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The Heath & Hampstead Society **NEWSLETTER**

February 2022

Vol 53 No 1



Highgate Pond cygnets

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Front cover: The photograph was taken by Ron Vester. Ron comments: "The four remaining Newbie cygnets love the chance to fly over Highgate Pond where they were born in May 2021, giving us a spectacular show. They have done well since their mother, Mrs Newbie, died a few months ago, leaving father Wallace to raise them."

Chair's Notes

by Marc Hutchinson

May I wish all our members a happy and prosperous New Year.

Christmas Party

It was a pleasure to meet again so many members at our very well-attended Christmas Party at Burgh House in December 2020 where local journalists and representatives of the Heath management were among the Society's guests. We look forward to a long-delayed New Members' Party which we hope to hold in March, also at Burgh House.

Martin Humphery

It is with great sadness that we received the resignation of our Vice-President, Martin Humphery, with effect from 1 January this year. Martin's past involvement as an officer of the Society in so many different roles is exceptional.

Martin became a member and the Chairman of the Town Sub-Committee, and a Vice-Chairman of the Society, in 1995. His cv. in the May 1995 Newsletter stated the following:

"Martin Humphery is a retired businessman and has lived in Hampstead for 40 years. He walks on the Heath every day and has a strong interest in its conservation. He is also deeply concerned at the declining condition of Hampstead's Townscape and this year joined the Society's Town Sub-Committee



Martin Humphery

Chair's Notes (cont)

as co-opted member. He has been investigating the reasons for the poor state of rubbish collection and road cleansing by Camden Council for the Sub-Committee."

He continued as Chairman of the Town Sub-Committee until 2004 and, at the same time, became Chairman of the Society in succession to Helen Marcus in 1998, a position in which he served until 2003 when he was succeeded by Tony Hillier and became a Vice-President of the Society.

In 2004, he stepped down as Chairman of the Town Sub-committee but remained a member of it, leaving it eventually to join the newly-formed Planning Sub-Committee in 2008 on which he served as a member until 2014.

We are deeply grateful and indebted to Martin for his untiring work for the Society over nearly 30 years. The General Committee will be hosting an event soon to mark his retirement and we send him and his wife Angela our best wishes for their future. We shall enjoy seeing them as usual at our lectures and social events.

Rubbish

Following complaints and a campaign led by the *Hampstead Village Voice*, Camden Council is cracking down generally on littering and fly-tipping in Camden. Fly-tipping is a broadly defined criminal offence and includes leaving domestic or commercial rubbish out on the street outside the designated collection times. Six additional enforcement officers have been taken on and they will now be able to provide enforcement during the night time when so much illegal dumping



Waste piling up in Heath Street. Courtesy: Sebastian Wöcker, Hampstead Village Voice

takes place. Veolia, the Council's rubbish contractor, is being directed to increase visits to known fly tipping spots. Residents can report dumped rubbish on <https://camden.lovedcleanstreets.com> (or the related app, available to download from Camden's website) or by calling Veolia on 020 3567 8105.

Murphy's Yard

By the time you read this, you will have received a letter from me asking you to object to the current development proposals for Murphy's Yard at Gospel Oak. These are referred to in this Newsletter in the Heath and Planning Reports. The Society is working with the Highgate Society, the City, affected neighbourhood forums and other civic groups to coordinate objections to this gross and view-destroying overdevelopment. I would like to thank those of you who have already objected.

Hunter Davies – Honorary Membership

The Heath Report in this Newsletter records the launch party for Hunter's book about the Heath and his extremely generous donation to the Society.

In recognition of that, the General Committee has appointed him an honorary member of the Society under Rule 8(5) of its constitution. Honorary membership is conferred on individuals who have "given outstanding service to the Society or have conspicuously furthered its objects". Hunter thereby joins a distinguished group of people who include Margaret Rodgers, Ray Walmsley and Nigel Kennedy.

Events

Our customary programme of events and lectures will be resumed this year and you will be notified of these on the website and in newsletters. We are delighted to start the year with a Glass-in-Hand lecture by Society Patron Melvyn Bragg, who will talk on William Tyndale and the language of the Bible: see the invitation below.



Melvyn Bragg on ***"William Tyndale (1494-1536): The Bible and its language"***

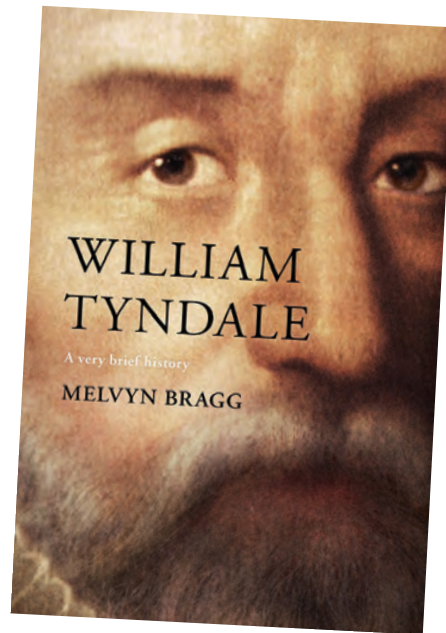
The Society presents this Glass-in-Hand lecture

