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The Heath & Hampstead Society

NEWSLETTER

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Vol 51 No 1



'A rose-ringed parakeet peeps out of an oak tree cavity'

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Front cover: The photograph was taken by professional photographer Matt Maran. Matt comments: "A rose-ringed parakeet peeps out of an oak tree cavity. The UK's first naturalised parrot divides opinion – some find it a joy to watch a tropical green bird flying a squeaking overhead, others see it as a potential threat to native birds as they compete for nest holes."

Chair's Notes

by Marc Hutchinson

Christmas party

We welcomed a record number of guests, including senior Heath managers from the City, to last year's Christmas Party at Burgh House, and everyone had a most enjoyable evening.

South Fairground Site

The owner and builder of the illegal house has demolished it, following her decision not to appeal the ruling of the planning inspector to the High Court. We wait to see to what lawful use the site may now proposed to be put.



South Fairground Site; demolition of Bren Cottage.

North Fairground Site

The final day of this twice-adjourned Planning Inquiry was 18 December 2019. On 9 January 2020, the Inspector found in favour of Camden (the local planning authority) supported by the City and the Society and the Vale of Health Society, and rejected the application by a developer to allow the erection of seven static caravans on the site. The Inspector found that the only presently lawful use of the site is as an active travelling showpersons' site.

Chair's Notes (cont)



North Fairground Site. Photo courtesy: Ellen Solomons

Abacus School

In rejecting the recommendation of their planning officer, councillors on the Camden Planning Committee unanimously refused this application to alter the old Police Station at Downshire Hill to allow it to accommodate the Abacus Belsize Primary School, which wants to relocate from Belsize to Hampstead.

This was the letter I wrote to the *Ham & High* on the outcome:

As your readers know, the Heath & Hampstead Society has always opposed the relocation of the Abacus school to the old Hampstead Police Station. So the Society congratulates the independent-minded councillors (of all parties) on Camden's Planning Committee for unanimously refusing the latest planning application.

The sorry fiasco of these unsuccessful applications derives from the reckless decision of the Department for Education to purchase the old Police Station after its decommissioning. The Edwardian purpose-built – and now heritage-listed on that basis – offices, prison cells, courtroom, narrow passages and small high windows – with an overarching design to prevent the escape of prisoners – is the worst possible choice of a functional

and safe building for a 21st-century primary school. And that is to leave aside the noise, traffic and pollution increase that the school would unavoidably bring to its relocated site.

This lavishly Government-funded school needs to find new suitable premises within its own very large Belsize catchment area.

At the time of writing, it is not known whether the applicant will appeal the refusal to a planning inspector.

New members

In November 2019, we organised a mail-drop to 1,300 households in Hampstead whose occupants were not already Society members. We expect this will lead to a material increase in our membership. At the time of writing it is too early to quantify reliably the overall increase, but the rate of membership application has noticeably improved. I shall report more fully on this in the May 2020 Newsletter.

Committees

Town Sub-committee

We say goodbye to Brian Friedman who has served on the Sub-committee for two years, and thank him for his work for the Society.

General Committee

We have appointed three new trustees to existing vacancies on the General Committee.

Dafydd James-Williams has lived in Camden, Chalk Farm, Primrose Hill and Hampstead for most of his 28 years since first moving to London. He has worked for the last 19 years at North London Collegiate School. Before that, he worked for two years for the three National Parks in Wales, largely organising events (or supporting existing ones) to promote local produce, arts events and community activities in towns and

villages across the Park areas. Dafydd will have a special responsibility for outreach to, and increased engagement with, local schools in relation to the Society's work and its educational remit.

Professor Jeff Waage has been on the Heath Sub-committee for two years and, as an ecologist, represents the Society in several important Heath projects and initiatives, as readers will know.

Latoya Austin has been on the Heath Sub-Committee

for four years. She is a City lawyer and a justice of the peace. Latoya leads the Society's social media projects.

It is the intention that all of them will at, the 2020 AGM, stand for election (for a three-year term) as elected members of the General Committee.

Happy New Year

The trustees and sub-committee members of the Society thank you for your support in 2019 and wish you all a very happy New Year.

Thursday 13 February 2020

Should we be nervous of trees?



The Heath & Hampstead Society and Osbornes Law together present a Glass-in-Hand Lecture on the latest technical and legal issues surrounding the potential impact of trees, hedges and other plants on our lives and homes in Hampstead.

Guest speakers:

Jim Quaife, Arboricultural Association Registered Consultant, Quaife Woodlands

Shilpa Mathuradas, Solicitor, Partner and Head of Property Litigation, Osbornes Law

Venue: St Stephen's Church, Rosslyn Hill, NW3 2PP

Drinks and canapés served from 7pm.

Lecture commences at 7.30pm.

RSVP: 0207 435 6497 or

info@heathandhampstead.org.uk

This event is kindly sponsored by Osbornes Law and is free to attend.

Osbornes | Law^o



Heath Report

by John Beyer

Heath budget

A major concern for the Heath Sub-Committee has been the City's Fundamental Review and its possible effect on the budget for managing the Heath. As it turns out, the budget set for 2020-2021 will be equal in cash terms to 2019. While there will be no increase to cover inflation, the reduction in expenditure should be manageable. If there is to be any squeeze on resources, it will be from 2021 onwards. We are in frequent discussions with the City about this.

Licensing

The Heath Sub-Committee has been engaged with the City on a range of consultations regarding licensing issues stemming from clarification of the City's powers under the Open Spaces Act of 2018. These include new regimes for commercial dog-walkers and professional fitness-trainers.

There will also likely be a licensing system for outdoor schools where the children spend nearly all of their time in the open, not for schools with regular classrooms bringing children to the Heath for short periods. The idea of London children being in the fresh air, in all weather, and learning from nature is surely to be cherished, but there are implications for wildlife, such as low nesting birds, and compaction, i.e. wear and tear, if the number of children becomes large.

Waste management

Meanwhile, we continue to discuss with Heath Superintendent Bob Warnock ways to deal with the rubbish on the Heath. Moving to more sustainable rubbish collection has proved trickier than we initially thought. For example, there is no electric version of the 7-ton collection lorry the City needs. The new



Galvanised bins on the Broadwalk near Nassington Road

lorry the City has acquired will have the cleanest diesel engine (Euro 6). This will replace the Trilo vehicle, which has a dirtier engine (Euro 2). The City also tried a mixed-recyclables system. However, people disposed of the recyclable materials with contaminated food containers, resulting in the load being unsuitable for recycling. The City replaced the mixed system with the conventional three separate containers, for glass, plastic and paper. Work remains to find some way of converting a very urban looking bin to fit in a rural environment. One idea is to create a close-knit chestnut paling around the bins, which can have ivy or other creeper grown over it.

Quarterly Walks help in many ways

Through the Quarterly Walks, we have been helping Heath staff with a review of how the Ponds should be managed in terms of wildlife and fishing, and where dogs can swim. We have also given advice on what we believe are the priorities for managing views.

Heath and development

We have been watching and commenting on plans for a high-rise development on the site of the old Murphy's Yard in Kentish Town. There is currently a debate about the height of the blocks proposed, with a maximum of 25 floors. Our goal is for the blocks not to overshadow the Heath. The plans include a new pedestrian path from Kentish Town to the Heath at Gospel Oak Overground station. We hope the path can be designed to act and look like a wildlife corridor. The Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forum have been very active on the project.

Sheep in 2020

We very much hope to see sheep back on the Heath in 2020, perhaps in May and September. The aim is to see how we can use ecological means to maintain or improve the landscape. A key element in the success of the pilot project in 2019 was the presence of volunteers from the Society and Heath Hands, who were on hand to speak to the public and engage with dog-walkers. We will be calling again for shepherds and shepherdesses. We will be working once again with Heath Hands, who will administer the rota. Anyone interested can contact me in the meantime: johncharlesbeyer@gmail.com.



Norfolk Horn enjoying bramble

Delivering the Newsletter by email

Would you prefer to receive your Newsletter by email in the form of an Acrobat PDF file so that you can read it on screen?

It is environmentally more friendly, saving paper, unnecessary waste and cost.

