



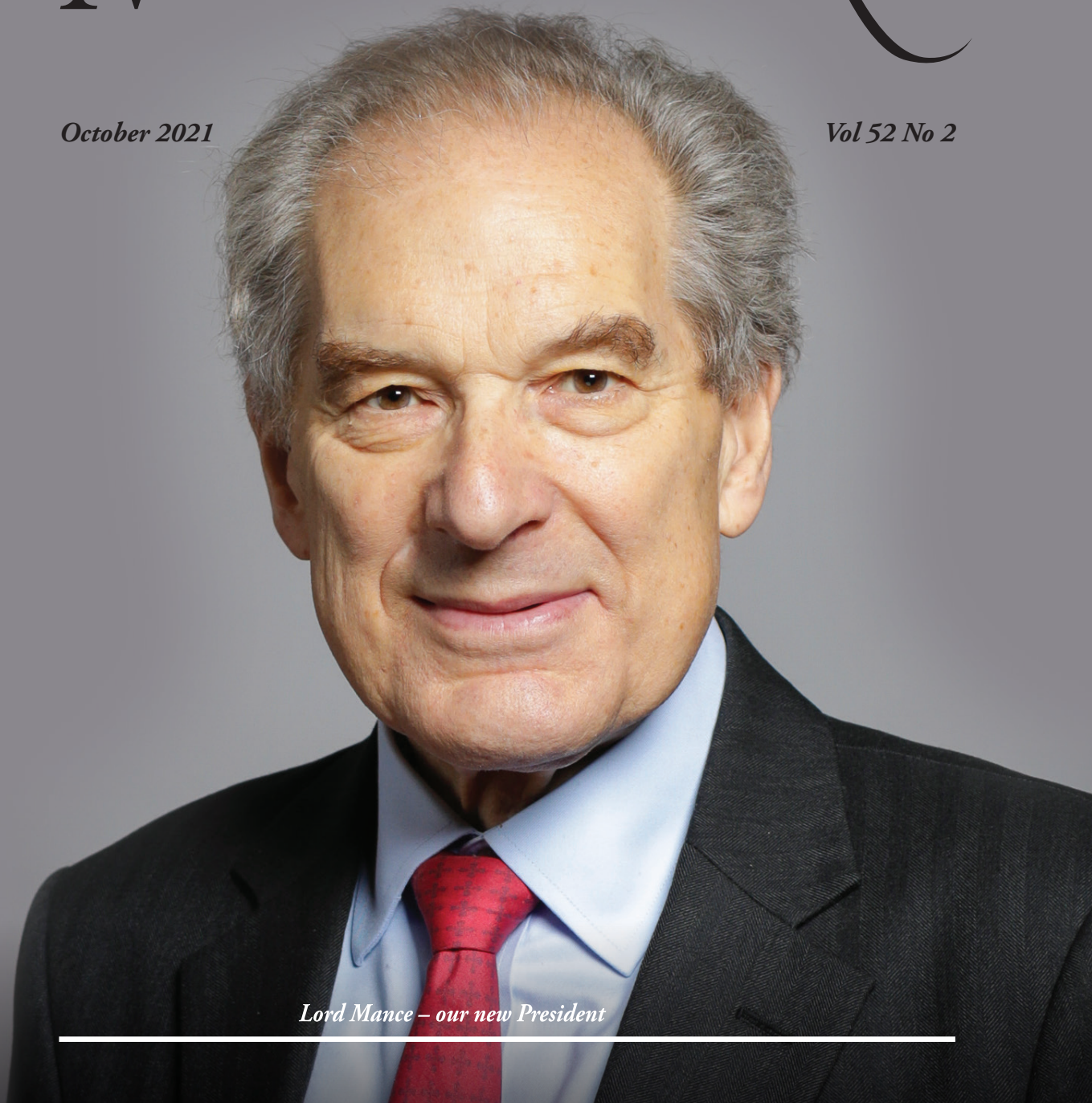
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The Heath & Hampstead Society

NEWSLETTER

October 2021

Vol 52 No 2



Lord Mance – our new President

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Chair's Notes

by Marc Hutchinson

As anticipated in my Annual Report in the May Newsletter, I am pleased to say that the life of the Society, like the condition of Hampstead Heath, is returning to normal. We have been particularly grateful to have been able to host events marking the Heath's 150th anniversary, as reported in the Heath Report in this Newsletter. The sesquicentenary kicked off with a party at Keats House hosted by the Lord Mayor of London whose speech is reprinted on page 18, and the erection of monolithic information boards at South End Green and at other main entry points to the Heath.



*Information monoliths celebrating the sesquicentenary.
Courtesy: City of London Corporation, 2021, CC-BY-NC-ND*

Annual General Meeting 2021

The Annual General Meeting took place as planned at St Stephen's, Rosslyn Hill. The most important piece of business was the retirement, after 17 years as our President, of Lord Hoffmann ("Lennie" to the Society) and the election of his successor, Lord Mance.

Tony Hillier, my predecessor as Chair, spoke about how, following the stepping down of the formidable Peggy Jay as President, he was tasked with finding the new President and how he regarded his greatest achievement as Chair to have been persuading Lennie to accept the

Chair's Notes (cont)



Lord Hoffman, Lord Bragg and Lord Mance at the Annual General Meeting. Courtesy: Ham & High

presidency. He recalled the three great topics which had engaged him and Lennie during his time as Chair: “pubs [licensing and hours], ponds and basements”.

I spoke about my time as Chair working with Lennie, including on various legal cases and the Dams Project. I said he had been an outstanding President who from the beginning had involved himself in the work of the Society, including attending General Committee meetings despite the numerous demands on his time from his other commitments.

The Society presented him with the original of a rare book, published in 1912, entitled *Hampstead – its historic houses and its literary and artistic associations*, by Anna Maxwell. This was paid for personally by the trustees on the General Committee and the excess funds contributed have been passed, at Lennie’s request, to Burgh house. We send him and his wife Gillian our best wishes for the future. Lennie will maintain his connection with the Society, having agreed to become one of its Patrons.

Lennie replied by recalling how he and Gillian had come to live in Hampstead in 1960 and how they had lived here ever since. He recalled the many campaigns successfully fought by the Society and thanked all those who had served the Society and supported him during his presidency. He then introduced Lord Mance (“Jonathan” to the Society) whom he had,

coincidentally, tutored at Oxford.

Jonathan replied, comparing and contrasting his and Lennie’s respective legal and judicial careers. He recalled his and his wife’s own connection with, and time in, Hampstead; they had loved Hampstead ever since moving to London, in particular its variety of architecture, its great houses, its village atmosphere, its small streets and ways, and the Heath. He looked forward to his new role in the Society.

The draft minutes of the Annual General Meeting are on the Society’s website.

Jack Straw’s Castle

At the time of the May Newsletter the outcome of this appeal was not known. Alas, and as I reported in a subsequent email to members, the appeal was allowed by the Inspector.

In allowing it, she departed from the reasoned views of all the previous inspectors who had turned down appeals to build on the site, ignored the biodiversity arguments and, most shockingly, reasoned, in an Alice-in-Wonderland fashion, that although relevant Heath views would clearly be lost as a result of the new buildings, Heath visitors could escape the impact of the loss by walking away into the more heavily wooded areas.

Notwithstanding what we regard as these flaws in the decision, our counsel and Camden did not see the basis for an appeal to the court. So, this decision stands as a terrible setback and precedent for us and the City in our joint attempts to stop building on the very edge of the Heath. Remember, no planning permissions have been given in recent decades to allow any new building on the edge of the Heath, and that the Society extended its charitable objects in 1933 specifically to include the prevention of inappropriate building on the Heath fringes.