***At Rosslyn Hill Chapel, 3 Pilgrim's Place,
Hampstead NW3 1NG on Tuesday, 22 March 2022
at 7.30pm (doors open at 7.00pm)***

The welcome guest speaker will be Society Patron Melvyn Bragg, legendary broadcaster, prolific author and parliamentarian. The background to his talk is his book, *William Tyndale: A Very Brief History*

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. To help us anticipate numbers, please email us with your intention to attend at info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk

Refreshments will be available



Heath Report

by John Beyer

Welcome to the new Heath Superintendent

Stefania Horne was appointed Heath Superintendent on 10 January 2022. Stefania was educated at the University of Rome (*La Sapienza*) and the University of Wales (Bangor). Her most recent post was Head of Parks and Sport at Hounslow Council. Prior to that, Stefania worked at the Wildlife Trust and Forestry Commission. She is the first woman Heath Superintendent. We look forward to working with Stefania.

We are grateful for the spirit of cooperation shown by Richard Gentry in his role as Acting Superintendent following the departure of Bob Warnock last summer.



The new Heath Superintendent, Stefania Horne, with Bianca Swalem and Thomas Radice

Licences for professional dogwalkers

On 1 April 2022, the City plan for the licensing system will finally come into effect. The Society has worked with the City on how the scheme should operate ever since the basis for licensing was set by the 2018 Open Spaces Act. One outstanding issue was work needed to be done to define areas protected for wildlife habitat, such as bird-nesting sites, which should not be used by professional dog walkers. Professor Jeff Waage and Heath ecologist Dr Adrian Brooker have used data from the two bird surveys undertaken by the Society and partners over the last two years to draw up maps of sensitive areas. The City has also devised criteria to be met by those applying for a licence and will appoint a panel of three magistrates in case applicants wish to appeal against refusal of a licence. Details of the licensing scheme must be announced 28 days before the scheme comes into effect.

Biodiversity boards

Work continues with partners (the City, English Heritage, Marylebone Birdwatching Society, Heath Hands and the London Natural History Society) on designs for new boards for 2022-2023, under the guidance of Professor Jeff Waage. These should be in place in March 2022, with the addition this year of a QR code guiding visitors to additional online material about the Heath's habitats and wildlife.

Christmas fair fun

The Society has favoured the introduction of the *Hampstead Christmas Fayre*, a new children's fun fair occurring during the Christmas period. The event took place on the established fairground next to the East Heath Road carpark and closed each day at 7:00pm, so there was no evening disturbance to



Hampstead Christmas Fayre

residents. A number of Society members thought the advertising signs were out of scale for the location. We will discuss with Heath staff how signage for the fair and the sale of Christmas trees might be tailored for next Christmas.

Support for new trees south of the carpark

A number of Society members have contributed to the planting of new willows and field maples to the south of the East Heath Road carpark. We have lost a number of trees in the area in the last few years and the planting should improve the aspect for visitors in what is one of the most popular entrances to the Heath. We are grateful to members for supporting this initiative.

Murphy's Yard

The Society, along with many other community groups and Heath users, is alarmed at the height of some of the towers proposed for the development to the south of the Heath known as Murphy's Yard. We object in particular to the proposal to build one block of 19 storeys and another of 17. These will be clearly visible from the Heath in the Parliament Hill area. See also the Planning Report and the Chair's Notes in this Newsletter for more information on objecting to this project.

Launch of *The Heath: My Year on Hampstead Heath*

A glittering party at Keats Community Library on 11 November 2021 marked the launch of *The Heath: My Year on Hampstead Heath* by Hunter Davies. As the name implies, the book records the people Hunter met as he walked on the Heath over the course of a year (see Newsletter Vol 52 No 3).

Society Chair Marc Hutchinson introduced the two speakers: Hunter Davies and his long-time friend and Society Patron, Lord Bragg. Hunter gifted his £10,000 book advance to the Society. He said this gift was in recognition of the continuing good work of the Society and his love of the Heath and the people who make it such a fun place. This is the largest single gift received by the Society from a living individual.



*Society Chair Marc Hutchinson with Lord Bragg and Hunter Davies.
Courtesy: Ron Vester*

The event was attended by, among others, the Chairman of the City's Heath Management Committee, Anne Fairweather, and Acting Heath Superintendent Richard Gentry; the conservation groups representing areas around the Heath, including Elizabeth Millar, President of the Highgate Society, Ellen Solomons, Chair of the Vale of Health Society, and Emma Howard, Chair of Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association; and representatives of

Heath Report (cont)

other groups who are on the City's Heath Consultative Committee. Society President Lord Mance and Patrons Lady Hopkins and Bill Oddie OBE attended. Hunter's friends also attended the event, including Sir Michael Palin, Ferdinand Mount and Ollie Pudney from the Bull and Last, together with people who appear in the book, such as Giles Coren, Paul Jeal and Peter Tausig. Representatives of local and national press were on hand to cover the event.