With postage charges increasing, this is now a major consideration. The occasional extra flyers could also be sent via email, if wished.

PDFs of the Newsletter can be seen on the website. If you would like to try this, please let us know at:

info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk



Remember to use the

Hampstead Card

The current list of businesses taking part in the scheme can be found on the Society's website and can be downloaded from there:
www.HeathandHampstead.org.uk

Benefits offered are granted at the traders' discretion. The Society is not responsible for changes in terms or availability of any discounts or offers.

Town Report

by Andrew Haslam-Jones

The members of the Town Sub-Committee continue to monitor and work on a variety of issues affecting Hampstead and its amenities.

Anti-Semitic graffiti in Hampstead and Belsize

The Society issued the following statement in response to the above.

The recent daubing of anti-Semitic graffiti on shops in Hampstead and Belsize Park and on the South Hampstead Synagogue is horrifying. The Society, which represents the multicultural residents of Hampstead, extends its support to the Jewish community and to other groups that might be similarly targeted

It also wishes to congratulate and to thank the councillors and officers of Camden and the Metropolitan Police for their swift reaction to the event.

Racist vandalism, and anti-Semitic graffiti in particular such as that perpetrated, is an important matter. Fascist and anti-Semitic activity was significant in Hampstead in the mid to late 1940s; it must not be allowed now. We are confident that the police will identify and arrest those who committed these acts of hatred.

Electric hire bikes

As reported in the last Newsletter, Camden Borough Council entered into a contract with two electric bike hire companies, Lime (green bikes) and Jump (red bikes), to allow them to station bikes in Camden for hire from 1 August 2019. The Council expects a London-wide bye-law to be in place by the summer of 2020 to allow better control of the hire companies and their activities. Together with the Hampstead Business Improvement District, we met with the Camden officer responsible to identify spots in Hampstead where the stationing of the bikes by the hire companies would be less intrusive.

We have been monitoring the situation since the summer. One morning in November, there were 19 red Jump bikes arranged along the High Street and stationed in close proximity to each other. Clearly, that is excessive.

We informed the Council

officer responsible and such a high density of bikes doesn't appear to have recurred. We are also very grateful to the Society members who have contacted us with pictures of hire bikes poorly parked on side streets, which we have passed on. While we applaud encouraging alternative transport at a time when we are becoming more aware of the effects of pollution on health and the environment, we should also have due regard for other users of the public realm.

Oriel Place Garden

As we write, it's not clear whether the renovation of Oriel Place Garden will have begun by the date of publication of this Newsletter. The plan is to carry out the work simultaneously with replacing the York stone paving on the Oriel Place passage running between Heath Street and the High Street. We understand local councillors are seeking to address the concerns some very local residents have raised about the possibility of an increase in anti-social behaviour that might be caused by the removal of the fence.



A group of Lime bikes

Policing

On a positive note, since the beginning of December 2019, Hampstead Town ward now has a full complement of police officers, i.e. two constables (PC Naomi Palmer and PC Jamie Walsh), a PCSO (PCSO Anthony Alexis) and a sergeant (APS John Hounsell) shared with one other ward (as opposed to a sergeant shared with three other wards, which was the case previously). Last October, the Inspector responsible for Safer Neighbourhoods in Camden also announced he was allotting a further two police constables to the ward. They arrived in November (PC Jordan Spice and PC Jesse Lipetz-Robic). Members may have noticed already the reassuring presence of the uniformed officers patrolling the High Street.

Road name signs

A couple of years ago, Camden Borough Council was able to source a number of ceramic letter tiles which could be used to replace the damaged historic road name signs in Hampstead. Juliet Sonabend, a member of this Sub-Committee, has worked closely with Councillor Stephen Stark in identifying the signs needing mending, and work is now progressing.

Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum, which successfully developed the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan (<http://www.hampsteadforum.org/>) setting out local planning and related policies for Hampstead, on being re-designated as a local planning forum for a further five years from November 2019.

Hampstead Theatre

Eton Avenue

Support your local theatre – Become a Friend of Hampstead Theatre

Avoid disappointment by becoming a Friend and taking advantage of our priority booking period. For just £50 per annum Friends receive the following benefits:

- Priority Booking • Advance notice of forthcoming productions
- Quarterly e-newsletter • Invitations to exclusive events at the Theatre • 10% discount at Hampstead Theatre bar

For more details see www.hampsteadtheatre.com/support-us

☎ 020 7449 4155

We look forward to welcoming you soon

Members' email addresses

Are you missing out?

Keeping you informed of the latest news and events.

The Society is increasingly using email, to let members know of vital issues that crop up between Newsletters.

It is also an invaluable way to bring you other useful information, such as walks, talks and events that do not fit in with the Newsletter timetable.

If we do not have your email address you may be missing out on important local and Society news and initiatives.

So, if you have not already done so, please do send your email address to the Society at:

info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk

Make sure that you include your name and street address so that we can identify you.

This will also enable us to update our membership records and simplify our communications with you.

Planning Report

by David Castle

Last year seemed to pass at an even greater speed than usual and during the year there were many planning applications needing our attention. In fact, during 2019 we examined all of the 419 applications affecting Hampstead, both large and small, and objected to 42.

Many applications take a long time to reach a decision. This is not usually the Council's fault, but is often due to the applicant and its agent or developer proposing a building that does not meet the requirements of the Local or Neighbourhood Plans and, therefore, raising a storm of criticism from numerous objectors. Preparing the required information or studies to address criticisms often takes many months. Frequently, these are inadequate, which further delays the process. If applicants were to work with local people and civic societies and act on their suggestions, they would obtain approval more speedily; alas, such collaboration is rare.

The outrageous application to build five houses in a beautiful garden at 55 Fitzroy Park on the edge of the Heath, first mentioned in a Newsletter a year ago, is dragging on with no signs of the developer making any substantial improvements.

At the end of the year, there was an interesting application for a small building on the Royal Free Hospital site by Daniel Libeskind, the internationally renowned New York architect. The building is for a Maggie's Centre for cancer care and support. The proposed building has a discordant exterior contrasted with a calm interior. The Society has not objected, but we have sent our considered comments to Camden.

The most important planning event of the year was the refusal by Camden Council of the proposal

to convert the old Police Station, at the junction of Rosslyn Hill and Downshire Hill, into a school. At the Camden Planning Committee it was very encouraging to watch the councillors efficiently take the application to pieces and then vote once again for a refusal. It was hard to understand why the Planning Department issued a Recommendation to Approve to councillors in the first instance, as the application had so many faults.

We were also party this year to the withdrawal of the application to build two houses onto Jack Straw's Castle, which was a threat to the edge of the Heath.

Queen Mary's House

As yet, no news has emerged from the Royal Free on their intentions regarding Queen Mary's House. Does the hospital really wish to sell this invaluable building? We fear such sale would lead to its demolition and the construction of a new six-storey block of flats on the edge of the Heath. The edge of the Heath is not just the border of the open space. It is also an important part of the urban space forming one of the impressive entrances to Hampstead. The existing hospital is in good condition, but has been only partially used by the Royal Free over the last few years.

We have learned that many people living in Hampstead, who reasonably expect to be treated at the Royal Free, are being sent for treatment miles away to the new Chase Farm Hospital. Reaching that hospital takes a long, expensive journey by car or taxi, and it is difficult to reach by public transport. We also know that, when offered treatment at Chase Farm, several people have successfully insisted on being treated at the Royal Free.

We question the decision to develop Chase Farm

Hospital for Camden residents. If facilities are not available in Camden, then services should be provided locally. With respect to Hampstead residents, if the Royal Free is not large enough, then we have Queen Mary's House, which is currently sitting empty and waiting to be used once more.

More trees in Hampstead

During the recent election, we were pleased to see all the main parties include a promise to plant millions of trees. In addition, Camden Council are producing a Biodiversity Action Plan, an essential component of which would be more trees.

The admirable Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan includes policies for Biodiversity Corridors (see Plan no. 5). Such policies could be a template for extending the ecological diversity and tree cover of Hampstead, linking more corridors together to encourage and extend tree cover and biodiversity.

Trees take time to grow. Preventing the subsidence industry from erroneously blaming trees for subsidence problems and then removing or aggressively pollarding them is something we are now actively pursuing with the support of Camden Tree Officers.