There is one unfinished aspect to the outcome of this appeal, namely the revised roof plans which the developer handed up to the Inspector during the hearing showing that the roofs extend, in a trespassing manner, onto the Heath itself. The City is now in discussion with the developers and Camden on this unanticipated problem the developers now face.

Planning reform

In the May Newsletter, we noted, despairingly, the proposed reform of national planning laws and the serious adverse impact of that reform on the green belt and local input into the planning process generally. At the time of going to press with this Newsletter, the Government is, as a result of public and backbench pressure, reportedly not proceeding with the "reform". If true, this is wonderful news, but we need to look into the detail of what alternative reform proposals are in prospect.

Licensing

I have disappointing news on the licensing front. South End Green is a notorious habitat for street drinkers who gather by Hampstead Heath Overground Station, on the grassy approach to the Heath, and at the fountain traffic island at the bottom of Pond Street. They constitute a serious public nuisance, begging from, accosting and threatening passers-by. They leave litter, and along with the other begging drug addicts, their presence and behaviour seriously degrade what should be an attractive row of small shops and cafés leading onto one of the main entrances of the Heath. Public drunkenness also occurs on the Heath, and the City has supported us in our opposition to new off-licences.

In South End Green, three new off-licences have effectively been issued by Camden Council in the last 12 months. A new wine bar called MUST is opening at 63 South End Road and it has been granted

a licence for on- and off-sales. We, the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum, the Safer Neighbourhood Forum and local residents objected to the latter because of the problem of street drinking. The residents of Wentworth Mansions objected on that ground and also on the ground of the late-night noise from the wine bar entering their flats above. All the objections were unsuccessful. Each of the applicant, the Council licensing officer and the police claimed the imposition of conditions on the application would mean that, in practice, street drinkers would not go there to buy their cheap alcohol.

The tiny take-away ice cream counter, The Nook, at 43 South End Road has also applied for an off-licence. Again, despite objections in relation to public nuisance, the licence was granted on the basis that certain conditions proposed by the police – e.g. no spirits or cider may be sold – would prevent the outlet being patronised by street drinkers.

The greatest disappointment has been the success of the appeal by the owners of Heath News at 41 South End Road. An off-licence was refused to them in 2020 at these premises because, in the view of the police, the outlet would, like the other general off-licensed stores in South End Green, contribute to the problem of street drinking. The owners then appealed to Highbury Corner Magistrates Court. I and several residents prepared witness statements to assist Camden Council in responding to the appeal. My own witness statement included several contemporary photographs of street drinkers in South End Green, taken on a single day. Nevertheless, Camden's barrister advised Camden that the chances of the appeal succeeding were 80%, following the imposition by the police of further restrictions (related to minimum pricing and reduced permitted sales hours viz. 10am-4pm) as a condition for withdrawing their objection. Faced with those odds,

Chair's Notes (cont)

Camden understandably decided not to contest the appeal, which means Heath News will now get its off-licence.

With off-licences in South End Green being handed out at this rate, it will not be long before most of the outlets in the area are off-licences. There were already five off-licences at South End Green before the ones mentioned above. The increase will inevitably contribute to the problem of street drinking and anti-social behaviour. The existing general store outlets licensed for off-sales routinely sell alcohol to street drinkers and, as I have demonstrated to Camden, even do so outside their licensed hours. But no enforcement action, either by Camden in penalising the outlets for breaching their licences, or by the police in relation to anti-social behaviour, is effectively being taken.

This entirely unsatisfactory situation has led the Town Sub-Committee to think of new ways of dealing with it. Provisionally, the Sub-Committee is considering three responses: (i) to get local residents to complain frequently and formally (so there is a record) to Camden and to the Metropolitan Police over instances of breaches of the licences or anti-social behaviour; (ii) to raise the overall problem with Camden by responding to the current consultation over the renewal (for another five years, 2023 to 2027) of Camden's Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing Act 2003; and (iii) to seek to have South End Green declared a "cumulative impact policy area". This would bring in the legally rebuttable presumption that any new off-licence in the area would normally be refused if it was likely to add to the existing cumulative impact (of anti-social behaviour etc).

Retirement of the Heath Superintendent

To mark the retirement of Bob Warnock, the Heath Superintendent since 2013, I hosted a drinks party at my house to which we invited senior Heath staff

and representatives of the Highgate Society, the Vale of Health Society, the Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association and the City. The weather was clement and the party was most enjoyable, not least because this was the first time the guests had actually seen each other (except via Zoom) for the past 15 months and this was their first large social function since the first lockdown. Bob made a very interesting and amusing speech of thanks, after which we and the organisations mentioned above presented him with a large painting entitled *Poplars in the Vale* (of Health) done by long-standing Heath Sub-Committee member and Heath artist Janice Hardiman. Bob's speech is printed in this Newsletter on page 20 and it gives a unique grassroots insight into what it takes to run the Heath. I and the other representatives present said how



Past and present Hampstead Heath Management Committee Chairmen (Jeremy Simons OBE, Anne Fairweather and Karina Dostolova) and Superintendent Bob Warnock at retirement party. Courtesy: Ron Vester



Senior Heath staff and Heath Superintendent Bob Warnock at retirement party. Courtesy: Ron Vester



*Janice Hardiman presents the painting *Poplars in the Vale* to the Heath Superintendent. Courtesy: Ron Vester*

grateful we were to Bob (and his team) for all their work in protecting and maintaining the Heath as the God-sent retreat it has been shown to be, especially during the pandemic lockdowns.

We wish Bob (a keen sailor) and his wife Christine every happiness in their retirement to the South Coast near Chichester. Bob is already involved in local conservation projects there.

Piers Plowright

We were sorry to learn of the passing of local broadcaster and writer Piers Plowright, one of Hampstead's most famous residents. He was an active supporter of its institutions, including Burgh House and Keats Community Library. Although never a member of the Society, he was a supporter of it and its work, and was an occasional contributor to its Newsletter. I have written in sympathy to his widow.

Dafydd James-Williams

Dafydd has had unexpectedly to step down from the General Committee for family reasons. He was originally appointed with special responsibility for schools-outreach but was unable to achieve much in that regard owing to the pandemic. We thank him for

his service and wish him and his family well.

Town Sub-Committee – new members

This Sub-Committee deals with all matters affecting Hampstead Town other than planning. Thus, it deals with licensing, rubbish collection, traffic, pollution, the Hampstead Card scheme, and generally the protection of the amenity of the area. The committee is looking to recruit one or more new members. If any Society members would be interested in joining the committee, they should contact its Chair, Andrew Haslam-Jones on 07768 720 97 or by email on ahj1966@gmail.com

The Newsletter

I received an unexpected message from our Patron, Sir Simon Jenkins:

I have finally come round to reading your latest newsletter. I receive a mass of conservation society literature but this really is the best. I think I read it cover to cover. Not only is it a mountain of information but it gives me – still a regular Heath walker – a wonderful insight into the frenzy of activity that goes into keeping this Europe's most splendid urban park. I was particularly intrigued by how you are recovering from the mud-bath horrors of last winter. As for the town, I felt I had read six months of old Ham & Highs in one go. As one of your proud patrons I have to say congratulations.

This is praise indeed for our Editor, Emilia Leese, the layout skills of Tania Oates from Lonsdale Direct Print, and our contributors who maintain the Newsletter's high standards. I hope you will be joining me for Sir Simon's glass-in-hand talk on Traumas in London's History on 26 October – see the notice on page 8.

Christmas Party

Our Christmas Party will be held at Burgh House on Wednesday 8 December 2021. Please see the enclosed invitation.

Heath Report

by John Beyer and Professor Jeff Waage

Recovery from the worst of Covid

It has been a pleasure to see the recovery of green where the sides of paths and other areas were trodden down and turned to mud during the height of the Covid lockdown. We are grateful to Heath staff for addressing this issue so methodically.