Ilana Lorraine who is featured in the book. Courtesy: Ron Vester



Society Patron Bill Oddie and Sir Michael Palin. Courtesy: Ron Vester



Hunter Davies with Society President Lord Mance. Courtesy: Ron Vester



Society Treasurer Maureen Clark-Darby with Vice-Chair John Beyer receiving Hunter Davies' gift. Courtesy: Ron Vester



Angela Humphery with Hunter Davies. Courtesy: Ron Vester



The Heath. Courtesy: Ron Vester



Anne Fairweather buying a copy. Courtesy: Ron Vester



*Society Chair Mark Hutchison with Patron Bill Oddie OBE.
Courtesy: Ron Vester*

Winter and Spring Musical Events

St John-at-Hampstead Parish Church

Church Row NW3

Monday 7 March

Recital of works by Couperin

The Hampstead Collective
at 7.00 pm, doors open at 6.30 pm

The Hampstead Collective was formed in
2019 by the professional singers of
Hampstead Parish Church choir
For all details and tickets see the Hampstead
Collective website

Sunday 3 April

St John Passion with baroque orchestra

Retiring collection
Hampstead Parish Church Choir
at 5.00 pm

All enquiries to Jenny Macdonald-Hay
0207 794 1193

Town Report

by Andrew Haslam-Jones

The High Street

It is very gratifying to see new shops coming to Hampstead High Street, such as Planet Organic or, later in the spring, Sainsbury's, diversifying the commercial offering. With the Business Improvement District now defunct, the Society was happy to assist the councillors in finding funding for the Christmas tree and lights by sharing its list of Hampstead Card participants so that they could be approached for contributions.

Now that there is no organisation representing the shops and other businesses in Hampstead, it seems even more important for the Society to maintain good relations with them. To that end, the Town Sub-Committee is looking for one or more volunteers who would be willing to join the Sub-Committee and take over the administration of the Hampstead Card. The card is issued to all members of the Society and participating retailers are then free to offer discounts and special offers to cardholders. This requires one or more people to visit the shops to maintain existing participation in the scheme and encourage new participants. It would also be an excellent way for the Society to build and maintain relationships with the businesses of Hampstead who are so important to it.

If you are, or know someone who would be, interested in joining the Sub-Committee to fulfil that role, please get in touch via the info@heathandhampstead.org.uk e-mail address with Shops as the subject line.

Traffic and pollution

The first batch of pollution testing tubes set up by the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum has been taken away for testing for nitrous dioxide, a common pollutant from traffic. The Society was pleased to

contribute £250 to the funding of the tubes. They can be found in ten locations in Hampstead: Arkwright Road, Downshire Hill, the viaduct on the Heath, Heath Street, Holly Hill (where pupils from UCS Junior School are helping with the study),

Lyndhurst Road, Pond Street, Rosslyn Hill, South End Green and the Vale of Health. The study will continue over the course of the year and, later in the year, will be extended to cover particulates, another form of pollution caused by traffic, including from residues produced by braking cars. Regular readers of the Newsletter will recall that the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum carried out a similar study five years ago which revealed, somewhat shockingly, that even in leafy Hampstead, high above the city smog, the location on the viaduct in the middle of the Heath was at the legal limit for pollution and every other location in Hampstead was above it.

Hopefully, the results of the study will assist the Hampstead Transport Partnership (HTP) in assembling a transport strategy to assist Camden Council in addressing traffic planning in this area in much the same way that the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan assists with planning. The HTP has recently completed its online survey which was sent out by the Society to its members. The survey attracted a very respectable 500 responses and a report is being collated. The HTP hopes to be able to appoint a traffic consultant with the help of local Community Infrastructure Levy funds (the money developers pay to the Council, 25% of which is available to be spent in the council ward in which the relevant developments take place). The consultant would then approach local residents and other groups in order to develop a transport strategy for the area.

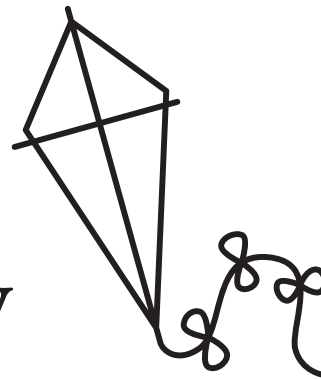
Licensing

After a great deal of activity, there has been a welcome lull in licensing applications. Given the problems with street drinking and drinking on the Heath, the Society has always taken a strong line in ensuring the guideline hours set out in Camden Council's own policy are rigorously respected. There have been a number of occasions recently where applicants have applied for licenses allowing them to sell alcohol earlier or later than the so-called framework hours set out in Camden's guidelines and the Society has been successful in having the licences amended to respect those guideline hours on all but one occasion. When objections are made by the Society, often applicants will agree to sensible conditions, such as monitoring and staff training, that help to regulate the sale of alcohol.

