilies, delphiniums, evening primroses, peonies, carnations, narcissi, and a host of others'

Robinson was an autodidact on a mission to learn as much as he could about plants and how to grow them. 'Becoming a gardener,' he wrote, 'is a life study'. This may explain why he had no time for gardening experts who offered 'cookie cutter' solutions. These 'arbiters of taste', as he referred to them, didn't have his experience, and were 'degrading the true garden art to the level of the pastry cook's notions of design'. He had a point.

'There is a Great Deal too much Pruning of Roses'

Robinson disliked pruning or clipping of any kind, including topiary. Pity the poor gardener who attracted his attention in Hyde Park in November 1891. '...I saw a man clipping hollies at the 'Row' end of the Serpentine, and, asking him why it was done, learnt that it was to 'keep them in shape', though, to do him justice, he added that he thought it would be better to let them alone. Men who trim with shears or knife so handsome a tree as the holly are dead to beauty of form'. Influenced by Ruskin, Robinson was an artist who delighted in the natural beauty of trees and plants. His writing is driven by curiosity and rooted in observation. He bristles at fellow gardening writers who, in his opinion, were pushing arbitrary design fads without any understanding of plants. If one of the principles of good design is 'form follows function', then Robinson's 'good gardening' principle might be something like 'the right plant in the right place'.

The Pugnacious Paradox

Robinson's most recent biographer, Richard Bisgrove, describes Robinson as a pugnacious paradox. Certainly, Robinson wasn't afraid to call a spade a spade. The gardens at Crystal Palace, Sydenham were 'costly rubbish'. The now lost Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) garden in South Kensington designed by William Nesfield (the same Nesfield who designed Avenue Gardens in The Regent's Park) contained 'ridiculous broken brick and marble flower beds'. What Robinson was objecting to is the use of coloured bricks and stones to create shapes in the ground.

And Robinson was a paradox:

- He worked for himself, but as the numerous editions of his book, *The English Flower Garden* show, he collaborated with emerging gardeners such as Gertrude Jekyll, and artists including Alfred Parsons.
- He encouraged readers to write and share their gardening experiences. If the Victorians

had invented the internet, Robinson may have had a very active Facebook presence.

- He dismissed the terraces at Crystal Palace as 'railway embankment gardening' but he built a terrace in his garden at Gravetye Manor

- When asked about garden design he said, 'Don't worry about a plan, just get on with it.'

Robinson's Legacy

In some ways Robinson was a gardening Don Quixote, tilting his pen in vain at carpet bedders, architects, and landscape designers. He can also sound like Muriel Spark's sharp-tongued schoolteacher, Jean Brodie. Striking an uncharacteristically generous note towards fans of carpet bedding, he writes, 'Let those who like bedding flowers enjoy them'.

Today many of the gardening approaches that Robinson promoted are part of environmentally friendly and sustainable gardening practice: growing plants in places where they can look after themselves, no dig gardens, less pruning, less hedge and grass cutting, bog gardens, and meadow lawns. I think Robinson also deserves credit for bringing together some of the leading Victorian and Edwardian gardeners and artists to create some of the most popular gardening periodicals and books of the 19th and early 20th centuries. I admire Robinson for his energy and drive, for his curiosity and his inventiveness. But most of all I admire his hunger not only for learning about plants, but his personal crusade to share his learning with others. Despite all his achievements, too numerous to describe in this short article, Robinson lost the battle against carpet bedding. In The Regent's Park, at least.

Recommended Reading

Aurélien Wasilewski, 'Modern gardeners' with Rustic Ideals: Fruitful Congruencies between John Ruskin and William Robinson, <https://journals.openedition.org/cve/7346?lang=en>

THE SECRET OF THE ST JOHN'S LODGE GARDENS

Our first summer event which was fully booked took place on Saturday 6 June and was a tour led by Edward Kellow a Royal Parks garden volunteer. It covered the development of the St John's Lodge Garden, from a private garden for reflection to an increasingly well known 'secret garden', and a truly outstanding example of an arts and crafts garden.