Society Patron, Lord Melvyn Bragg, in conversation with Nick Harkaway



We have also seen the “green shoots” of a spirit of revival through a series of events, hosted or co-hosted by the Society, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the 1871 Hampstead Heath Act. The last of these was held on 9 September. It was a special showing of the film *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, based on the novel by John le Carré, organised by Hideaway Cinema as an outdoor event near the Lido. Approximately 650 people attended and all used headphones to avoid annoyance to neighbours. The Society’s Patron, Melvyn Bragg, and one of the author’s sons, Nick Harkaway, himself a novelist, introduced the film.

On 27 June, we enjoyed a Kite Festival on Kite Hill, and on 5 September, a *Natural Aspect* concert. The Society is planning further events in 2022, and has pencilled in a kite event on Sunday 26 June, which is the nearest weekend in the calendar to the anniversary of the 1871 Act. Our thanks again to Heath staff for their co-operation. See *Kites and a Concert to Celebrate 150 Years of the Heath* by the organiser, Melissa Fairbanks, in this issue.

Farewell to Bob Warnock and welcome to Richard Gentry

The Society’s Chair, Marc Hutchinson, hosted a splendid party for Bob Warnock on his retirement as Heath Superintendent (see *Chair’s Notes* in this Newsletter). We are delighted that Richard Gentry has agreed to take on the role of Acting Heath Superintendent while the recruitment process for a new superintendent runs. The Society knows Richard well, not just for his role in heading the Heath Constabulary, but as the lead on many contentious projects.



Acting Heath Superintendent Richard Gentry. Courtesy: Ron Vester

Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee

On 6 September, Thomas Radice stood down as the Society's representative on the City's Consultative Committee, which advises on the detail of how the Heath is run. Thomas has scanned tomes of material, which make up the committee papers, to extract what really matters to the Society and presented our point of view with persistence and eloquence. Thomas will remain the Society's representative on the Kenwood Landscape Forum, a trustee on the Society's General Committee and a member of the Heath Sub-Committee. He is succeeded on the Consultative Committee by Professor Jeff Waage.

Branch Hill Pond

The project, initiated by the Redington Frognaal Association (and supported by the Society), to create a pond at Branch Hill on or near the site of a pond in the painting by John Constable has continued to make progress, albeit not as fast as we had hoped and expected. The City has taken the lead in applying for planning permission; this fits with the intention of using Heath staff to construct the pond, undertake planting for wildlife and look after it once it is established.

Licences for professional dog walkers

Based on a survey of current usage of the Heath by professional dog walkers, the City is looking at ways to issue licences on a zoning basis. This might mean more licences in total than the 40 that had been originally envisaged, but in limited areas rather than Heath-wide. The zones open to the walkers would need to dovetail with sections of the Heath identified by the Society's Nesting Bird Survey as vital to protect nesting sites.



East Heath car park resurfaced. Courtesy: Marc Hutchinson

East Heath car park

Residents around South End Green will recall that, until last year, heavy rain on the gravel car park surface caused the gravel to wash away down East Heath Road. The problem has now been fixed by the relaying of a firmer surface and the installation of a giant underground rainwater attenuation storage tank which, we can report, completely fulfilled its function during the recent floods.

Biodiversity boards

The boards projecting the need to protect biodiversity on the Heath were originally planned as a one-year initiative to mark the sesquicentenary. We believe the messages they convey, on the need to protect the Heath, will remain just as necessary in the future. Professor Jeff Waage will once again lead a partnership to produce new boards for 2022-2023. The autumn boards for 2021 are now in place.

Heath Report (cont)

2021 Nesting Bird Survey

The 2021 Nesting Bird Survey was conducted between April and July. It involved a team of 12 people walking 17km of Heath transects every fortnight and recording nesting-related behaviour. The team recorded 51 species of birds, 45 of which are considered to be nesting on the Heath. Some, like cuckoos, were just passing through. We had a particularly good year for nesting birds of prey, including Kestrel, Sparrow Hawk, Tawny Owl and, for the first time this century at least, Buzzard. On the basis of our 2020 survey, a part of Hedge Two on the East Heath was fenced off to protect scrub habitat for nesting Whitethroat, one of our rarest birds, where they bred successfully this year.

Greening the edges of the Heath

The failure to stop the new housing development at Jack Straw's Castle has focused the Society's attention on protecting the edges of the Heath, and the potential loss of important green buffers. Alongside other organisations, the Society will be objecting to the upcoming proposal for the development of Murphy's Yard, located southeast of the main Heath, on the basis of the height and massing of its proposed residential tower blocks. The Society will also explore the opportunity to turn part of Murphy's Yard into a wildlife corridor, linking the Heath with other parts of *wild* London.

Sir Simon Jenkins on “*Traumas in London's History*”

***The Society presents this Glass-in-Hand lecture
at Rosslyn Hill Chapel, 3 Pilgrim's Place, Hampstead NW3 1NG
on Tuesday, 26 October 2021 at 7.30pm***

The welcome guest speaker will be long-time Society Patron Sir Simon Jenkins, best-selling author and former editor of the Evening Standard and The Times, and former Chair of the National Trust. The background to his topical talk is his most recent book,

A Short History of London: The Creation of a World Capital.

Entry is £12 payable on the door, or you can book and pay via Eventbrite, the link for which will appear on our website nearer the time. If you wish to attend, in order that we may anticipate numbers, please email info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk

Refreshments will be available and copies of the author's books will be available for sale.

Town Report

by Andrew Haslam-Jones

As we emerge, blinking, from lockdown, life carries obstinately on.

Flooding

Flooding has been quite an issue over recent months in and around Hampstead. Occasionally, the Society is able to help. One of our members living near The Mount was very impressed with the speed with which Camden Council officers responded to our plea to clear a blocked culvert causing an overflow in the street. Elsewhere, near South End Green, the heavy downpours in July caused several severe problems. Despite the apparent effectiveness of the Heath dams, the sheer volume of water pouring off the Heath not only caused South End Road to flood, twice, outside Hampstead Heath Station, but it also resulted in water rising up through the floor tiles of the basements of nearby houses. Keats Grove also suffered some flooding from excess water, in part, apparently caused by blocked drains. It seems the amount of water falling in these sudden and unusual quantities may simply be too great for the current drainage system to cope with.

Delivery mopeds and bikes

There have been more complaints about the delivery mopeds occasionally swarming on the double yellow lines outside Bimba Y Lola on the other side of Hampstead High Street from the tube station. Readers of the Newsletter will recall this has become a persistent problem. During one day in July, the Town Sub-Committee was approached with several complaints when a particularly large number of delivery mopeds had gathered. Fortunately, the Society was able to contact Camden Council officers who dealt with the problem very quickly. They promised to increase the presence of enforcement officers to ensure the mopeds were not parking illegally and adding to the traffic congestion that plagues the centre of Hampstead.

Hampstead Transport Partnership

On that note, the Hampstead Transport Partnership has launched a short online questionnaire on the future of transport and traffic in Hampstead. This Partnership comprises local community groups and councillors. It is organised under the auspices of Jessica Learmond-



Food delivery mopeds outside Bimba Y Lola

Town Report (cont)

Criqui who is a member of this Sub-Committee and whom many will know from her e-mail circular *I Love Hampstead*. The Partnership covers Camden's Frognal and Hampstead Town wards.

Those of you who receive emails from the Society will have received the questionnaire. The Partnership is hoping to use the questionnaire to pique interest in the many questions surrounding how transport in Hampstead can be better managed. Following the results of the questionnaire, the Partnership intends to engage with a broad range of residents and other local groups to develop a transport strategy to help Camden Council take an integrated approach to decisions affecting the Partnership's area.