Very soon, with increasingly hot summers and colder winters, we will be grateful for the shelter that trees provide. We should retain the height and spread of existing trees whenever possible and increase their number. More trees and evergreen boundary hedges would be good for Hampstead, air quality, carbon capture, and our endangered planet.



*Copper beech providing shade in Christ Church's car park.
Photo courtesy: Vicki Harding*

Springett Lecture 2019 – Bird Navigation: How do pigeons find their way home?

by Dr Rupert Sheldrake

*Dr Rupert Sheldrake delivered the Springett Lecture for 2019 on 17 October. Dr Sheldrake is a biologist and author of more than 90 technical papers in scientific journals and nine books, including *Ways To Go Beyond And Why They Work*. He was a Fellow of Clare College, Cambridge and a Research Fellow of the Royal Society. From 2005-2010 he was director of the Perrott-Warrick project for research on unexplained human and animal abilities, funded from Trinity College, Cambridge. He lives in Hampstead and is a member of the Heath Sub-Committee. His website is www.sheldrake.org. This is an edited version of his lecture.*

Many animal species migrate over distances of thousands of miles. For example, swifts fly to England from southern Africa every spring, a journey of more than 5,000 miles. Some have now been tracked using miniature GPS devices attached to their backs. After feeding in Liberia, swifter swifts take only five days to fly over the Sahara Desert, cross from Morocco to Gibraltar, fly over Spain and France and then across the English Channel. Then they fly back to Africa in late summer. They repeat this cycle and often return to the very same place they nested the year before, navigating with pinpoint accuracy over thousands of miles. How do they do it? Navigation is goal-directed. Even if birds are blown off course by strong winds, they can still find their way to their destination. They somehow know where they are going.

Most experimental research on navigation is with pigeons. Homing pigeons have been used for a very long time, at least since ancient Egypt where they had a pigeon post system for carrying messages. They are now the basis of the sport of pigeon racing, which has hundreds of thousands of followers in Europe and elsewhere. In a typical long-distance pigeon race



Dr Sheldrake addressing the Springett audience

in Britain, the birds fly for approximately 600 miles, and they can come home in a single day, at an average speed of 60 miles per hour.

Pigeons can also fly under very adverse conditions. During the Second World War, pigeons were taken on Lancaster bombers and, if the plane was ditched in the North Sea, the navigator wrote the map reference and released the pigeon with the message attached to their leg. These birds saved many aircrews. Some of these pigeons were released at night in freezing fog, and they still got home from the middle of the North Sea where they had never been before.



Common Swift (Apus apus) in flight. Photo courtesy: Paweł Kuźniar

Theories in terms of known senses and physical influences

There have been many theories about how pigeons manage to find their way home. Charles Darwin, who kept pigeons himself, proposed one of the first. He believed the pigeons remember the twists and the turns of the outward journey and, when they reach the place where they are released, by dead reckoning they somehow calculate the direction of their home. In the 20th century, his theory, although reasonable, was tested to destruction by anaesthetising pigeons, putting them in the back of a closed van in darkness, rotating them on a rotating drum and driving to the point of release by a devious route. When these pigeons recovered from the anaesthetic and the effects of the travel and were released, they flew straight home. So, they are definitely not doing it by dead reckoning.

The next theory was landmarks. There's no doubt pigeons can recognise landmarks and they can get home by a kind of steeple-chasing system over short distances near their home. Tim Guilford and other

researchers at Oxford using modern tracking devices have shown, when pigeons are released near Oxford, they pick up familiar features of the landscape, follow roads, and go from landmark to landmark. But when a pigeon is released from 600 miles away in totally unfamiliar terrain, it's inconceivable they can see the home, or landmarks near their home. Landmarks can only help them when they get near home and are in familiar terrain.

Scientists have actually tested the visual theory by fitting out pigeons with frosted glass contact lenses and releasing them many miles from their homes. They can still navigate despite not seeing. These pigeons get within a few hundred yards of the loft when they start colliding with trees and telegraph wires. They need to be able to see to land on their loft.

The next theory, put forward by Geoffrey Matthews, a professor of zoology at Cambridge, is a form of solar celestial navigation. Matthews suggested pigeons find their way home by observing the position of the sun and, by knowing the time, calculate their latitude and longitude from the sun. To navigate by the sun requires the birds to see the sun, and the first problem with this hypothesis is that pigeons can home on cloudy days and, in experiments by the Swiss Army, can even be trained to navigate at night. But leaving these problems aside, solar navigation would require a very accurate time sense. In the 18th century, the British government put up a prize for calculating longitude at sea, which could only be done with an accurate chronometer. The prize was won by John Harrison, who, incidentally, is buried in the churchyard of Hampstead Parish Church.

Researchers have tested this theory by shifting pigeons' time sense by keeping them in the dark in the daytime and in light at night, shifting their internal clock by either six or 12 hours. The birds were then taken from the loft and released on sunny days, and

sure enough they set off in the wrong direction, as if they were using the sun to get their position. But after a few miles they realised they were going the wrong way, changed direction and got home. On cloudy days the time shift did not confuse them because they couldn't see the sun. So, pigeons can use the sun as a kind of compass, but they are not routinely navigating by the sun because they can get home without seeing it, and even when time shifted.

Only two further possibilities remained, one of which is olfactory: they sniff their loft from a long way away. An Italian school of pigeon researchers, led by Professor Floriano Papi, tested the smell theory in experiments displacing the incoming wind to the loft, rotating it by 90 degrees. They thought pigeons could pick up clues from the wind direction, and they found pigeons were confused by deflecting the direction of the wind coming into their loft. The pigeons set off in the wrong direction when released. But they corrected their course and got home anyway.

The final theory is based on magnetism. Many scientists favour this theory because it seems the only remaining explanation. Everything else has failed. When I first became interested in the technical research in this field, I went to several conferences on pigeon navigation, and a feature of these conferences was an intense rivalry between the German and the Italian schools. The Italians favoured smell, and the Germans magnetism, and they were both very good at refuting each other. The Germans refuted the Italians by anaesthetising their birds' olfactory system with xylocaine, and they got home perfectly well, and even did so after their olfactory nerves had been severed surgically. The Germans thought pigeons had a magnetic sense, but teams in the US and in Italy tested this by putting magnets on pigeons to confuse their putative magnetic sense. They got home in spite of this.

In any case, the magnetic theory faces a fundamental theoretical problem. If you were given a compass and were parachuted into an unknown place, would you be able to find your way home? The compass would tell you where north is, but it would not tell you where home is. It would give you no information whatever on how far east or west you had been displaced. Pigeons can home equally well from all compass directions.

Is there a sense of direction?

Basically, we don't know how pigeons home, or how migratory birds and other animals navigate. The official position, is although all these individual theories, whether sun navigation, landmarks, smell or magnetism, have been refuted, the animals must be using a subtle combination of all these cues. This amounts to saying that we don't really know, but there must be an explanation in terms of known senses and physical influences, even though we cannot say exactly what this explanation is.

But there is a further possibility. Maybe animals have a sense of direction depending on a kind of connection or field at present unrecognised by science. I think this role is played by what I call a morphic field. I have written in detail about morphic fields in my book *The Presence of the Past*. Morphic fields provide invisible connections linking the pigeons to their home, almost like an invisible elastic band. When they are taken away from their home, this field is stretched, and when the pigeons are released and circle around, they feel a pull towards their home, which gives them a sense of direction.

I designed an experiment to test this hypothesis when I was a don in Cambridge in the 1970s. Instead of taking the pigeons from their home, the usual procedure, I took the home from the pigeons. Could they find it? This test required the use of a mobile loft. The first of these experiments took place on the estate

of Lord and Lady Dufferin in Northern Ireland; Lady Dufferin was the Springett lecturer in 2018. The loft was mounted on the back of a farm trailer and pulled by a Land Rover.

We started by training the birds by moving the loft about 100 yards. They took an awfully long time to go into it. This was not because they couldn't see it, but because they didn't expect it to move. If you went home and your house was 100 yards away from where you left it, you would be unlikely to go straight in as if nothing had happened. Pigeons are like that too. But through training, moving the loft a bit further every day, they soon got used to it.