As one person commented "truly excellent - Edward was a first class 'guide' and kept us all enthralled and the garden in that glorious sunshine looked beautiful." We are hoping to repeat in September - but do look out for other upcoming events on our website!

ADRIAN BERG – THE PARK AS INSPIRATION FOR AN ARTIST

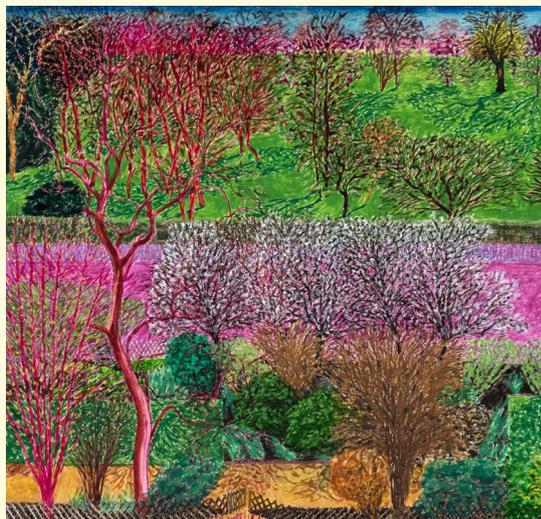
Anne-Marie Craven

The artist, Adrian Berg (1929–2011) lived in Gloucester Gate for 24 years from 1961–1985 and painting landscape was one of his great passions. A beautiful book illustrating much of his work has just been published by Lund Humphries.

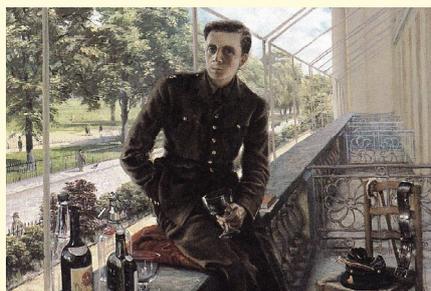


Adrian Berg, Gloucester Gate, Regent's Park, Date unknown. Adrian Berg Estate. Reproduced in the monograph, Adrian Berg, by Marco Livingstone, Lund Humphries 2021.

Written by Marco Livingstone with chapters from Sam Clark, Berg's assistant from 1998 to 2011, and the gallery owners, Rollo Campbell and Matt Incledon, it shows how he developed his skills and styles and is enhanced with lots of material from letters to and from his father and stepmother. His father was a distinguished psychiatrist in Harley street



Adrian Berg, Gloucester Gate, Regent's Park, Summer, 1981 Oil on canvas 101.5 x 101.5 cm (40 x 40 in) Courtesy of Adrian Berg Estate. Photograph: Justin Piperger. Reproduced in the monograph, Adrian Berg, by Marco Livingstone, Lund Humphries 2021.



Rex Whistler, Self-portrait, York Gate, 1940. Courtesy National Army Museum

and until his early 20s Adrian was expected to study medicine. At school his skill as an artist was recognised and after national service in the Royal Signals, and a lot of foreign travel, he decided to read English at Cambridge, fortunately with his father's approval. As a mature student he went to St Martin's School of Art in London followed by Chelsea and the Royal College of Art, where fellow students included David Hockney. Later, one of his own students

was Tracey Emin, whose interview for the book is a delight. His years in The Regent's Park resulted in many glorious paintings vibrant with colour as this example shows. He ventured elsewhere – to Kew, Sussex, the Lake District and more and we can also sample a few of his poems.'.... Whether we choose to walk, blank by brick walls, Fearful of the dark, Or pleurably a park'.

The photograph of him perched on the balcony in Gloucester hints at the self-portrait of Rex Whistler in 1940 in York Gate (to be seen in the National Army Museum). Colour versus whimsy?

Lund Humphries are offering the Friends of Regent's Park a 20% discount on the recently published monograph ADRIAN BERG. Click on the link below to order a copy:
lund Humphries.com/products/128272

An exhibition of some of his work is currently at the Frestonian Gallery in London until 16 June.