Given that Hampstead is a mixed commercial and residential area, the Society is very keen to ensure residents are not unduly disturbed by a proliferation of drinking establishments, especially where that might lead to late night noise in narrow alleyways where people live. Sometimes, the Society will object where an application is unclear and looks as if it might permit the applicant to set up a bar rather than a restaurant. For example, in one recent case involving 20 Heath Street, the original application looked as if it were for the introduction of a late-night bar. Several groups, including local residents, councillors and the Society objected. At the hearing, it became clear the plan was for a restaurant and not for a bar. Subsequently, the application was amended to make that clear, and various conditions were agreed to the satisfaction of all parties.

**The Kite Society of Great Britain
the Heath & Hampstead Society,
and the City of London present...**

A Kite Display



Following a hugely successful event last June, members of The Kite Society of Great Britain will give another spectacular display of the art of kite flying, with tricks and intricate routines accompanied by music, on the beautiful surrounds of the Heath

Sunday 26 June - Parliament Hill - Time TBC

Planning Report

by David Castle

Planning law developments

On 10 January 2022, *The Times* reported that the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities, which is responsible for reforming planning law, stated, “even when the broad principle of development is agreed ... all the *details* would still need to be consulted on with communities and approved by officers or committees where appropriate” (emphasis added). This could be good news, but only if details are defined to include height, density, design, layout, loss of trees, and all those other issues of concern to the local community.

Ruining Hampstead’s gardens

Over the past few years, many Hampstead gardens have been filled with large buildings purporting to be gymnasias or offices. These buildings frequently cause loss of trees and ecological damage and are eroding one of the essential qualities of Hampstead, the gardens and extensive tree cover.

A particularly egregious planning application has just been made for 8a Hampstead Hill Gardens (ref. no 2021/5750/P) for an extension to an existing house with a basement over about 90% of the whole garden. This proposal is made even more unacceptable by the provision of a double basement for cars and a cinema, which is not permitted by Camden’s Local Plan. We have objected, as has the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum, and will campaign against such an obnoxious application.

It is worth noting Camden’s Pre-Application Advice report on the proposal is very thorough in setting forth the reasons the basement and building (over virtually the entirety of the garden) were unacceptable. In this case, the applicant has disregarded Camden’s Pre-Application Advice. This causes us to be critical of the value of Pre-Apps even more (see Newsletter Vol 52 Nos 2 and 3). A favourable Pre-Application Advice report helps to obtain approval, whilst a critical one is ignored.

Enforcement of planning infringements

For many years the Society has been campaigning to improve Camden’s planning enforcement.

The two situations where improvements are needed are: 1) speedier and more effective action when an infringement is reported; and 2) effective penalties to prevent applicants avoiding the requirements of the Planning Approval and of the Construction Management Plan (CMP).

Before the start of the pandemic, the Society and the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum held several meetings with Camden’s enforcement officers. We are still waiting for decisions about any such improvements.

Murphy’s Yard – major proposals for development

This long-expected application has now been finalised and can be found on Camden’s web-site under ref no 2021/3225/P. The site stretches from Kentish Town to Gordon House Road near the Lido at Gospel Oak. It will allow a cycle and pedestrian route to and from Kentish Town Station and the Heath.

This is a difficult area to develop and has two large linked zones. The north-western zone is composed of 750 dwellings, with a maximum height of 19 storeys (with some commercial space at ground level) accessible by vehicle only from the narrow Gordon House Road, near the two railway bridges.

The lower south-eastern zone contains 92,000 square metres with a mix of offices, light industrial, retail, commercial space accessible only through Sanderson Close. There are no dwellings in this area. The height of the buildings in the commercial zone is about eight storeys in a line by the railway.

The whole development is too high and dense and will cause increasing traffic through the two limited access points. The commercial buildings and the line of high flats will cast shadow onto the proposed public spaces and routes, and will be very visible from adjacent areas. The long wall of high flats will, in particular, be very visible from the Heath. The proposed development is deficient in so many ways. Therefore, the Society will be objecting to and campaigning against these proposals.

Quarterly Walk by Members of the Heath Sub-Committee

by Jeff Waage

Conservation, restoration and access are in constant tension on the Heath. This tension and some new ideas about how to reconcile the various aims were the topics of discussion during the latest Heath walk.

Society members will be aware of the impact of lockdown during the pandemic on paths and natural habitats on the Heath, as many more visitors sought peace and support in nature. Heath managers worked hard to restore affected areas, often using temporary fencing. As the pandemic recedes, high visitor numbers on the Heath continue and will probably grow in future. This will increase pressure on natural habitats and biodiversity, making the balance of recreation and conservation a major challenge in the coming decade.

Fencing the Heath to protect its biodiversity?

In January, members of the Heath Sub-Committee made a walk with City staff to discuss options for protecting and improving the Heath's habitats and biodiversity. The central issue was whether it is acceptable to close off parts of the Heath to users in

order to restore nature, and to what end and for how long. The Hampstead Heath Act of 1871 specifies the Heath should be, "always kept uninclosed [and] its natural aspect and state being, as far as maybe, preserved." Many Heath users feel strongly about maintaining this right to roam. Today, some firmly fenced areas on the Heath are those already fenced in 1871. New fencing is only allowed on a temporary basis for specific purposes.