New constituency boundaries

The Society's Chair, Marc Hutchinson, used the existence of the Hampstead Transport Partnership in the Society's response to the 2023 Review by the Boundary Commission for England. The consultation closed on 3 August, with a further chance to respond early next year. The 2023 Review reduces the number of London constituencies from 75 to 73, seeks to equalise the number of voters in each constituency and, to do that, completely redraws existing constituency boundaries. The Review creates new constituencies, using council wards as the base unit. Hampstead Town ward is in the newly proposed constituency of Camden Town and St. John's Wood. However, Frognal is placed in the new constituency of West Hampstead and Kilburn. While the Society is loath to intrude on political matters, the separation of Frognal, existing border of which runs through Hampstead, and Hampstead Town appears to be contrary to the Boundary Commission's own guidelines by dividing an existing community. We await the Boundary Commission's response.

All Boundary Commission materials can be found online on the Boundary Commission's website <https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk>

Licensing

Madhavan Raman, aka Maddy, is the Sub-Committee member who monitors licensing applications and he has been busy of late. There have been several applications for alcohol licences in South End Green in particular. The Society is not opposed to the sale of alcohol per se. Provided the applicant's proposed hours are within the guidelines in Camden's planning policy, and they agree to comply with any conditions requested by the police, the Society is unlikely to object to an on-licence application. However, there are concerns about alcohol-fuelled anti-social behaviour on the Heath and in South End Green. The Society will continue to monitor licence applications. In further news, Maddy has also recently been elected to the Society's General Committee. Congratulations, Maddy!

Hampstead Business Improvement District

Contrary to the expectations reported in the May issue of the Newsletter, the Hampstead Business Improvement District (the BID) was not put to a vote for a further five-year term. As a result, the BID has ceased to exist and is, we understand, being wound down. This Sub-Committee appreciated the BID's willingness to work with the Society to address issues affecting Hampstead's commercial heart. It is not yet clear what might replace the BID as a voice for businesses in Hampstead or when that might be. It is useful to have a body representing Hampstead businesses with which the Society can liaise, especially when mutually relevant issues arise.

Planning Report

by David Castle

The Society is a member of both *Civic Voice*, a national charity for civic groups in England, and *The London Forum*, which is a similar organisation serving London. Both are very active in campaigning, for example, against the many changes affecting the planning system.

Civic Voice has recently been involved in re-starting the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Civic Societies, which will give access to Parliament for civic groups. Following the warnings in the UN Report on Climate Change, *Civic Voice* has also recently asked the provocative question: *what can civic groups do to help limit climate change?*

Planning law and policies are full of worthy words about taking decisions to limit climate change, protecting ecology and trees, but these are all too frequently ignored in practice. The Society, in common with many other similar civic groups, does campaign successfully to save trees, prevent unnecessary demolition of buildings, stop building on gardens and limit vehicle use, all of which help limit climate change. If planning law were changed to give more protection to trees and gardens and allowed more access to the decision-making process in Camden's Planning Department, we would have more success.

The secretive, biased Pre-Application Advice process

Applicants considering making a planning application are able to pay for exclusive, secret access to the Camden planning officers whilst local people and local councillors are not informed or allowed to take part. We now have evidence of several cases where the officers have heavily supported a particular design

of an application without an open discussion with those most affected by the proposal. In this process, the planning officers often do not outline the policies involved with respect to an application, identify the problems needing to be solved and the information required to do so. An open discussion would have revealed problems or obstacles ignored or overlooked by the officers giving the Pre-Application advice.

This one-sided advice process leads to submission of a planning application for which the applicant, quite reasonably, expects to receive a rubber-stamp approval. In a recent case, the Planning Department submitted a 'Recommendation to Approve' to the Planning Committee for an application which had received a very favourable pre-application advice. Notably, such recommendations are hardly ever overridden by the Planning Committee. The application received furious objections from all the local groups and people involved.

At Planning Committee Hearings, the many objectors must share only five minutes to speak, which is nowhere near enough time to challenge the opinions of the Planning Department. In fact, the Planning Committee is not the place for a discussion of the complex issues involved in many applications. The issues should be resolved to everyone's satisfaction before the Committee decision, which is exactly what the Pre-Application process is supposed to do.

If, both before and during the planning process, the planning officers would engage with local councillors and objectors, many dubious, poor-quality applications could be improved, then receive approval, not go on to appeal and save time, money and effort for the developer, the Council and the local people most affected by the application.

Planning Report (cont)

Another questionable Pre-Application recommendation: 14A Hampstead Hill Gardens

Following a recent Pre-Application, a full planning application for a large detached house is now being considered by the Council. The dwelling would be constructed on the site of two garages between two very different houses: one, a tall and grand Italianate stucco villa, and the other a low brick Edwardian house. The contrast could hardly be greater.

When asked to comment on such a Pre-Application, Camden planning officers should immediately ask: 1) should the gap be filled with building or left open; and 2) is it possible to design a house on this site which can fit between two such different houses without making either, or both, look out of place or even ridiculous – and therefore detract from the existing quality of the Conservation Area?

Unfortunately, instead of explaining the problems implicit in the site to enable the designers to make a

satisfactory non-contentious application, the Pre-Application advice praises the proposal. Once again, local objectors are faced with a time-consuming and expensive struggle to convince the Planning Department of the severe faults of the application.

Even if an application is refused by Camden, the applicant with a favourable Pre-Application Statement is likely to go straight to an appeal, where the Inspector can, and likely will, take such Pre-Application advice into account in deciding the appeal.

Heath House

We are frequently asked about Heath House, a listed building in a prominent position which has stood sad, dilapidated and unused for more than 40 years.

About ten years ago, its owners obtained planning permission to add a large extension. Recently, they have been in discussion with Camden planning officers to make minor changes. In the last six months, Camden has heard nothing further from the owners.

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

Kites and a Concert to Celebrate 150 Years of the Heath

by Melissa Fairbanks

To celebrate the Heath's anniversary milestone, Melissa Fairbanks led the efforts to organise an extraordinary kite flying display on the almost-eponymously named place and a mini music festival echoing the original sentiments pertaining to the Heath.

Kites on Kite Hill!

On June 27 the very first kite flying display took place on one of kite flying's most iconic and historic sites – our very own Kite Hill, atop the Heath.

It was the first of many events to mark the 150th anniversary of the 1871 Hampstead Heath Act. All concerned looked to the glowering skies hoping for the best possible weather. The esteemed members of the Kite Society of Great Britain declared the wind to be perfect and the rain, which had been constantly threatening all week, miraculously held off until a downpour at the very end of the day.

The Kite Society of Great Britain was founded in 1979 and has grown to be recognised as the leading organisation for kite fliers in Great Britain, with over 3,500 members worldwide. The Society was lucky to find them available only due to Covid curtailing their previously planned events worldwide. With tireless help from Paul Maskell from the City, the Society managed to organise this display. We welcomed Jon and Gill Bloom, Presidents of the Kite Society, and a dozen other members, all of whom have extraordinary skills and have made kite flying their life's passion.

Like many, I had only seen and experienced the most basic forms of kite flying: a triangle of flimsy material on the end of a string, which invariably ended up either broken or tangled in branches. Witnessing expert



A variety of kites. Courtesy: Ron Vester



Kites and crowds on Kite Hill. Courtesy: Ron Vester



The majestic 81-kite train. Courtesy: Ron Vester

Kites and a Concert to Celebrate 150 Years of the Heath (cont)

kite flying took the experience to an entirely different level: not only the *kind* of kites, from huge inflatables, to delicate ghost-like birds, huge aerodynamically designed and painted kites, but also the art and skill needed to fly them.

One of the most amazing displays was four kites, each one controlled with several strings held by an individual flyer while accompanied by music. The kites danced in the sky, dipping, rising, swirling and diving in perfect synchronicity. I was told by one of the team members they usually have eight kites doing this intricate dance, which is astounding!