KINDNESS AMONG THE MEAN STREETS

Mike Baker

The environs of The Regent's Park are not all leafy villas and comfortable communities. There are also tough inner-city areas, housing estates, and districts with significant levels of crime, including drugs-based gang violence.

SMC Youthwork is a community organisation attached to St Mary's Church in Elsworth Road. They do terrific work in reducing gang violence and knife crime by working with vulnerable kids, often teenagers at risk of exclusion by their schools and on the margins of society. They mentor at-risk young people

and try to support them, providing trust, a listening ear and emotional support, which may be hard to find at home. Above all they are persistent with the young people they mentor, and thanks to their determination they can steer them to the realisation that opportunities do exist and that it is possible to do more with their lives. If some of those young people are unfortunate enough to spend time in prison, SMC Youthwork will follow and visit them there.

SMC Youthwork Jason Allen spoke eloquently at last year's Friends AGM in October. The photograph shows the team on a field trip to the country with some of the mentees.

Their work has not gone unnoticed. Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer QC says of Jason 'He succeeds where others fail: averting catastrophic violence in the short-term and providing stability, support and opportunity in the long-term.' SMC Youthwork's patron

Andrew Marr calls the SMC Youthwork team 'quite exceptional and exceedingly brave. Their direct intervention, dogged determination to stay in touch with people being ignored by much of the rest of society, and tireless work with them have, I am absolutely sure, saved many lives.'

For all the reasons above, the Friends have made two donations totalling £5,000 to SMC Youthwork to help them keep up their great work •



IN THE GARDENS

Nick Biddle, Park Manager

For so many of us this past year, parks and green spaces have been a vital source of freedom and an opportunity to engage with nature. I think it's fair to say that they have been valued more than ever over the past year. Keeping the parks open, making them as safe as we can and presenting them as well as possible has been an extraordinary challenge for the staff, both directly employed by The Royal Parks and those of our delivery colleagues.

In terms of major events, Frieze Art Fairs, Frieze London and Frieze Masters, will be back in the autumn, open to the public from 7–10 October. Frieze Sculpture will be with us from 16 September to 31 October. The number of exhibits will be more than last year but not quite as many as we've had in previous years. We are currently looking at 19 pieces.

Taste of London will go ahead with a transformed format. In order to provide a COVID-safe event, the layout will have more space across the site, between the restaurants, at gangways and cues. The capacity for each session will also be significantly reduced. To accommodate the same number of visitors it will run over two weeks, from Wednesday 7 July to Sunday 11 July and Wednesday 14 July to Sunday 18 July. (See For the diary).

Two elements of our work: welcoming visitors and enhancing biodiversity and landscape resilience are becoming increasingly important for us. The significance of the resilience of our landscapes and their ecosystems is put in sharp focus as the impact of climate change becomes increasingly evident.

To this end we are placing greater emphasis on sustainability in all areas of our activity. Corporately we are monitoring our carbon footprint and seeking to reduce it wherever possible. We have made significant changes to the way we manage our waste stream, for example, which has resulted in our new litter bins. I imagine you'll be in one of two camps as they seem to be the marmite of litter bins. We admit that not all of the current locations are right, and that there is some scope to reduce their visual impact. We are living with them to learn what works and what does not and will consider what constructive changes can be made. We are currently trialling two treatments to the backs of the bins: one a leaf pattern, the other a very dark green. The old 100-litre bins were simply not fit for purpose given the move to a disposable culture and the volume of waste that visitors now leave in the

park. The new bins have been made possible by a generous grant from the DCMS. They not only provide a greater capacity across the park, but they also result in far fewer vehicle movements within the park. The collection process is far more efficient, and there is a 10-tonne annual reduction in the use of black bin bags. The grant also funded a static compactor that reduces the volume of waste before it goes off-site and also reduces the number of journeys between the park and the Materials Recycling Facility. Queen Mary's Gardens, the Avenue Gardens and the Broad Walk still have the 100-litre bins.