We then moved the loft 20 miles away to see if they could find it, and in the first experiment they didn't bother. It was in November and they don't normally home during November. I had to do the experiment then because I was leaving to take up a job in India shortly afterwards. By the time I returned from India on home leave, the pigeon colony had been destroyed by sparrow hawks. In the 1980s, I did another experiment of this kind in Suffolk, on an estate near Bury St Edmunds. We found the birds could find the loft when we moved several miles away, but they would not go in because it was in a very unfamiliar area. This experiment was done again at Utrecht in Holland, and again the birds would not go into the loft when it had been moved, even though they found it. They seemed afraid of the unfamiliar surroundings, and they perched in trees nearby and deserted the loft.

It became clear that to do this experiment adequately, it had to be done on board a ship at sea. It so happened I was on a television programme in Holland in 1994 when I discussed pigeon homing with Stephen J. Gould, Daniel Dennett, Oliver Sachs and several other scientists. This triggered an intense debate in Holland. A Dutch friend knew an admiral in the

Royal Dutch Navy, and persuaded him to let us do this experiment at sea. We conducted it on the main research vessel of the Royal Dutch Navy, the *Tideman*. This ship travelled over 6,000 miles, from Holland to the Caribbean and back, with the pigeons on board, routinely flying back to their home on the moving ship. Some of the pigeons were hatched at sea and knew no other home.

We did a series of experiments with them. To start with, they were taken off the ship and released when it was up to 20 miles away. They found their way back without difficulty. They could perhaps still see it from 20 miles away although being a naval ship it was camouflaged. We later did an experiment near the island of Madeira, and the pigeons found the ship from 40 miles away, but two or three of the pigeons disappeared. Three days later, one of them re-joined the ship when it was 60 miles from Madeira. We assume they went to the island of Madeira, spent a couple of days there and then found their home. The most interesting case of all was in the middle of the Atlantic, when some pigeons were on a training flight just after they had been fed. The ship was heading North East, and four birds disappeared to the South East. Three of them were never seen again, but



The Springett Lecture audience

two days later one of them re-joined the ship 300 miles from the place they had left. This shows a remarkable ability to find a moving home at sea. Unfortunately, this experiment came to an end when the *Tideman* returned to port in Holland. But these preliminary tests showed that it is indeed feasible to do this kind of research at sea, with very interesting and suggestive results.

The nature of the sense of direction is an open question. Many animals have this ability to navigate to particular places; even some highly domesticated

animals like dogs and cats can find their way home from many miles away. I think this sense of direction is part of animal nature and it may even be part of our own nature in a vestigial way. Animal navigation is one of the great unsolved problems of science. Everyone agrees animals can migrate over thousands of miles, such as birds, fish, turtles, even insects, like Monarch butterflies, and that pigeons and many other species can find their way home over great distances from unfamiliar places. But no one yet knows how they do it.

Annual General Meeting: June 2020

Elections to General Committee

Officers

There will be, as usual, elections for the offices of President, Vice-President, Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

Other members of the General Committee

If the above Officers are elected, there will be nine vacancies on the General Committee.

Existing appointed members Jessica Learmond-Criqui and Peter Tausig intend to stand for election for a first term of three years.

Existing elected members Frank Harding and Robert Linger complete the first of their three-year terms as elected members and intend to stand for re-election for a second three-year term.

Existing elected member John Weston completes the second of his three-year terms as an elected member and is therefore not eligible for re-election.

Existing newly-appointed members Dafydd James-Williams, Latoya Austin and Professor Jeff Waage (see Chair's Notes in this Newsletter) intend to stand for election for a first term of three years as elected members.

The maximum number of members of the General Committee is 20. There is no constitutional requirement that these vacancies be filled.

Any future resignations or changes to the above election proposals will be promptly announced on the Society's website.

Nominations for elections to the General Committee must be received by the Society in writing **before 15 April 2020** in accordance with Rule 21(4) of the Society's constitution.

The Society's constitution can be viewed on the Society's website.

Alien Species on the Heath

by Jeff Waage

As we enter a new era, alien and native flora and fauna will both challenge and delight us. And how we reconcile the two will depend on our perspective.

If you are a wanderer on the Heath, you are likely to encounter a number of its common alien species; that is, species native to other parts of the world that have established breeding populations here in the UK and on the Heath.¹ Alien species now represent a small, but growing, part of the flora and fauna of almost every part of the world. This is the result of two centuries of rapidly growing international trade and travel, augmented more recently by climate change. Such is the scale of this phenomenon that some scientists have suggested we are entering a new era in Earth's history, the *Homogocene*, when everything will eventually come to live everywhere.

The Heath is a perfect place to witness the advance of the Homogocene. It lies in southern England, into which normally continental species are now extending their range as the climate warms. The Heath is located in London, a port city assimilating centuries of ship-born plant and animal introductions. And it is in the midst of a dense urban population, constantly feeding the Heath with garden escapes and released exotic pets.

The Heath's aliens include plants, mostly escaped from horticulture, such as Japanese Knotweed, and our two alien balsams: the tall, pink Himalayan Balsam in our wetlands, and the shorter, yellow Small Balsam on our woodland floors. They also include a range of mammals and birds, some deliberately introduced to the UK long ago, like grey squirrels, Canada geese and Mandarin ducks, and others escaped from

captivity, like ring-neck parakeets. Perhaps less well known, because they are less obvious, are the Heath's aquatic aliens, animals like Red-Eared Terrapins and Red Swamp Crayfish,² and plants like New Zealand pygmy weed and Azolla water fern. Finally, aliens we are least likely to see, but whose effects are often most dramatic, are insects, fungi and micro-organisms living and feeding on our plants and animals. For example, the browned summer leaves of the horse chestnut are caused by a tiny alien moth, the leaf miner. Ash dieback disease is caused by an alien fungus, which is sickening and killing native ash trees like Dutch elm disease did for our elms some decades ago. How concerned should we be about alien species on the Heath? The answer is ecological and cultural.

Ecologically, it is the potential *invasiveness* of alien species that makes them particularly undesirable. Invasive alien species tend to increase rapidly and reduce the abundance and diversity of native species. For plants, this may involve taking over habitats and crowding out natives, while many invasive alien animals are predatory or parasitic and kill local species. Others may simply reproduce and spread so quickly they out-compete natives for food or nests, while others have much more subtle effects. Alien squirrels and crayfish brought diseases to Britain to which they are immune, but which proved lethal to the native red squirrel and the white-clawed crayfish. We can see a particularly twisty tale of alien invasion on the Heath's oaks. You will find acorns deformed into spiky, sticky galls. This is the work of the tiny alien gall wasp. The wasp causing these *knopper galls* requires two oak species to establish. In addition to native oaks, the alien continental European turkey oak also lives on the

¹ In the past decade, the UK and other countries have replaced *alien* with the term *non-native* as it is more accurate and less emotive.

² See '*Invasive Crayfish on the Heath*' by John Hunt in Society Newsletter Vol 42 No 1, January 2011.

Alien Species on the Heath (cont)



Willow Emerald damselfly. Photo courtesy: Liz Andrew



Heath. Fortunately for the wasp, this was a favourite ornamental tree for parks and gardens in previous centuries. There are some fine old turkey oaks at Kenwood. As a result, the Heath has knopper galls, which may pose risks to regeneration of native oaks, and to our acorn-feeding natives, like jays, and aliens, like grey squirrels!

Not all alien species are invasive. In the UK, of the approximately 2,000 established alien species, only about 12% are invasive. Of course, any alien or native species will have an impact on its habitat and the species therein, but often this is quite limited. On the Heath, for instance, have a look this spring by the gate at the corner of the Bird Sanctuary where the bird feeders hang. There, you will find a small patch of a distinctly yellowy green wildflower whose stems appear to be growing through its leaves. This is *Perfoliate Alexanders*, a European relative of our common native Alexanders, which has escaped from gardens. This small patch of pretty aliens has hardly grown for years. But a few metres behind these

plants, in the wetter areas of the Sanctuary, Heath staff and volunteers fight an annual battle to control another alien, the pink-flowered Himalayan Balsam. If not pulled out every year, it would quickly cover the Sanctuary's wetlands in dense, tall, impenetrable stands, crowding out native wildflowers and wildlife. Science spends much effort trying to predict whether a new alien species will be invasive and a threat to native species and habitats, but this is still a challenge. Therefore, the best strategy is to treat all new introductions as potentially invasive. Quick action should be taken against those known to be invasive elsewhere, and others should be monitored to catch them if they take off.