Another highlight was an 81-kite train, stretching as far as the eye could see across the sky. This kite belonged to a famous kite maker who had died some years ago. This was the first time it had been flown in its entirety since its painstaking restoration. The crowd was entranced. Children ran about between the fluttering embroidered banners and it seemed everyone was spellbound by the magic happening in the sky. You can see a short video of the display on the Society's website.

One of the kite fliers said he felt a bit like Peter Pan, never quite wanting to grow up. I think the kites had that effect on everyone watching. Perhaps there is a part in all of us wishing to fly. Kites can vicariously bring that feeling a bit closer to reality. And of course, they are simply beautiful and joyful. It was altogether a wonderful day, and we are delighted the Kite Society has already marked the Society down in their busy calendar for next year.

Natural Aspect mini music festival

On 6 September, the Society and the City brought a spectacular and varied line-up of musicians as part of the celebrations. The sun shone on the free *Natural Aspect* concert and its several hundred spectators.

Why that title? It is taken from the wording of the Hampstead Heath Act 1871, whereby the Heath was to be preserved for evermore as an oasis with its "natural aspect".

John Etheridge, the legendary jazz guitarist, and the sensational jazz singer Vimala Rowe were the first on stage. John is often described as one of the finest guitarists in the world and is also a Hampstead local who has spent many years campaigning to protect the Heath. His renowned guitar playing accompanied Vimala in an eclectic selection of numbers ranging from a sublimely beautiful Sanskrit song dedicated to the goddess Saraswati, during which you could hear a pin drop amongst the crowd (yes, even on the grass!), to their original and moving *Anthem to the Heath* (which you can also view on the Society's website)



John Etheridge and Vimala Rowe. Courtesy: Ron Vester

Next up was Cosmo Sheldrake, who practically grew up on the Heath. A multi-instrumentalist musician and composer, his music has an almost unearthly, ethereal quality about it and is simultaneously very much a part of it. A kind of musical visionary, Cosmo seems to translate earth and creature into sound and rhythm. We heard music he created and improvised built on the songs of birds and calls of animals, many

Kites and a Concert to Celebrate 150 Years of the Heath (cont)



Cosmo Sheldrake. Courtesy: Ron Vester

of them endangered species, and many recorded here on the Heath. As John Beyer pointed out, his songs resonated with the idea of protection, which was exactly the theme of our celebrations this year.

As a rousing finale, we were transported back in time by the band formerly known as Dave, Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mick and Titch and

catapulted forward into their present incarnation as the Beaky Band. What a way to finish! Kids danced, older listeners clapped and everyone in-between was caught up in the exuberant mood of their great repertory of music. Altogether a resounding success. Hopefully, these concerts will be repeated yearly, even beyond this momentous 150th anniversary!



The Beaky Band. Courtesy: Ron Vester

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.

‘Hampstead has grown a heart’: Oriel Place courtyard opens

by Michael Boniface

We are reproducing the Ham & High’s coverage of the opening of Oriel Place Garden. After much discussion, concern and construction, may this new oasis provide a welcome corner of calm for all Hampstead residents and visitors.

A neighbourhood group says “Hampstead has grown a new heart” after the revamped Oriel Place was officially opened on Monday (May 17). Century-old railings have been removed and the paving slabs replaced to help open up the space, which is overlooked by a giant London plane tree. Neighbours previously raised concerns that the long-mooted changes could increase antisocial behaviour.

Janine Griffis, from the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum, said:

The tree is what this space is all about. It’s a sustainable, welcoming public space which has good environmental qualities, all the things that we asked for in the neighbourhood plan of a public space. And for me Hampstead has grown a heart.

Cllr Stephen Stark (Con, Hampstead Town) said:

For far too long a metal fence and a locked gate spoiled the whole beauty of this area. When you stand back against the building and you look up at this absolutely wonderful, splendid tree it just shows how right we were to open up



The unveiling in Oriel Place by some of those involved in the project. Credit: Polly Hancock

150th anniversary of the Hampstead Heath Act



The London plane tree overhanging the area. Credit: Polly Hancock



The courtyard in Oriel Place. Credit: Polly Hancock

this area so that anyone and everyone can look at it. I hope for a long, long time the people of Hampstead and its visitors can enjoy this space.

The project received funding from the community infrastructure levy after a consultation in 2016.

Cllr Adam Harrison, Camden Council's cabinet member for the environment, said:

The revitalisation of Oriel Place Garden has been a longstanding ambition among the local community and was highlighted as a priority in the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan. The site had been closed for

a number of years and the aim was to create a safe and welcoming space by opening it for public use and enjoyment. The project is a fine example of a community-led project funded by local community infrastructure levy money that has been supported by the council.

Andrew Haslam-Jones, chair of the Society's Town Sub-Committee, said:

It is very gratifying to see the original idea of Juliette Sonabend of the Society's Town Sub-Committee come to fruition and in the open manner, sympathetic to its surroundings, that the Society and the neighbourhood forum campaigned for.

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.



The Lord Mayor of London's speech on the 150th anniversary of the Hampstead Heath Act

by The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of London, Alderman William Russell

This is the speech given by The Lord Mayor of London, at Keats House, to mark the sesquicentenary of the 1871 Hampstead Heath Act.

Chair, chief commoner, ladies and gentlemen...

Good afternoon and welcome to Keats House for this celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Hampstead Heath Act. Thank you to the Chair of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee for inviting me here today. I am glad to say I am here in much happier circumstances than my 17th century predecessor Sir Richard Browne.

He led a London Trained Band who chased a group of Fifth Monarchist rebels back to Kenwood, after the Fifth Monarchists had seized St Paul's Cathedral. I am glad to say the life of a Lord Mayor is not quite as stressful now.

I am very pleased to be here to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Hampstead Heath Act 1871. And what a significant anniversary this is – it is thanks to this Act, and to the foresight and determination of those who campaigned for it at the time, that we are able to enjoy the Heath that we know and love today.

While I don't want to attempt to steal any of the glory, I believe one of my predecessors as Lord Mayor from the time lent his support to the campaign.

The Act placed what had previously been privately owned land which was at risk of being sold off bit and by bit and built upon – under the guardianship of the Metropolitan Board of Works. And the Act promised that:

"The Board shall forever keep the Heath open, unenclosed and unbuilt on... and shall at all times preserve, as far as may be, the natural aspect and state of the Heath, and to that end shall protect the turf, gorse, heather, timber and other trees, shrubs and brushwood thereon."

This is a promise which was kept by the Metropolitan Board of Works, and which has been kept by its successors as custodians of the Heath: London County Council, the Greater London Council, and of course the City of London Corporation.

In fact, Hampstead Heath has grown since the passing of the Act – taking in Parliament Hill, the Hampstead Heath Extension and the Kenwood Estate.

And the Hampstead Heath Act left a legacy far beyond this area. Some of those far-sighted and pioneering 19th century campaigners, such as Octavia Hill and Robert Hunter, went on to preserve other open spaces for public use, and to form the National Trust.

While the Heath itself has become an iconic and treasured part of London life. It is not only part of the lungs of London, it has also become part of the soul of London.

The Heath has been a favourite spot for poets and has featured widely in art, films and literature. Indeed, it had its own film made about it just a few years ago: *Hampstead*, with Diane Keaton and Brendan Gleeson.

It is one of the locations in the novels *Dracula* and *The Woman in White*. It is so glamorous that Kendall Jenner chose it for a photoshoot. And for those of us who are political nerds, it even influenced British political life- You may remember *Newsnight* interviewing a man called 'Gareth' who was simply given the description "met Ed Miliband on Hampstead Heath".