Our drive towards sustainability in the landscape has been supported, and to some degree driven by Mission: Invertebrate, which is very generously funded by the players of the People's Postcode Lottery. The programme has five objectives: to educate, providing hands-on school sessions; to promote discovery, providing informal learning opportunities for families, special interest groups and hard-to-reach communities; to provide training for all, engaging citizen scientists in valuable data collection; to conduct research, commissioning ecologists to determine and monitor baseline invertebrate populations, particularly to monitor the outcomes of our management processes or interventions; to enhance green spaces, enriching park habitats with tailored landscaping projects; and to share the work, developing an interactive online presence to showcase projects, which you can find on The Royal Parks website.

Projects they have supported recently include replanting a number of shrubberies with pollinator friendly woody and herbaceous plants together with soil improvements; hedgehog surveys; habitat piles; works around the lake (dredging and landscaping, fencing, sunken cage planting, marginal planting, reedbed enhancements) to create habitats for a range of aquatic species including fish, dragonflies and aquatic invertebrates. The programme has also funded the installation of scrub pockets in the northern parkland, helpful to our resident hedgehogs, birds and invertebrates.

The transformation of Gloucester Gate Playground was funded largely by the London Marathon Charitable Trust, providing much of the capital for the new playground as well as funding for



an outreach worker, who is linked with Mission: Invertebrate to provide activities to engage local children with the ecology of the park. Two street art murals can be viewed at either end of the playground's toilet block featuring the park's flora and fauna, with diurnal species at one end and nocturnal species at the other.

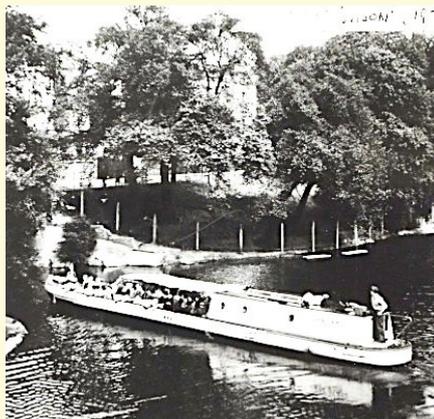
Mission: Invertebrate's next project for us is to install a swale in the very wet area to the south east of Gloucester Gate Playground. This will be a sustainable drainage scheme to mitigate rainwater runoff from Gloucester Green and create new and valuable habitat. The hedge from Gloucester Gate to the south, is being extended with hawthorn whips, which will be an improvement for wildlife. This is part of HS2's mitigation commitment.

The more traditional horticultural features such as the Rose Garden are being well tended. As well as the 80-plus single variety beds in Queen Mary's Gardens there are roses worked through the mixed border around the perimeter of the Rose Garden, a much more modern style of planting, and an entire bed of David Austin's English Rose varieties. The roses and delphiniums are going to be a little late flowering this year after an unusually cold May.

If we are able to keep on track with the roadmap out of lockdown the pleasure we once took for granted, but have all had to forego over the past 15 months, will feel like blessings indeed •

BICENTENARY OF THE OPENING OF THE REGENT'S CANAL PART 4: REGENERATION

Peter Darley



The boat trip business had started on the Regent's Canal in 1951, as part of the Festival of Britain celebrations, growing from 1500 to 100,000 passengers in ten years. The narrowboat 'Jason' was the first trip boat, here passing the short stub of the Cumberland Market Branch in 1957 (Canal and River Trust).

In 1965, St Pancras (now Camden) Civic Society, with the Islington and Paddington Waterways Societies, formed the Regent's Canal Group (RCG). The RCG, a body embracing all the inner London canal-side amenity societies, campaigned for opening the towpath to the public. RCG championed a peaceful, green and tranquil route away from the traffic for the public to enjoy, a direct contrast to the dangers posed at that time by the motorway proposals of the Greater London Council (GLC).