One feature of aliens we know enhances invasiveness is their escape from those parasites and predators limiting their numbers in their region of origin. Biological control is one strategy for alien species management. This involves the careful introduction of specific natural enemies, first checking they will attack only the alien species in question and not become

problems themselves. On the Heath, the recently arrived alien Oak Processionary Moth, discussed in the Society Newsletter Vol 50 No 2, May 2019, has been followed last year by its specific natural enemy, a parasitic fly from its continental European home. This fly now seems to be well established and may help control moth numbers in future. This was not a deliberate biological control effort; we think this parasite might have spread naturally or accidentally to UK. But you never know!

Alien species are seen differently depending on culture. I previously chaired the Global Invasive Species Programme, tackling alien species problems around the world. For some countries, just being alien made a species highly undesirable. These alien-averse countries, such as North America and Australasia, all had large areas of truly wild habitats: *wilderness*. Certainly, invasive aliens in wilderness areas can be particularly harmful to rare species and difficult to control, but I sensed views in these cultures were also shaped by a strong sense of *civilisation vs wilderness*, and a feeling there was a purity to their nation's wild areas that should not be spoiled.

In my interactions on alien species with European cultures, I usually encountered a very different perspective: *assimilative*. European views on alien species have been shaped by centuries of deliberate introductions from around the world. Further, there is very little of Europe that can be called wilderness. Even our wildest habitats, and for London this must certainly be the Heath, are managed to produce a certain biodiversity.

Another particularly British issue encouraging an assimilative view, is the problem of what is *actually* alien here? Are beavers, pushed out by the ice age and now being re-introduced to England for landscape conservation, alien? Are rabbits, a gift of the Romans,

still to be considered aliens? And what about the many continental species extending their range over the Channel as our climate warms? Last year, we welcomed onto the Heath a striking new species of damselfly, the Willow Emerald, recently spread from Europe, which has now established on almost all of our ponds. How long will we regard it as an alien species?

I am attracted to the pragmatism of this European perspective on aliens. Clearly, we should prevent a serious invasive alien from establishing. If we are too late, then we should try to manage it to non-damaging levels. But for an alien species which is not so damaging, it makes sense that our views on whether it should be here depend on what it brings to the Heath, its pros and cons, including how it affects our biodiversity and our enjoyment of Heath habitats.

The management of alien sycamores and turkey oaks on the Heath is an example of such a pragmatic approach. City of London foresters and volunteers actively remove saplings of both because they would take the space that native trees could occupy. But a tall, established sycamore or turkey oak is a home for many species and an attractive part of a woodland canopy, so it is left. In Britain, we have a rather depauperate fauna and flora, thanks to ice ages and being an island. Might we not see new non-invasive aliens as enhancing our biodiversity and its enjoyment? For instance, is not a London child's first encounter on the Heath with a curious grey squirrel, a noisy Egyptian goose or a bright green parakeet no less special an *experience of nature* as an encounter with a woodpecker or a fox?

I could not conclude without mentioning the alien most Heath enthusiasts love to hate: ringneck parakeets. This is a perfect species with which to practice your new found assimilative approach to aliens. Yes, they are noisy in large flocks, like our crows

Alien Species on the Heath (cont)

and jackdaws, but like these natives they are also great fun to watch, particularly as they establish and guard their nest holes in oaks and other trees in spring.

As to their invasiveness, Heath Hands volunteers have been looking into this over the past year. We have been observing all the birds that use tree holes in Ken and North Woods, which are our *hole-iest* woodland because of the ancient nature of its trees. We were interested to see if parakeets compete for nests with two of our really special Heath natives, jackdaws and stock doves. We found parakeets and natives seem to coexist peacefully, using slightly differently sized holes for their nests. Indeed, we observed they all join together to mob their common, nest-robbing enemies, grey squirrels and crows.

This is not to say parakeets are harmless. Research shows they do compete with native birds at bird-feeders in winter, and we have yet to learn if they affect other birds and bats using tree holes on the Heath. But

eradicating them would be a difficult and probably inhumane exercise. Our best approach may be further study to understand and mitigate any harm they might be doing. Pending this effort, our parakeets seem to have found a fairly non-invasive place in our Heath community, and enriched our biodiversity in the process. In fact, looking into Heath archives, we were surprised to find parakeets first established themselves on the Heath in the 1990s, which coincided with the first 20th century records of jackdaws breeding on the Heath. The alien and the native, now sharing the Heath's tree holes, are both recent arrivals!

Alien species, whether benign and interesting additions to our biodiversity, or harmful invaders demanding action to protect that biodiversity, or something in between, will be a growing component of our Heath fauna and flora. I suggest Heath wanderers be vigilant sentinels, while taking the time to observe and enjoy our new species!

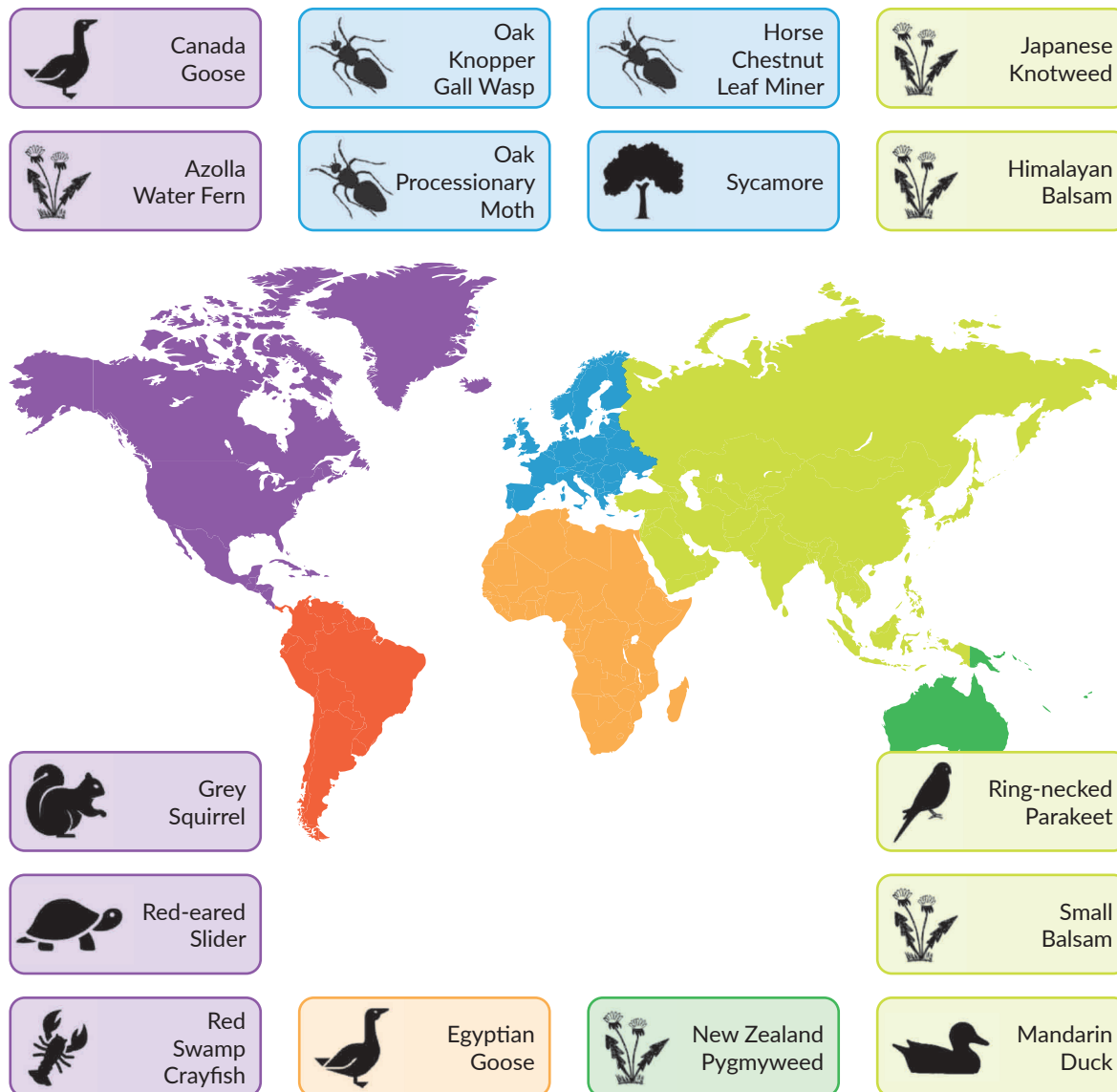


Jackdaw in nest hole. Photo courtesy: Liz Andrew



Ringneck parakeet in nest hole. Photo courtesy: Liz Andrew

Alien Species on the Heath (cont)



Where do our alien species come from? Some of our more common or important Heath aliens and their continents of origin. Symbols indicate whether they are plants, trees, insects or other kinds of animals.