Visitors come from far and wide for the famous views of the City of London and Westminster from Parliament Hill – a view which, along with the view from Kenwood House, is protected. And for communities both in the local area and from across London, Hampstead Heath provides a vital space to enjoy sports, to enjoy nature and to relax. All our lives are enriched by this treasured and ancient landscape, a stretch of rolling countryside and wide vistas in this crowded city. The Heath's protection is vital to the health and wellbeing of millions of Londoners. So, it is no surprise that users of the Heath and its facilities are very loyal to the Heath and very passionate – something which we at the City Corporation are well aware of, believe me!

Of course, maintaining an environment like this takes a great deal of care and effort, from both staff and volunteers, for which we should all be thankful. As well as the City of London Open Spaces department, the Heath is supported by our friends at London Borough of Camden, London Borough of Barnet and English Heritage, and volunteers from Heath Hands, the Heath and Hampstead Society, and dedicated community groups – thank you to you all!

I said that the campaigners behind the Hampstead Heath Act had great foresight, but even they could not have foreseen some of the challenges which you have had to deal with – from drones to electric

scooters. And of course, over the last year and a half, there have been unprecedented numbers of visitors – showing just how important this place is to the health and wellbeing of Londoners during the most difficult times.

As always, it is unfair to pick out particular individuals for praise, but I am going to do it anyway. Bob Warnock, the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath, is retiring this summer after seven years as superintendent here and thirty years working for the City of London Corporation. I know you were Superintendent of the Ashted and the City Commons before this, so I won't ask you to pick a favourite Open Space.

But know that you will be missed.

I hope you will continue to return to the Heath, maybe to enjoy swimming in the ponds!

And to everyone here, I hope you will enjoy the displays celebrating 150 years of the Hampstead Heath Act and remember those predecessors who secured the Heath which we have today.

Finally, I am going to ask for Keats' forgiveness, and quote William Wordsworth, who I think summed up Hampstead Heath's bond with the City very well:

*"Our haughty life is crowned with darkness,
Like London with its own black wreath,
On which with thee, O Crabbe! forth-looking,
I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath."*

Thanks to the Hampstead Heath Act, we will all be able to enjoy gazing on London from Hampstead's breezy heath for years to come.

Thank you.

Reflections on a journey to Hampstead Heath

by Bob Warnock

Former Heath Superintendent Bob Warnock retires from his over three decades in managing public open spaces for people and for wildlife. He shares his farewell speech given during his retirement party hosted by the Society and other Heath groups.

After a career in countryside management and over 30 years working for the City managing Open Spaces, both my wife and I retired at the end of August and are looking forward to new challenges and opportunities.

On leaving college in 1988, I started working for Surrey County Council with the Downlands Countryside Management Project. This involved implementing small scale environmental improvements across Surrey and South London. Following the City's acquisition of Ashted Common in March 1991, I was appointed to the position of Community Woodland Officer for Ashted Common. Ashted Common is a 200-hectare public open space, which is a wooded common and home to over 1,000 living ancient oak pollards.



A farewell selfie. Bob Warnock and his wife Catherine on their last evening at Golders Hill Park

During my time in Ashted, and later as the Superintendent responsible for the Coulsdon and West Wickham Commons, I gained invaluable experience. This allowed me to develop my knowledge and skills in relation to management planning, community collaborative partnerships, volunteering, conservation, veteran tree management and grazing. Now looking back, I can see how this formed a bridge to cross the river to North London.

Through my reporting to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, I met many of the Chairs of the Hampstead Heath Management Committee, including Gordon Wixley, Christine Cohen, Catherine McGuinness, Bob Hall, and Michael Welbank. Subsequently, as Superintendent of Hampstead Heath, I have been fortunate to have worked alongside dedicated and enthusiastic Chairs of the Management Committee, including Jeremy Simons, Virginia Rounding, Karina Dostalova and most recently Anne Fairweather.

When the previous Superintendent, Simon Lee, announced he was moving on, I considered the opportunity to apply for the position at Hampstead and by October 2013, I had taken a copy of the Hampstead Heath Management Plan away as light reading during a short holiday break! From November 2013, I started attending meetings and learning more about the Heath.

By early 2014, I was commuting from Ashted and in July 2014 we moved into tied accommodation in Golders Hill Park to embark on a life changing opportunity as a family.

At the Heath, the team were just commencing the public consultation on the Ponds Project. Whilst this

was a challenging point to join the Heath, looking back it is great to see how the scheme has now settled into the Heath landscape along with securing the dams and the positive gains for biodiversity and recreation. Following a torrential storm on Monday 12 July 2021, armed with wellington boots, a rain coat and a torch and following our lone-working procedures, I commenced a tour of the ponds at 23.30 that evening. The storm event had passed, but water levels were continuing to rise. The dry dam at Catchpit was holding back over a metre of water and Bird Sanctuary had overspilled into the Model Boating Pond, as the scheme was designed to do. It was poignant to see the impact of the Ponds Project in relation to this extreme storm event. Unfortunately, contamination of water entering the Heath affected the water quality of the Bathing Ponds, preventing swimming for a week. You win some and you lose some!

Following the completion of the Ponds Project, my next significant challenge was updating the Hampstead Heath Management Plan. In April 2016, we launched the project to develop the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy. This started with a comprehensive review of the 2007 Management Plan and then an ambitious project to develop a Community Vision for the Heath. Over 1,100 people commented through the online engagement as well as workshops and pop-up events across the Heath.

The Heath Vision informed the development of the Management Strategy outcomes in relation to protection and conservation, how the Heath enriches our lives, being inclusive and welcoming and building a culture of shared custodianship.

I have been delighted to work with the Society on a series of projects supporting the achievement of the Heath Vision and Management Strategy. These

have included replacing the sign at the summit of Parliament Hill and more recently designing and constructing biodiversity boards with seasonal messages at six locations on the Heath as well as one within the Kenwood Estate. We continue to collaborate on planning issues and we have seen numerous successes in recent years.

The role of Superintendent of Hampstead Heath is something you grow into! It is important to listen, reflect, take soundings and then following implementation to keep the impacts under review. Building a strong and effective relationship with the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee has been critical. To improve our governance arrangements, we increased the number of Consultative Committee meetings from three to four per year and carefully aligned the dates to be ahead of the Management Committee meetings. We also placed greater emphasis on the walks before the Consultative Committees and focused on formative engagement as projects were initiated. This manifested in the creation of a series of small, targeted working groups drawing on a range of local skills and knowledge to help develop and steer projects through to completion.

After the success of hosting the National Sheep Dog Trials in September 2017, featured on BBC Countryfile, seeing sheep grazing on Parliament Hill was fantastic. Subsequently, the Society hosted a lecture and the concept of reintroducing cattle and sheep grazing emerged. This has been another example of our collaborative approach and sheep returned to the Tumulus during 2019 as a pilot exercise, with support from the Society, Heath Hands and Mudchute Farm. This gave the opportunity to assess the benefits of grazing in relation to biodiversity and to inform future opportunities for grazing on the Heath. The pilot was a resounding success and caught

Reflections on a journey to Hampstead Heath

worldwide media attention. Unfortunately, as a result of the pandemic, we were forced to take a break from grazing in 2020 and 2021. A grazing proposal is being discussed for summer 2022.

Collaborative working continued with the celebrations to mark the 150th Anniversary of the Heath Act.

The Heath continues to benefit from significant allocation of resources from the City in relation to the annual operational budget, building maintenance and repairs as well as funding for capital projects. As Superintendent, the ongoing challenge is to manage these resources effectively in order to fund the Annual Work Programme and the Projects set out in the Divisional Plan. This has meant some critical issues had to be addressed to ensure the charitable resources are having the greatest impact in meeting the Management Strategy outcomes. This involved developing a series of policies to guide the implementation of the Powers granted under the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018. This has seen the successful development of the Events Policy and more recently work to license Professional Dog Walkers to protect the amenity of the Heath. We have also been addressing the long-term financial sustainability of the swimming facilities across the Heath.