We know historically-enclosed areas have proven to be important sanctuaries for wildlife. The Bird Sanctuary Pond, between the Model Boating and Ladies' Ponds, now supports the Heath's best population of grass snakes and its only nesting kingfishers, both of which would probably go if it were opened to walkers and their dogs.

But what about new fencing? There is a history of temporary fencing to restore disturbed land and establish wildflower meadows. Creating wildflower meadows requires fencing for two or three years. These biodiversity-rich areas, such as the patch above the Broad Walk at the Hive, and the slopes of the meadows below the Tumulus, have persisted well after fencing was removed and paths re-opened.

During the pandemic, concern about increased footfall and its visible effect on compacting paths and killing path-side trees compelled Heath managers to expand protection of veteran trees, some of which are over 300 years old. Wire and rope fencing, with explanatory notices, permitted a quick response. In the longer-term, dead and live hedges can be built to protect these trees. This fencing, in contrast to that used to recover meadows, will need to be long-term.



Society members and Heath managers looking at the fenced-off area of scrub for the Whitethroat

Quarterly Walk by Members of the Heath Sub-Committee (cont)



*Reed Warbler in the reed bed at the Model Boating Pond.
Courtesy: Adrian Brooker*

In our walk, we visited an area recently fenced for a special reason. The 2020 Nesting Bird Survey on the Heath, organised by the Society, revealed which species of birds were in safe numbers on the Heath and which were at risk of local extinction. Since the late 1900s, the Heath has lost 30% of its bird species. One of the birds we found to be only hanging on is the Whitethroat, a migratory warbler in national decline, nesting only in a few patches of bramble and rose scrub between woodland and meadow. Paths through this habitat at Hedge 2 on the East Heath posed a threat to the Whitethroat's most regular nest site, and Heath managers have therefore closed one path through this area by fencing and roping a larger area of scrub around it. This diverts walkers through a lower, existing path through the hedge. How temporary this fencing will be depends on how quickly the protected thorny area becomes less attractive and accessible to people and dogs. Later this coming spring, a visitor to this new reserve may be rewarded with the site of a Whitethroat singing from the spindly top of a rose bush!

We also discussed how fencing has been used to protect new plantings of reedbeds and wildflowers around ponds on the Heath. At the Model Boating Pond, this has helped to create a green pond-side border of reeds and wildflowers. In summer, these reedbeds provide new homes for the shy Reed Warbler. Once a rare bird on the Heath, expansion of reedbeds has greatly increased its numbers. In summer as you pass this and other ponds, listen for its loud, chattering song from deep within the reeds.

Last year, an experiment with removing fencing around this pond quickly led to degradation of the planted areas by dogs trying to enter the pond. As a result, the temporary fencing may need to be reconsidered. The City has an ambitious plan to extend planted reedbeds around the entire Model Boating Pond, boosting biodiversity, creating specific platforms for fishing, and reducing dangerous swimming in the pond by summer crowds. The soil for this planting would come from the land



A Whitethroat on a bramble. Courtesy: Liz Andrew

Quarterly Walk by Members of the Heath Sub-Committee (cont)

bridge currently connecting the pond's new island to the mainland. The fence now protecting the new wildlife refuge would then be replaced by a natural water barrier. This is one way to address the fencing restriction in the 1871 Act!

During our walk, we saw situations where fencing could also provide a temporary solution to degradation of Heath habitats. For instance, we saw a badly denuded area within Hedge 1 below Parliament Hill, which arose as a consequence of a forest school. Once the school is relocated to a less sensitive site on the Heath, this woodland's ground cover could be restored by fencing and replanting.

Arguably, the most imaginative idea for using temporary fencing to increase biodiversity is to close a large area of rough meadow, about a hectare in size. Such an area could attract the return to the Heath of nationally endangered ground nesting birds, like the skylark, who disappeared decades ago. For this purpose, fencing would be closed during spring and summer breeding seasons. It would reopen, for walkers and their dogs, in autumn and winter. For the moment, our walkers concluded priority should

be placed on saving threatened habitats and wildlife already on the Heath. The prospect for restoring lost species – perhaps even John Keats' beloved Nightingales – remains an exciting idea for the future.



Prof Waage holding up a photo of a Whitethroat

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.

Coffee with Hunter Davies

by Bianca Swalem

Who needs “lunch with the FT” when, in this first-person account, we can tag along with a Heath Sub-Committee member to spend some time with, and peek into the life of, prolific author and esteemed friend of the Society, Hunter Davies?!

Late last autumn, Society trustee and Chair of the Heath Sub-Committee John Beyer asked if I would interview Hunter Davies for the Society’s Newsletter. Hunter has generously donated to the Society his £10,000 advance from his book, *The Heath: My year on Hampstead Heath*. It is the largest donation the Society has ever received from a living individual. At the party held at Keats Community Library to celebrate and launch the book, Hunter mentioned he and his wife Margaret had a tradition to give the advance of every other book to a cause important to them. The Heath had become their spiritual home and, as Lord Bragg recounted with fondness in his introductory speech, the backdrop to 60 years of friendship and adventure. Because so many reviews of the book have already been written, I thought I would take the opportunity to delve a little deeper and give Society members and Newsletter readers a glimpse into the life of an author who Michael Palin describes as “the most agreeable egomaniac I know.”