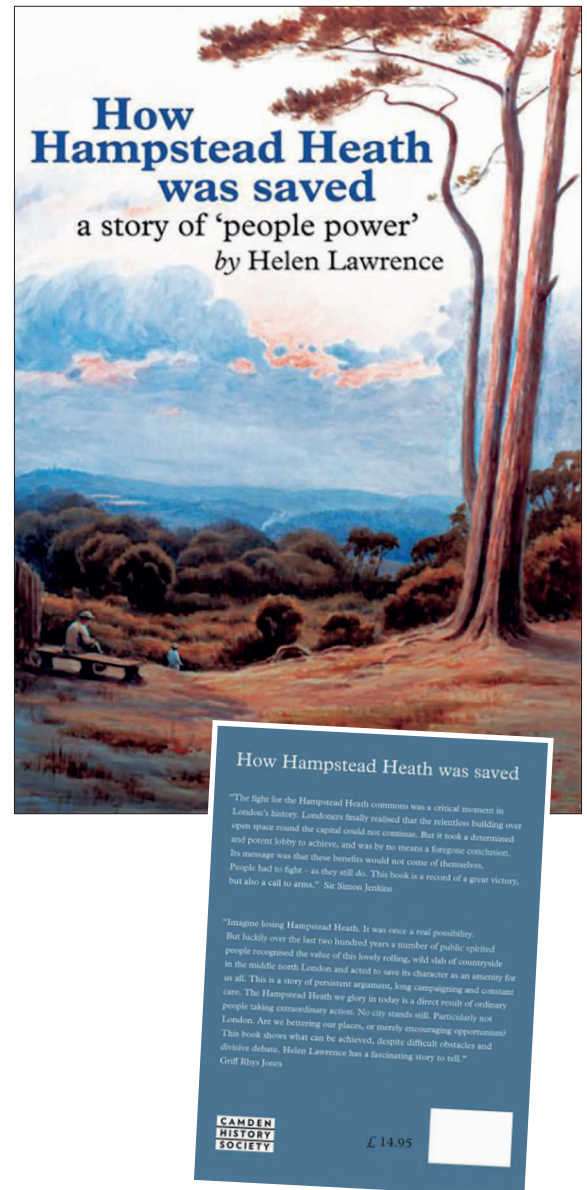
How Hampstead Heath Was Saved – A Story of People Power

A new history of the Heath is the first to tell the fascinating story of the Society: how it not only fought to ensure that the Heath remained natural countryside – not a park – but, as one of the first civic societies in the country, pioneered the idea of democratic accountability. This quite remarkable story of “people-power” continues today and has never been told before. Helen Lawrence (Mrs Helen Marcus) served on the Society’s committee for 25 years, first as Chairman and then as Vice-President.

The campaign to save the Heath was one of national importance, helping to change opinion and encourage others to take action. Of all the open spaces saved for the public in the 19th century, its story is the most extraordinary, involving legal stratagems of every kind, in and out of parliament, vitriolic character assassination, national press campaigns, perjury, wholesale misinformation and even accusations of bribery and blackmail.

A group of formidable people who had campaigned for the Heath went on to be at the heart of what became the new conservation movement, setting up the Commons Preservation Society in 1865 and the National Trust in 1895. They were all involved in the founding of the Hampstead Heath Protection Society in 1897 – today’s Society. This newly researched account places events in the larger historical context of social and political developments and focuses on the role of the individual people involved, many of them eminent public figures.

How Hampstead Heath Was Saved – A Story of People Power is published by the Camden History Society and is available from them and most local bookshops.



Hampstead police station emerges from a cloud!

The campaign continues

by Andrew Neale

Mr Neale is an architect, Chair of the Downshire Hill Residents Association and the Co-Chair of the Hampstead Community for Responsible Development ("HCRD"). HCRD led the fight against the conversion of the Hampstead police station into yet another school for Hampstead. Mr Neale discusses the origins of the fight, its successes to date and what may lie ahead.

The fight goes on to determine the fate of Hampstead police station and the future character of Hampstead village. In November 2019, Camden Council refused a second planning application for conversion to a school, but an appeal by the applicants may follow. We are grateful to all those whose time, effort and money went into overcoming the second misconceived scheme, but please embolden yourselves: the work is not over! Our ambition is to see the building come into full civic use that serves Hampstead's community without exacerbating present congestion and without the harm associated with a school use.

We have three principal tasks ahead of us: 1) Prepare to resist a potential appeal. We would be represented as necessary at a public inquiry before a planning inspector, and expect to argue for additional reasons for refusal, over and above the primary reasons summarised by Camden. 2) Resist further inappropriate or ill-considered applications, whether from the Department for Education ("DfE") or other developers. 3) Promote appropriate re-use of the building and encourage a seemly disposal process by DfE.

Should an appeal materialise, we will expect to expend significant additional resources, both in terms of our time and in the funding of professionals as necessary, to resist the well-resourced DfE and its multitude of consultants. Through a network of relationships all

the principal residents' associations, and organisations including the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum ("HNF"), the HCRD and the Society, have coordinated to present an effective voice to our councillors and our MP.

Hampstead police station, along with five other redundant stations, was transferred to DfE by the Greater London Authority some six years ago. At £14.1 million for the Hampstead site alone, it has to be one of the most expensive in the country. DfE chose not to take heed of local planning policies against further schools in Hampstead, and proceeded to develop a scheme of breathtaking over-development, presumably in the expectation that stipulations of the National Planning Policy Framework regarding preferential treatment for schools would override all local considerations.

Our consultants prepared extensive reports and rebuttals to the first application, which eventually resulted in a recommendation for refusal, unanimously endorsed by Camden's Planning Committee. There was then an extended period of uncertainty whilst DfE conferred with the planners over the reasons for refusal, and the prospects for a further application.

In early 2018, DfE declared it was proceeding with a reduced scheme for 210 pupils, apparently without any cost concerns given an already hugely expensive provision that was nearly doubling in cost per pupil. Subsequently, DfE engaged in a series of consultations to discuss potential interest in an integrated small business centre provision, to take up some of the excess accommodation. The latter was so embedded in the scheme it seemed to many this was a simple ruse for future school expansion. The inclusion of additional space from the rear of the adjacent police

Hampstead police station (cont)

station section house site reinforced this impression.

Members of the HCRD were invited to a series of meetings to discuss how critical issues of design could be addressed, and also to engage in an alternative site search, given DfE's claim that alternatives would be considered. We were more than prepared to join in a search, and left DfE with clear advice we saw intractable issues with the Hampstead site. We engaged in an intense period of activity, but each ostensibly viable option was dismissed without proper and diligent assessment. Had DfE applied these very same objections to the Hampstead site itself, it would have led to DfE similarly dismissing Hampstead as well! Eventually, just before another promising site became available, DfE unilaterally withdrew from the search, and prepared to submit the Hampstead proposal it had been developing.