Looking forward, there are some significant challenges to address and balancing the Heath budget will require further efficiencies, innovation and income-generation activities. On the Heath's website there is a broad range of projects where you can make donations to support the Hampstead Heath Charity. These include conservation projects, playground improvements and plans to further enhance the biodiversity at Model Boating Pond.

In relation to planning, there is still huge pressure on the Heath boundary from development affecting the character and openness of the Heath and the implications from changes in hydrology.

The Tree Team, Conservation Team and Ranger Team are implementing initiatives through the Annual Work Programme which will be critical to protect and conserve the Heath. This also links to the work the City is undertaking in relation to its Climate Action Strategy, which focuses on conserving and enhancing biodiversity, and reducing carbon emissions.

The effects of the pandemic on the Heath are still being assessed and addressed. In the spring, the Heath Team did a fantastic job completing the first stage of the recovery programme.

However, the undisputable fact emerging from the pandemic is: the Heath is life-enhancing. People are healthier and more active, have taken up opportunities to volunteer, engage with nature and participate in sport and physical activity. Whilst it has been an exhausting and challenging period for staff, throughout the pandemic our approach has been to keep people safe, maintain public access and deliver essential services.

Reflecting on my retirement, I am very proud of what I have achieved over the last 32 years managing public open spaces for people and for wildlife.

We have moved to Emsworth in Hampshire and are looking forward to spending more time sailing in the Solent. I am also keen to follow my charitable interests with organisations, including the Ancient Tree Forum and Chichester Harbour Conservancy.

Going forward, Richard Gentry has taken over as Acting Superintendent. Richard is a highly respected colleague and my very best wishes to him, the

Reflections on a journey to Hampstead Heath

Management Team and wider staff over the coming months.

I have been honoured to hold the position of the third Superintendent of Hampstead Heath. It has been an incredibly challenging and rewarding position. Thank

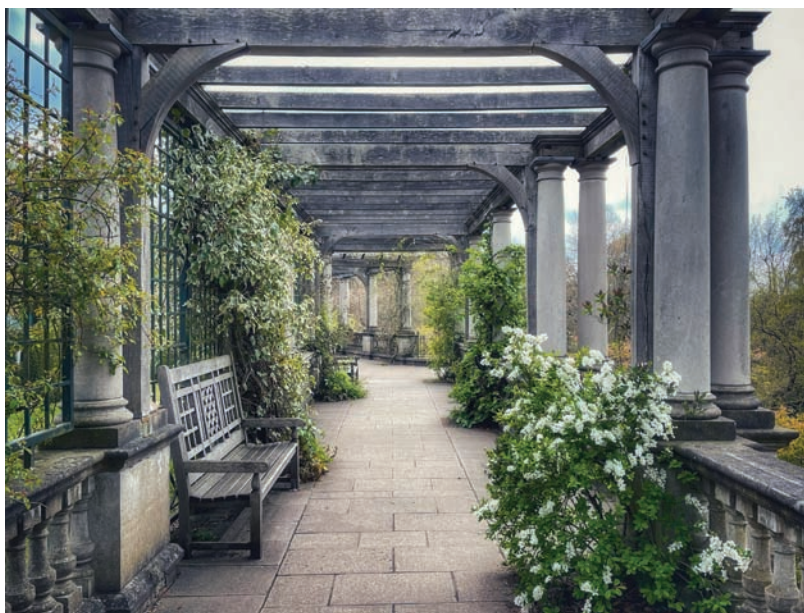
you for all your suggestions, contributions, feedback and support during my tenure.

I will continue to follow the journey to safeguard the Heath for present and future generations to enjoy and look forward to visiting regularly.

Photographic Competition #myhampsteadheath

The Society runs a regular photographic competition on Instagram.

Patrizia Coro's image is the Society's current winner.



Matt Maran is the Society's judge for this competition. "I love the simplicity of this image. The composition is perfect, with great depth and the even light compliments the muted tones of the stone, bench and pergola", 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

Quarterly Walk by Members of the Heath Sub-Committee

by Jeff Waage

In July, the Sub-Committee resumed its Quarterly Walks on the Heath with a walk focused on the how the Heath is affected by activities around its borders. Scrutinising developments on the edges of the Heath has always been a focus of the Society, and recent concerns about new building at Jack Straw's Castle and the conversion of Murphy's Yard are mentioned elsewhere in this issue (see Chair's Notes on page 1 and Heath Report on page 6). From an ecological perspective, the edges of the Heath contribute to, and benefit from, the Heath's wild spaces in an important way that can be threatened by over-development. Much wildlife moves freely between the Heath and its surrounds. Indeed, some wild birds like starlings, goldfinches and sparrows breed more now in urban than wild habitats, but come onto the Heath to find food. Some birds move the other way, as anyone who has seen a Sparrow Hawk cause havoc at their backyard bird feeders will attest! Enriching wildlife in our gardens and local parks by building wildlife corridors allowing animals to move between green patches is growing in popularity nationwide, and the Heath provides a great opportunity to anchor such corridors in a rich, biodiverse habitat. Initiatives in London to encourage homeowners to make small holes in their walls and fences allowing the movement of hedgehogs is an example of creating these green corridors, and one that is particularly suited to the edges of the Heath, given its status as the hedgehog capital of central London.

Our walk focused on a particular dimension of the relationship between the Heath and its edges: water. The Heath has a complex hydrology. Local springs on the Heath feed its ponds that, in turn, feed the now-lost rivers of Fleet, Tyburn and Westbourne. But water also

flows onto the Heath from surrounding properties. For instance, streams from Highgate, running through the Fitzroy Allotments and across Millfield Lane feed the Highgate chain of ponds, including the Ladies and Men's swimming ponds and the Bird Sanctuary Pond. Were housing development or other activities to close this source of water and run it down municipal sewers, the ponds would suffer.

A more immediate risk is the possible source of pollution from water flowing onto the Heath. The City regularly measures the quality of water flowing onto the Heath, including nutrient levels and bacteria associated with human or animal waste. Excessive nutrients can harm water quality, causing algal blooms and killing pondlife. Bacterial contamination may be caused by sewage entering upstream. This is particularly likely after heavy rains, which may cause sewage systems to overflow, or wash out bacteria that have settled over time in stream beds. The serious pollution event last year, closing Highgate chain swimming ponds for some weeks, arose not from such surface water contamination but from overflow of a sewage pipe running from Kenwood across the Heath. This is another dimension of the interaction of the Heath with its borders. Pollution events are reported to the Environment Agency and where relevant, water companies, for action. Fortunately, these events are few, and intense monitoring facilitates an early response.

During our walk, we learned runoff from roads bordering the Heath can also be a problem, with oil and other pollutants from traffic washing into the Heath. The City pays particular attention to this in its Kenwood Yard, where vehicles are stored and rubbish is collected.

Runoff from the yard goes first into reedbeds at its edge, a natural way to filter out pollutants, before it goes onto the Heath. Elsewhere on the Heath, weirs, woody jams and filter beds reduce the flow of pollutants into and between ponds.

For all these reasons, it is important to be vigilant about activities on the edge of the Heath, and to engage with proposed development early on. Ecological effects

may be subtle. Besides creating problems with water flow, Heathside properties may create light pollution affecting bats, discard plant compost onto the Heath, introduce toxins and alien weeds, or build fences limiting the movement of hedgehogs and other wildlife. The Heath is not the island it appears to be on the map. Greening its edges will benefit both the Heath's survival and enhance the nature experiences we enjoy in our own gardens and local green spaces.