I called Hunter and received the instruction to come to his house. “Through the park, third oak tree on the right, under the arch, to the end of the grove, the fifth garage, to the left. The blue one.” I wondered if there were a secret password at the door, perhaps a lyric from the Beatles – Hunter is, of course, the author of the only official Beatles biography. Instead, I asked if there might be a postcode I could use in case I got lost. “Well, if you insist on doing it the conventional way,” came the disappointed answer.

As I arrived, Hunter’s daughter, Caitlin Davies, author of *Taking the Waters: A swim around Hampstead Heath*, was just leaving. Keen to make a good first impression, I made the first of several faux pas by asking if it were true Queen Victoria had instituted the ladies’ pond so the ladies of London would have somewhere to bathe. Ludicrous. It was suggested I should read Caitlin’s book and Hunter offered to lend me his copy, but only if I promised to bring it back. The next few faux pas came in quick succession. As we walked through the house, I failed to recognise the significance of the artwork on the walls (some by Hampstead-based artists) and could not speak compellingly about football (Hunter is an avid fan, collector and prolific writer on the topic). Had I at least heard of the Beatles? Yes! But, no, I did not know the name of the dog featured in that song. “£10,000 and they send a luddite,” was probably what he was thinking, but he did not say it.



Hunter Davies with his collection of Beatles photos



Cheeky book titles



Double Hunter Davies, portrait by Ralph Steadman

We continued to the study, where Hunter keeps many of the treasures he has accumulated over the years. He writes about some of them in his book *Confessions of a Collector*, “It’s all going to be shipped off to museums soon, so I want people to see it.” Despite the wealth of original prints and first editions, what stood out to me was the compendium of books with double entendre titles. Two particular standouts: *Songs for Cooperative Women*, a hymnal for women who were part of the Co-op Society, or *Every Inch a Briton* – I didn’t dare ask. At heart, Hunter is a humourist. This comes across in every chapter of *The Heath*, perhaps nowhere more so than in the closing paragraph on Keats, where he quotes from the guest book, “What I liked most about Keats, is that his life was full of Fannies,” presumably referring to Keats’ mother, sister and fiancée, all named Fanny.

The schoolboy cheer turned somewhat sombre as we entered the study of his late wife, Margaret, which remains an untouched sanctuary. Overlooking the garden, the study is the very essence of what Virginia Woolf had called “a room of one’s own.” Her fountain pen – she never used a typewriter – is still among the

knick-knacks on the wooden desk by the window. “Margaret never suffered from writer’s block. She had an incredible imagination and could move from one thing to another.” The bookcase here is dedicated to women’s literature and framed autographs of the suffragettes hang nearby. Hunter sometimes invites writers to use the room for an hour or two to be inspired and gaze over the garden. Not many of them know they are gazing over Margaret’s final resting place.

“What is the secret to becoming a writer?” I asked, given Hunter has just finished his 102nd book and his wife and daughter are best-selling authors. “You should write. Every day, write.” I pressed on. After all, this man is a master shape-shifter. He has ghost written for people as diverse as Gazza and Prezzy (Paul Gascoigne and John Prescott), among countless others. How did he come to embody them, see the world through their eyes, tell their story? “Well if they’re alive, you ask them and, if they’re dead, you read their letters. How else would you know?” I could not argue with that and did not want to be a bore, especially since now, eyes once again twinkling, Hunter was holding

Coffee with Hunter Davies (cont)

out a plastic bag. “Do you want to see Paul McCartney’s bathing suit?” Yes! McCartney had become a close friend during the years of writing the Beatles biography and had left the shorts at Hunter’s house after an afternoon of swimming in the Men’s Pond.



Paul McCartney’s swim trunks

As we walked past the Bull and Last on the way to Bistro Laz, several people called out, “Hello Hunter!” He is definitely a chieftain of the Hampstead Tribe. Was it always this way? In the book, he recalls arriving in Hampstead 60 years ago with a bit of a chip on his shoulder. “We had both grown up in council houses and came from the same sort of working-class families, but somehow Margaret had emerged middle-class, with very definite tastes, views and opinions.” Initially rejected by a landlord in the Vale of Health, he writes of the joy of having their very own flat in NW3, and a phone number beginning with HAM. Eventually, Hampstead and the Heath became his spiritual home. Admitting he is now thoroughly middle-class himself, even embracing the Parliament Hill farmer’s market, despite the prevalence of Hunter wellies and Barbour jackets. “Do you have to be middle-class to be welcome on the Heath?” I asked, glancing at our jackets.