It was apparent from the submission scheme that scant attention was given to our principal concerns, and the most fundamental issues were, unsurprisingly, not resolved. In the process of negotiating with the local planning authority, we believe the planners gave great weight to the NPPF guidelines and to an inspector's report approving, on appeal, a parallel scheme in Hackney. This seems to have led to a presumption towards a likely recommendation for approval, and this mindset is likely to have informed the design trade-offs in the planning negotiations.

Three primary issues seemed to indicate this perceived pre-disposition. First, traffic generation harm: All local evidence demonstrates the implications of school use, and this impact is recognised in Camden's policy against further schools in Hampstead (highest school density in Europe), unless it can be demonstrated there would be no additional trip generation.

Camden's Traffic Officer was prepared to accept, for existing-use analysis purposes, the highly traffic-intensive Kentish Town police station as a comparator. Whilst this was seen as appropriate and conventional

methodology, we made a strong case that the comparison was invalid, and Camden's Planning Committee rigorously exposed this.

Second, listed building harm: The applicants' consultants claimed that the harm was less than substantial and justified by the benefits. Our heritage consultants advised there would be substantial harm, and the level of harm was in no way justified by claimed benefits. The Council's Conservation Officer formed the view that the restoration and preservation of some principal fabric, as part of a building being brought back into civic use, justified the extent of internal fabric destruction. This reasoning was carefully dissected by Planning Committee members who took the view that the destruction and loss of architectural meaning to the listed building was inappropriate and disproportionate.

Third, amenity noise harm: Our consultants were able to rebut the applicants' analysis and level of noise harm associated with the scheme's playground. Again, the Planning Committee members were rigorous in questioning the planning logic requiring the *hours of use* restrictions as a way of addressing such a fundamental matter of playground noise, directly adjacent to domestic windows a mere metre or so away.

The hard work resisting the application was rewarded when the Planning Committee unanimously refused the application, against the officer's recommendation for approval. The reasons for refusal are on traffic, noise, and air quality grounds, whilst listed building consent was refused because of loss of plan form and of fabric.

Between the first and second planning applications, excellent work was carried out by the HNF in preparation of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan. This embodies a series of local policies that have given weight to a number of issues relevant to the determination of the Hampstead police station

Hampstead police station (cont)

application, counterbalancing the stipulations of the NPPE.

As a result of the inappropriate pursuit of Hampstead police station for a school use, six years have been lost in the provision of a permanent home for Abacus, a cause of great concern to its pupils and parents. Several alternative opportunities are now lost, but new options arise over time and active involvement could lead to an eventual move to permanent accommodation. Meantime, the alarming fall in demand for school places, as a consequence of demographic changes, is forcing Camden to close, mothball and cap school accommodation, notwithstanding the high quality ranking of its school provision. The viability of many excellent schools is threatened with the loss of pupils and the consequent reduction in funding. Camden has the daunting task of resolving these imbalances.

We are actively considering possible uses for the building that would benefit the Hampstead community and protect the environment. The HNF is likely to be at the forefront of this effort.

At the outset of the first planning application, many were dismayed at the prospect of insensitive central government *diktat* overriding local planning considerations. By dint of the concerted effort of numerous individuals and organisations and donors, an historic level of damage to the character of Hampstead village has been averted, for the time being. At no stage during the process has the outcome been assured.

With the same level of dedication and resilience, and the careful consideration and involvement of our councillors and our MP, we should prevail.



Hampstead police station

A Magical Space

by Emilia A. Leese

The former Well Walk Pottery continues to be a haven for imagination and creativity. From a historic pottery, the space will be transformed into The Well Walk Theatre, welcoming children of all ages to share in the magic of puppetry. To read more about the historic past of what is now The Well Walk Theatre, see "Hampstead Shops, Caffe and Characters", by Piers Plowright, Society Newsletter January 2018, Vol 49, No 1.

Zina Drouche was a costume designer for theatres in Paris. When she left that world for London, she used that talent and experience to host imaginative puppet shows for her children's birthdays and weekend performances in Le Petit Pan, a now-closed children's

shop on the High Street. These shows were big hits with everyone, including parents. Today, Zina is creating The Well Walk Theatre, promising it will be an oasis of imagination and creativity befitting its historic pottery past. Zina and her husband, Dylan, are the new owners of the former Well Walk Pottery. Zina's plan, along with illustrator Marina Turmo, is to open a puppet theatre to bring magic back to Hampstead. The building was designated as an Asset of Community Value when the pottery was there and it will continue to be designated as such as the new theatre.

The intention is to have a bookshop up front, a small



Illustrated history of Well Walk Pottery



Illustrated plans for The Well Walk Theatre

café in the back and for the theatre to occupy half of the downstairs area. There will be events, after-school workshops and puppet performances. Despite still being in the planning and designing stage, Zina and Marina wanted to open quickly, even if on a limited basis, to see what they could do and to get the community excited about this project. They put on an evocative and well-attended series of puppet performances during the evening of Halloween 2019. Passers-by were peeping through the window or stopping in, mesmerised by the stories Zina and Marina wove with antique puppets and their wonderful costumes.

I rarely walk by the shop without noticing someone curiously gazing in the window or stopping in to ask questions. And I've had many conversations outside it with a number of neighbours whom I had never before met. In a mark of transparency and to communicate this warmth of community spirit, the shop's windows are illustrated with the history of the site and its vision. Even at this early stage, The Well Walk Theatre is exerting its magical powers.

There is no opening date set quite yet, but keep abreast of special openings and performances by following them on social media, @thewellwalktheatre.



The Well Walk Theatre interior with original shelving and counter



The Well Walk Theatre interior front view

Photographic Competition #myhampsteadheath

The Society runs a regular photographic competition on Instagram.

Joanna Kaze's image is the Society's current winner.



Running away from Monday like...

Matt Maran is the Society's judge for this competition. "This image stood out to me as it's not your typical 'Heath' photograph. The composition is excellent and the runner's body position gives great energy to the picture. Set against the moody backdrop of a stormy sky and the strong primary colours, made this a worthwhile winner", says Matt.

Since 2000, Matt has travelled the world photographing wildlife and landscapes, from Alaskan bears and South-East Asian primates to soda lakes, glacial rivers and primeval forests. His images are represented by Nature Picture Library and have featured in films, books, conversation journals and magazines, including BBC Wildlife, Outdoor Photography and National Geographic. His work has also been awarded in the European Wildlife Photographer of the Year, the Wanderlust Travel Photographer of the Year and the British Wildlife Photography Awards.

See the Society's website for competition rules

Appeal to Members

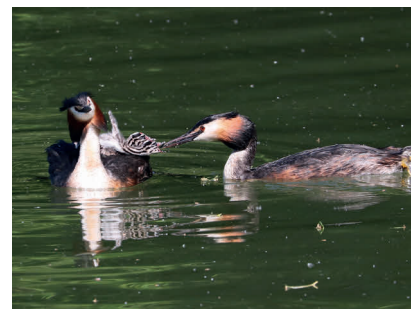
Dear Members,

The Heath Sub-Committee needs your help!

We want to improve our knowledge of where birds are nesting on the Heath. Hearing and seeing wild birds are one of the pleasures of visiting the Heath. Too much disturbance of birds interferes with their feeding and nesting, and will reduce their numbers and diversity. We believe there are about 50 species of birds nesting on the Heath, including many species that will not be found breeding elsewhere in central London. As public use of the Heath increases, we want to ensure these bird species are not lost. By knowing better where on the Heath our birds are nesting, we can help the City of London and English Heritage manage the Heath in a way that maintains its biological diversity.

This spring, we welcome any members who regularly walk on the Heath to report where they see birds nesting. Along with information from City of London other groups, we will use your records to build an understanding of what parts of the Heath are most important for conserving our rich bird fauna. We will provide you with information on how to spot a nesting bird, and a website where you can record your observations.

If you are interested in participating in this survey, please send an email to info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk



Great crested grebe in the Men's Pond.

Photo courtesy: Adrian Brooker

Vivian Suter to 5 April 2020

This is the first London exhibition of work by Argentine-Swiss artist Vivian Suter (b. 1949, Buenos Aires), filling Camden Arts Centre with delicate, but powerful *environmental* paintings, inspired by the Guatemalan rainforest.