Whatever happened to the Whitestone Pond drinking fountain?

by Emilia A. Leese

Society members, Corrine Gibbons and Robert Linger, have posed a very good question: *what has happened to the drinking fountain at Whitestone Pond?* Both remember it well and agree it was certainly still in place during the 1950s. They believe it is likely to have gone missing sometime between the 1960s-1970s. Gibbons and Linger have also

consulted Society member Malcolm Holmes and all have done their bit of sleuthing, but have not come up with an answer.

Now, it is your turn! Might you know something about this fountain or have more recent photos than the postcards pictured below? If so, please contact the Society at info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk



*The Whitestone Pond drinking fountain, very early 1900s.
Courtesy: Robert Linger*



Aerial postcard showing the location of the Whitestone Pond drinking fountain, circa late 1940s. Courtesy: Robert Linger

Camden Art Centre
Arkwright Road
London NW3

Phoebe Collings-James: A Scratch! A Scratch!

**Adam Farah: WHAT I'VE LEARNED FROM YOU AND MYSELF
(PEAK MOMENTATIONS / INSIDE MY VELVET ROPE MIX)**

Zeinab Saleh: Softest place (on earth)

10 September – 23 December

Phoebe Collings-James (b. 1987, London) has spent the last six months in the facilities at Camden Art Centre developing work for this exhibition as the third recipient of the Freelands Lomax Ceramics Fellowship. Collings-James'

practice encompasses sculpture, video, sound and performance and the new work created for this solo exhibition – her first in a UK institution – includes a new group of sculptures, held in a sensual environment combining bodies of water and an audio work composed and recorded by the artist with sounds of horns and the recital of texts, enveloping listeners in a moody atmosphere – lugubrious and elemental. Supported by Freelands Foundation



Phoebe Collings-James

Adam Farah (b. 1991, London) – also known as freeyard – is an artist, composer and sauce-maker. Farah's exhibition at Camden Art Centre is a presentation of their emotional journey through the chaotic depths of heartache and layers of trauma and desire, against the backdrop of a rapidly mutating city during a pandemic. The artist has spent years roaming the streets of London - dwelling on, searching for and enacting their desires – and their new commission works through healing processes that involve acts of connection, Mariah Carey, the North Circular, iPods, 'magic' mushrooms and WhatsApp intimacy. Supported by Arts Council England



Adam Farah



Zeinab Saleh

Zeinab Saleh (b. 1996, Kenya) is a London-based artist whose interdisciplinary practice takes the form of painting, drawing and video. Drawing on VHS tapes of home video footage and music that has personal significance to her, Saleh's work offers a glimpse into a past world and places personal histories at its core. Drawn to working in charcoal, quick lines evoke fleeting and transient memories, whilst acrylic attempts to hold the intangible in form. A softness and tenderness imbue her paintings, using muted colours and fluidity of

line and form. For Saleh, love is at the core of her working process

Farah and Saleh are recipients of Camden Art Centre's Metroland Studios Residency, a 6-month studio residency forming a new partnership between Camden Art Centre and Metroland Cultures. Supported by Metroland Cultures project in partnership with Brent Council and Arts Council National Lottery Heritage Fund.

For your safety and the safety of our staff, everyone must book a complimentary slot in advance.
See our website for all details.

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



Autumn 2021 Events in the Library

Thursday 7th October 7.30pm **“Brendan Behan’s Teapot”**

Jim Boylan will perform Neil Titley’s one man show on the life of the hell-raising novelist and poet, considered one of Ireland’s greatest playwrights.



Thursday 14th October 7.30pm **Chris Atkins on *A Bit of a Stretch***

Chris Atkins will talk about his book *A Bit of a Stretch* discussing his time in Wandsworth and the startling difference between the reality of prison and Home Office policy.



Thursday 4th November 7.30pm **Paul Mendez on *Rainbow Milk***

Paul Mendez talks about his debut semi-autobiographical novel, *Rainbow Milk*. Paul is a Hampstead based novelist, essayist and screenwriter. Born in 1982 and raised Jehovah’s Witness in the Black Country, Mendez disassociated himself from the Witnesses while still a teenager.



Refreshments will be available • Doors open at 7pm

Tickets for each event are £10 and available from the Library by calling ☎ 020 7431 1266 or emailing keatscommunitylibrary@gmail.com and online from www.wegotickets.com

The proceeds from these events keep the Keats Community Library open

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Burgh House & Hampstead Museum

Knots: Jonny Briggs x Burgh House **Contemporary Interventions into an Historic House** **until 6 March 2022**

Burgh House is delighted to present *Knots*, an experimental site-specific exhibition of new work by young British artist, Jonny Briggs. *Knots* features multi-media interventions, interacting with the exterior and interior of Burgh House, encouraging visitors to reinterpret their surroundings and reconsider roles of familiar objects. Surreal, staged photographs and sculpture will be presented overtly and covertly in dialogue with the museum collection and located throughout the House and garden in a game of hide-and-seek.

Working collaboratively with a contemporary artist for the first time will see Burgh House's Marie Louise von Motesiczky Gallery transformed into a dazzling cage-like playpen as Briggs attempts to deconstruct his past and reconstruct it - in the context of another home. Reflecting not only on Briggs's own familiar familial history within a pine forest in rural England, but also on the human history of Burgh House, this exhibition of contrasts and surprises will include limbs bursting through photographs, absurdly shaped shoes, animatronic sock puppets that speak to visitors, and masks that close around Briggs's body, restricting his movement.

In generating new perspectives on Burgh House and its collection, the exhibition connects with Hampstead's significant place within the developmental history of psychoanalysis and Surrealism, taking its title from psychiatrist and mental health campaigner, R.D. Laing's

1970 book of collected poetry. Briggs states:

My work looks at the constructed reality of the family through the constructed reality of photography. This exhibition attempts to make sense of a time when I was unable to connect with my father, while simultaneously discovering my queer sexuality and the social restrictions this came with. Now, my father has difficulty walking, and is restricted in his movement. The work is an opportunity to give a shape to nonsensical experience, double binds, and seeks to voice experiences once held silent.

I like how humour can question societal norms, helicopter above situations, and address difficult themes that may otherwise be too hard to talk about.

A work commissioned by and created within Burgh House will be included in the exhibition and added to the Burgh House collection.



Burgh House front, by Jonny Briggs

Burgh House
New End Square, NW3 1LT
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BURGH HOUSE

House & Museum: Open 12–5pm Wed, Thu, Fri & Sun
Café: Open 10am–5pm Wed, Thu & Fri, 9:30am–5:30pm weekends

Heath Walks: 2021-22

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

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

www.HeathandHampstead.org.uk

[@HandHSocHeath](https://twitter.com/HandHSocHeath)

2021

Sunday 10 October 2021 10am (meet in the Orchard, **Golders Hill Park**). *Please note early morning start and that this is the second Sunday of the month. Trees and associated fungi* led by David Humphries, Trees Management Officer, Hampstead Heath. **NB limited numbers: advance booking is essential for this walk.**

Sunday 7 November 10.30am (meet in **North End Way**, by entrance to **Inverforth Close, NW3 7EX**).

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 November 2.30pm

Walk led by senior member of the City's team (probably starting from **Whitestone Pond**)

5 December 2.30 (meet at **Kenwood Walled Garden**) Old Kitchen Garden. *The hidden Heath and its archaeology.* Michael Hammerson

2022

No walk in January

6 February 10.30am (meet at **Old Bull & Bush**) *Laughter in the Landscape: (to celebrate 'Grimaldi Sunday')* Lester Hillman

6 March 10.30am (meet at **Burgh House**) *History of the Heath Ponds.* Marc Hutchinson, Chair of the Society and Secretary of the Hampstead Heath Winter Swimming Club

3 April 9.30am (meet at **Burgh House**) *Bird watching* Pete Mantle, member of the Heath Sub-Committee