Changes in official attitude to the canal and its uses were primarily the result of the RCG's influence. It fought to maintain industrial vistas, rather than prettify them with "improvements", deploring undistinguished canal-side architecture that paid no homage to the Canal. Key individuals were Diana Gurney of Camden Civic Society (also, a Friend of RPPH); Peggy Jay, Chair of the Parks and Smallholdings Committee of the GLC; and Peter Jay of Paddington Waterways Society, but many others deserve mention.

The Pirates' Club was formed in 1966 under the leadership of Viscount St. Davids, allowing children to satisfy the urge for



adventure, enjoy the water and learn boating skills. The first clubhouse was a floating one. It inspired similar schemes around the country. At that time, the only 'public' parts of the Regent's Canal were by the Cumberland mooring basin and Regent's Park Zoo. Other sections of the towpath were only accessible under licence to anglers and boat clubs. In 1977, the club's success was marked by building the Pirate Castle and the Jubilee Waterside Centre.

In 1967, the Regent's Canal Group published "Regent's Canal – a policy for its future". Even as the report rolled from the presses, one of the basins, seen as the key to the revival of the waterway, was being filled in – Haggerston. However, their persistence was bearing fruit as, in 1968, Westminster opened towpaths within its boundaries to the public for recreational use. It took a further four years, until 1972, for Camden to follow the Westminster lead with the progressive opening to the public of the 11/2 miles of towpaths within its boundaries, starting with the towpath from the basin forming the stub of the Cumberland Arm to Hampstead Road Locks. In 1974, the second stage from Hampstead Road Locks to York Way was opened. It was now possible to walk from Maida Hill Tunnel to Islington Tunnel. A month later the Regent's Canal Conservation Area was designated.

The regeneration of the towpath led to the restoration and upgrade of the Lock Keeper's Cottage at Hampstead Road Locks (shown here). Dating from 1816, it



now combines a role as the Regent's Canal Information Centre with being a coffee house.

In 1972/3, a property company bought the yard at Hampstead Road Locks and converted it to workshops let to crafts people, branding it as 'Camden Lock'. The creative energy released was translated at weekends into an exciting retail market that grew and spread up the High Street into



clothes, music, food and entertainment.

The five Camden markets are now among the top tourist destinations in London, not least due to the preservation of much of their historic setting. The view along the canal from the locks and the Roving Bridge is an exceptional vista of industrial buildings dominated by the Interchange (shown here).

A new purpose was found for the canal route in 1979, when the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) installed underground cables in a trough below the towpath between St John's Wood and City Road. These 400 kV cables now form part of the National Grid, supplying electrical power to London. Pumped canal water is circulated as a coolant for the high-voltage cables from the pumping station opposite the Pirate Castle.

In 1982, the remainder of the towpath down to Limehouse was opened to the public and plans to redevelop Limehouse Basin were the subject of a design competition. Other basins were also dredged, many by private initiatives of bodies such as the London Narrowboat Association.

Camley Street Natural Park was opened by Ken Livingstone on 7 May 1985. In 1992, the Princess Royal opened the London Canal Museum in Battlebridge Basin.

Due to the increase in cycle commuting since the 2005 London Bombings, and increasing environmental awareness, the towpath has become a busy cycle route for commuters. National Cycle Route 1 includes the stretch along the canal towpath from Limehouse Basin to Mile End. Several studies into the effects of sharing the



towpath between cyclists and pedestrians have concluded that, despite the limited width, there are relatively few problems.

The attractions of canal-side living have also stimulated a rising tide of property development, undermining the nature of the canal as a green and secluded linear park. Combined with the increasing unaffordability of property in the capital, this has led to a near doubling in the number of boats on London's canals in the last seven years.

For the Canal and River Trust, which faces similar funding challenges to that of Regent's Park, increasing competition for mooring spaces offers an opportunity to sell not only cruising licences but also permanent moorings, to the chagrin of the continuous cruising community. Narrowboats are moored three deep on long stretches of the Regent's Canal, such as seen here alongside Victoria Park, and permanent moorings are being taken by commercial activities, such as "Word on the Water, the London Bookbarge" at King's Cross.