“And what of love?” Each chapter is anchored in the Heath’s landscape and interweaves conversations with local characters (many of whom are members of the Society) with anecdotes of the 55 years he shared with Margaret. This sense of place and personal history, humour and tenderness are present throughout, especially in the description of the bench they had engraved for their silver wedding anniversary and placed

beneath a silver birch. Hunter asked if I remembered this part of the book and, ever the keen observer, registered a shadow of confusion pass behind my eyes. He asked if I got the joke – silver wedding anniversary, silver birch. I did, but I was now intrigued to hear how it was possible to get a bench while still alive!

I had a final sip of coffee and many more questions. As the final one, it seemed only right to ask why Hunter chose to give so generously to the Society. “Well, the Heath has given to me so much in terms of spiritual and physical wellbeing, so many memories.” And to quote from the book, “Because the Heath deserves it, during the 150th year. It was in 1871 that an Act of Parliament made Hampstead Heath open and free to all. Hurrah!”

I’m sure this is a message resonating with us all. And although most of us will probably never get our very own bench beneath a birch, why not start the new year by buying a copy of Hunter’s book and making a donation to support the ongoing conservation work done by the Society? Because the Heath deserves it. Hurrah!



The late Margaret Davies’ study



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Springett Lecture 2021 – Entangled Lives: Fungal Networks, Ecology and Us

by Dr Merlin Sheldrake

Dr Merlin Sheldrake delivered the Springett Lecture for 2021 on 30 September. Merlin was born and raised in Hampstead, and spent countless hours on Hampstead Heath. His interest in fungi arose from his expeditions there, exploration of the changes in the heaps of chestnut leaves in his garden, and mushrooms which he cultivated. He continued his interest at Cambridge University, where he completed a PhD about mycorrhizal relationships in the tropical forests of Panama. Dr Sheldrake is currently associated with the Vrije University Amsterdam, where he is collaborating on a project to understand more about electrical communication in fungal networks. Dr Sheldrake is a member of the board of the Fungi Foundation and works with the Society for the Protection of Underground

*Networks. His book *Entangled Life: How Fungi Make our Worlds, Change our Minds and Shape our Futures* was published in 2020 and became an instant best-seller, with praise from across the board, be it *The Times* or *Time Magazine*.*

Fungi are everywhere but they are easy to miss. They sustain you and all that you depend on. They are eating rock, making soil, digesting pollutants, nourishing and killing plants, producing food, manipulating animal behaviour and influencing the composition of the Earth's atmosphere. Yet they live their lives largely hidden from view, and more than 90% of their species remain undocumented. The more we learn about fungi, the less makes sense without them.

Fungi make up one of life's kingdoms – as broad and busy a category as plants or animals. Microscopic yeasts are fungi, as are the sprawling networks of honey fungi, or Armillaria, which are among the largest organisms in the world. The current record holder, in Oregon, weighs hundreds of tonnes, spills across 10 square kilometres, and is somewhere between 2,000 and 8,000 years old. There are probably many larger, older specimens that remain undiscovered.

It is noteworthy that plants only made it out of the water 500 million years ago because of their collaboration with fungi. Today, 90% of plants depend on mycorrhizal fungi, from the Greek words for fungus (*mykes*) and root (*rhiza*), which can link trees in shared networks referred to as the Wood Wide Web. This ancient association gave rise to all recognizable life on land, the future of which depends on the continued ability of plants and fungi to form healthy relationships.



Dr Merlin Sheldrake with a truffle. Courtesy: Cosmo Sheldrake

Founding fungi

To this day, new ecosystems on land are founded by fungi. When volcanic islands are made or glaciers retreat to reveal bare rock, lichens (pronounced LY-kens) – a union of fungi and algae or bacteria – are the first organisms to establish themselves, and to make the soil in which plants subsequently take root. In well-developed ecosystems soil would be rapidly sluiced off by rain were it not for the dense mesh of fungal material that holds it together. From deep sediments on the sea floor, to the surface of deserts, to frozen valleys in Antarctica, to our guts and orifices, there are few pockets of the globe where fungi can't be found. Tens to hundreds of species can exist in the leaves and stems of an individual plant. These fungi weave themselves through the gaps between plant cells in an intimate brocade and help to defend the plant against disease.

The ability of fungi to prosper in such a variety of habitats depends on their diverse metabolic abilities. Metabolism is the art of chemical transformation. Fungi are metabolic wizards and can explore, scavenge and salvage ingeniously, their abilities rivalled only by bacteria. Using cocktails of potent enzymes and acids, fungi can break down some of the most stubborn substances on the planet, from lignin, wood's toughest component, to rock, crude oil, polyurethane plastics and the explosive TNT. A species isolated from mining waste is one of the most radiation-resistant organisms ever discovered, and may help to clean up nuclear waste sites.

More to fungi than mushrooms

Mushrooms dominate the popular imagination of what a fungus is, but just as the fruits of plants are one part of a much larger structure that includes branches and roots, so mushrooms are only the fruiting bodies of fungi, the place where the spores are produced.

Fungi use spores like plants use seeds: to disperse themselves. However, mushrooms are only one approach among many: the overwhelming majority of fungal species release spores without producing mushrooms at all.