The exhibition provides a timely and exciting opportunity to encounter Suter's work at a moment of renewed international interest by Tate Liverpool, a major new commission for Art on the Underground, and a retrospective at Reina Sofia, Madrid.

In 2005, a tropical storm destroyed large parts of Panajachel, Guatemala, her home since 1982, and flooded Suter's studio. Rather than seeing damage in the canvases, which were caked in mud and stained with water marks, Suter saw her work developing in response to, and in harmony with, its environment.

Since then, she has embraced the unpredictability of her adopted home, actively encouraging the intrusion of the elements into her practice. Working between open-air studios and spaces, her unprimed canvases are hung outdoors to absorb the traces of falling leaves, rain water, dirt and passing animals, imprinting on their surface the daily life of the forest.

Opening times:

Tuesday – Sunday, 10am – 6pm • Wednesdays, 10am – 9pm • Closed Mondays

Camden Arts Centre, Arkwright Road, NW3 6DG

Nearest Station: Finchley Road (Underground); Finchley Road and Frognal (Overground)

T +44(0)20 7472 5500 • E info@camdenartscentre.org • W www.camdenartscentre.org



Vivian Suter with Elisabeth Wild La Canicula. Installation view The Power Plant, Toronto, 2018



Spring 2020 Events in the Library

Saturday 28 March 10-4pm

Giant Book Sale

Thousands of high-quality books for sale at bargain prices. Free Entry

Donations Welcome

Time to spring clean those shelves! We would be very grateful for donations of art books, novels, history books, biographies and children's books – in good condition only please, (sorry, we can't accept encyclopaedias, text books, catalogues or magazines). We keep the books we need for our stock, and the rest are sold to raise essential funds to keep the library open.



Thursday 2 April 7.30pm

Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Singers Recital

Stephanie Wake-Edwards (mezzo-soprano), ByeongMin Gil (bass-baritone), Patrick Milne (piano)

Come and hear the opera stars of tomorrow. These singers are already performing on the main stage of the ROH.

We promise you an amazing evening

Note: this recital will take place at Rosslyn Hill Chapel. Tickets £12



Children's Events

Rhyme-Time every Tuesday & Friday, 10.30am, £3 per child on the door.

Chess Class every Saturday, 2.30pm, £5 per child on the door.

Book tickets by calling the library ☎ 020 7431 1266 or online at www.wegotickets.com
To keep up to date with our events, join our mailing list Email keatscommunitylibrary@gmail.com

KCL Events are generously supported by



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28a Hampstead High St. NW3 1QA
osborneslaw.com

Events at Burgh House & Hampstead Museum

Isokon and the Bauhaus in Britain

Wednesday 26 February, 7:30pm

Built in 1934 for Jack and Molly Pritchard, the Isokon building by Wells Coates, formerly known as Lawn Road Flats, was England's first modernist apartment building, and was hugely influential in pioneering the concept of minimal living. Its flats, bar and dining club would become an extraordinary creative nexus for international artists, writers and thinkers, including the Bauhausers Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Agatha Christie, Philip Harben, Adrian Stokes and even a network of Soviet spies. The Pritchards circle also included the surrounding Hampstead artist community, not least Herbert Read, Henry Moore,

Naum Gabo, Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth.

The authors Leyla Daybelge & Magnus Englund will be giving a richly illustrated talk about the story of the Isokon, the Pritchards artistic network and the legacy of the Bauhaus artists during their time in Britain.

Tickets £10 (£8 Friends & u25s) available from burghhouse.org.uk

How “the most dangerous spy in history” was recruited in Hampstead

Thursday 27 February, 7:30pm

For the Kuczynskis, fighting fascism by helping the KGB was a Hampstead family business. When a young scientist came to them wanting to share Britain's nuclear bomb secrets, they knew exactly what to do. Which is how Klaus Fuchs, now called the most dangerous spy in history' came to be recruited in a cultural centre in Upper Park Road NW3. The family story is told by Stewart Purvis, creator of the Hampstead Spies guided walk, who has researched all the files. Tickets £8 (£6 Friends & u25s) available from burghhouse.org.uk

The Story of Radio

Wednesday 4 March, 7:30pm

David is a seasoned radio executive who's worked across all formats in the UK - managing the Century, Galaxy, LBC and Virgin brands. He began his career at Nottingham's Radio Trent in 1980, where he became an award-winning broadcaster. Three years were spent at the former regulator, the Radio Authority, where he was responsible for overseeing compliance regulation for programming and advertising, including creating the system of Formats and of the early DAB licensing.

David spent a year at the coal-face in BBC local radio - and a famously brief spell as a BBC regional head of TV and radio - before becoming part of the management buy-in, with Orion Media, of a clutch of major Midlands stations (including the former BRMB, Beacon, Mercia, Wyvern and Heart 106). He played a key role in re-branding the stations as Free and Gem. The stations were sold to Bauer in 2016.

David is a radio historian, blogger, archivist and producer of the award-nominated legacy audio podcast series Conversations.

Tickets £10 (£8 Friends & u25s) available from burghhouse.org.uk

Family Easter Fun

Friday 10 April, 12-2pm

Join us for this Easter. Crafts and storytelling and load of fun will be waiting for your family in this day. Advance booking is essential.

Ages 8 and under, children must be accompanied by an adult. £10 per child, available from burghhouse.org.uk

Burgh House
New End Square, NW3 1LT
☎ 020 7431 0144
info@burghhouse.org.uk
www.burghhouse.org.uk
[@burghhouse1704](https://www.burghhouse.org.uk)

House & Museum
Open 12–5pm Wed, Thu, Fri & Sun

Café
Open 10am–5pm Wed, Thu & Fri,
9:30am–5:30pm weekends



Heath Walks: 2020

Walks are normally held on the first Sunday of every month except January. Most start from Burgh House, New End Square, London NW3 1LT – 10 minutes walk from Hampstead Tube Station (for map see www.burghhouse.org.uk).

NB: *Parking is extremely difficult locally, especially in spring and summer; the West Heath car park (behind Jack Straw's Castle) is more likely to have spaces than the East Heath car park.*

Starting times are either 2:30pm or 10:30am (9:30am for birds), depending on season and subject matter.

Walks last approximately two hours. They do not necessarily follow made-up paths; you are recommended to wear suitable footwear as conditions may be rough or muddy.

You will be invited to make a minimum donation of £5, to be collected at the beginning of each walk, to help support future walks programmes and to promote the Society's activities generally.

Children are always welcome so long as they are suitably shod, can walk reasonable distances and are accompanied by an adult taking full responsibility for them.

Further information from the walks organiser, Thomas Radice

mobile: 07941 528 034 or

email: hhs.walks@gmail.com

2 February 10.30am (meet at **The Old Bull & Bush**, North End Way, NW3)

Laughter in the Landscape: a walk to celebrate 'Grimaldi Sunday'

Explore 'Appy' Ampstead with accredited guide Lester Hillman, academic adviser to the Camden Tour Guides Association and to the Islington Archaeology and History Association. **NB: restricted numbers – advance booking essential**

1 March 10.30am (meet at **Burgh House**)

The history of the Hampstead Heath ponds

led by Marc Hutchinson, Chair of the Society and Secretary of the Hampstead Heath Winter Swimming Club.

5 April 9.30am (meet at **Burgh House**)

Birds of the Heath led by John Hunt, member of the Society and former Chair of the Marylebone Birdwatching Society.

3 May 2.30pm (meet in **North End Way, by entrance to Inverforth Close**)

The Pergola, the Hill Garden and Golders Hill Park led by Thomas Radice, Trustee of the Society and member of the Heath Sub-Committee.

7 June 2.30pm (meet at **Burgh House**)

Heavenly Herbs and Wondrous Weeds on Hampstead Heath led by Lynda Cook and Melissa Fairbanks, members of the Society's Heath Sub-Committee.

Save these dates for future walks:

5 July 2.30pm

4 October 2.30pm

2 August 2.30pm

1 November 10.30am

6 September 9.30am

6 December 10.30am

Further walks will be announced in each future Newsletter. Details of walk programmes will be available on the Society's website:

www.HeathandHampstead.org.uk

@HandHSocHeath