We end this series of articles marking the bicentenary of Regent's Canal with a view of the IWA's Canalway Cavalcade in Paddington Basin. The Inland Waterway Association's boating festival is a celebration of life on the water held every year since 1983 with the obvious exception of 2020 •



7 AM IN REGENT'S PARK OR A.E.HOUSMAN REVISITED

A poem by Isabel Raphael

Loveliest of trees, the cherries now
Are hung with bloom along the bough,
And stand about the Parkland wide,
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Forget the threescore years and ten:
Eighty-two won't come again,
And now that I've clocked up fourscore,
That only leaves me wanting more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Centuries are little room,
About the Parklands I still go
To see the cherries hung with snow.

FOR THE DIARY

MID-SEASON REVIEW

Wednesday 23rd June 2021

Zoom Webinar at 7pm

Speakers - Andrew Scattergood – Chief Executive, The Royal Parks. Alister Hayes - Head of Programmes, Volunteering and Conservation, The Royal Parks.

Please join your Committee at the mid-year review Webinar by using the following link https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/WN_aPHzXZJ_QTG2IcGVox7yBw

MARYLEBONE MUSIC FESTIVAL

24th-26th June

<https://www.marylebonemusicfestival.com/programme-2021>

July 1 2021, 10.30 am

Come to the English gardens to visit the *Davidia involucreta* (the handkerchief tree) which was planted a little while ago to remember Judy Hillman, patron for many years of the Friends of Regent's Park & Primrose Hill. Meet at the Espresso bar in the Broadwalk around 10.15am.



Saturday 31st July

Photo competition closes

WALKS

Organised by Janice Liverseidge -

Please reserve your place with her at:

janicebowling30@gmail.com

The events are free and places are restricted to a member and a guest so please when you have received confirmation of a place by Janice, ensure that you attend the walk to avoid the guide waiting unnecessarily for a no-show. Please contact Janice if you are unable to attend.

Sculpture walk with Anne-Marie

Tuesday 27th July 2021, 10.45am

Explore the park and its art works – some tucked away. Meet at Great Portland Street Station opposite the church.



Urban bees in Regent's Park

Friday 30th July 2021, 10am

walk, tour, visit to bees and honey tasting with Alison and Brian. Meeting point TBC.

Autumn Bird walk in the Park

with Tony Duckett

Sunday 15th August 2021, 8-10am

Migrant birds start making their way to warmer countries to spend the winter. Don't forget your binoculars. Meeting point TBC.



Regent's Canal Walk with Peter Darley

Monday 6th September 2021

10.30am – 12.30 pm

Camden's role as an important transshipment depot both for domestic and international markets was built alongside the canal and railway. The many features we will encounter on our towpath walk will illustrate the social and industrial context, and how this evolved over the last two hundred years. Meet at the Lock-keeper's cottage overlooking Hampstead Road Locks.

TASTE OF LONDON

Wednesday 7th July –

Sunday 18th July 2021

Visit the Taste of London website for more information and to book tickets.

NATIONAL GARDENS SCHEME OPEN GARDENS

Sunday 8th August 2021 2-5.30pm

69 & 70 Gloucester Crescent

Pre-booking available via

<https://ngs.org.uk/view-garden/21162>

Saturday 7th & Sunday 8th August,

2.30-5.30pm

The Holme, Inner Circle, Regent's Park

OPEN AIR THEATRE

Saturday 26th June –

Saturday 24th July 2021, 7.45pm

Romeo and Juliet

Friday 30th July –

Saturday 18 September 2021, 7.45pm

Carousel

Tuesday 10th August –

Sunday 5th September 2012, 2.15pm

Dragons and Mythical Beasts

And see website for other single performances

<https://openairtheatre.com>

MEXICAN FIESTA

Saturday 11th September 2021, afternoon

Zapata Mexican Dance Company & Mariachi

Loco celebrating Mexico Independence Day

on the Broadwalk. Two sets (with 3 dancers and band) with Lupita Dudla.



For many other activities near the park visit our website

<https://www.friendsofregentspark.org/news-events/events/>

GET IN TOUCH

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