Some species discharge spores explosively, which accelerate 10,000 times faster than a Space Shuttle directly after launch, reaching speeds of up to 100 kilometres an hour – some of the quickest movements achieved by any living organism. Fungi produce around 50 megatonnes of spores each year – equivalent to the weight of 500,000 blue whales. This makes fungi the largest source of living particles on the planet.

Some fungi, like the yeasts that ferment sugar into alcohol and cause bread to rise, consist of single cells that multiply by budding into two. However, most fungi form networks of many cells known as *hyphae* (pronounce HY-fee). These are fine tubular structures that branch, fuse and tangle into the anarchic filigree of mycelium. Mycelium describes the most common of fungal habits, better thought of not as a thing, but as a process – an exploratory, irregular tendency. Water and nutrients flow through ecosystems within mycelial networks.

Their metabolic ingenuity allows fungi to forge a wide variety of relationships. Whether in their roots or shoots, plants have relied on fungi for nutrition and defence for as long as there have been plants.

Animals too depend on fungi. After humans, the animals that form some of the largest and most complex societies on Earth are leafcutter ants. Colonies can reach sizes of 8 million individuals, with underground nests which are 30 metres across. The lives of leafcutter ants revolve around a fungus which they cultivate in cavernous chambers and feed with fragments of leaf. Being a monoculture, the fungus

is vulnerable to a specialist parasitic fungus. Each ant nest cultivates a particular strain of bacteria which produce antibiotics which inhibit the parasitic fungus.

Fungi and humans

Human societies are no less entwined with fungi. Diseases caused by fungi cause human harm and billions of dollars in losses. The rice blast fungus ruins a quantity of rice large enough to feed more than 60 million people every year. Fungal diseases of trees, from Dutch elm disease to chestnut blight, transform forests and landscapes. Romans prayed to the god of mildew, Robigus, to avert fungal diseases but weren't able to stop the famines that contributed to the decline of the Roman Empire.

The impact of fungal diseases is increasing across the world: unsustainable agricultural practices reduce the ability of plants to form relationships with the beneficial fungi on which they depend. The widespread use of antifungal chemicals has led to an unprecedented rise in new fungal superbugs that threaten both human and plant health.

Like leafcutter ants, however, humans have worked out how to use fungi to solve a range of problems. The Neolithic Iceman, whose corpse was discovered in the Alps, died 5,000 years ago, his body preserved in a glacier. On the day he died, the Iceman was carrying a pouch stuffed with wads of the tinder fungus (*Fomes fomentarius*) that he almost certainly used to make fire, and carefully prepared fragments of the birch polypore mushroom (*Fomitopsis betulina*) most probably for use as a medicine. There is a long and well-spread history of people using fungi for their medicinal properties, but it was only in 1928 that

Alexander Fleming discovered that a mould produced a bacteria-killing chemical called penicillin. Penicillin became the first modern antibiotic and has since saved countless lives.

Although fungi have for a long time been lumped together with plants, they are actually more closely related to animals. At a molecular level, fungi and humans are similar enough to benefit from many of the same biochemical innovations. When we use drugs produced by fungi, we are often borrowing a fungal solution and rehousing it within our own bodies. Fungi are pharmaceutically prolific, and today we depend on them for many other chemicals besides penicillin: for example, cyclosporine (an immunosuppressant drug that makes organ transplants possible) and the anti-cancer multi-billion-dollar drug Taxol (originally extracted from the fungi that live in yew trees).

Fungal solutions do not stop at human health. Radical fungal technologies can help us to respond to some of the many problems which arise from ongoing environmental devastation. Antiviral compounds produced by fungal mycelium reduce colony collapse disorder in honeybees. Voracious fungal appetites can be deployed to break down pollutants such as crude oil from oil spills, in a process known as *mycoremediation*. In *mycofiltration*, contaminated water is passed through mats of mycelium which filter out heavy metals and break down toxins.

Fungi remain a world relatively unexplored and unknown compared to the study of the animal and plant kingdoms. We are only just beginning to understand the intricacies and sophistication of fungal lives.

There is a light that is about to go out

by Jill Furmanovsky



Hampstead Police Station with banner. Courtesy: Jill Furmanovsky

Renowned music photographer and founder of Rockarchive writes about her Sisyphean efforts to establish a permanent and exciting home for the UK's rock and roll legacy, and how Hampstead's Police Station would have been an ideal location.

This is a saga about the UK's rock and roll legacy and a Hampstead building I hoped would become its home. In 2020, I tried my hardest to turn Hampstead Police Station into The Jailhouse Rock & Roll Museum.

People believed in the idea

I had a lot of support from top musicians and members of the public. Here are some of their words and experiences.

Nick Mason of Pink Floyd: "Jill's idea is about recognising the past, but also the opportunity for young bands to earn a living in the future."

Lee Thompson of Madness: "I love the concept. I have visited this clink on several occasion, but never for such a positive eye-opening cause." He added, "Let's have a riot in Cell Block Number 9!"

Gail Buckland (US based photo-historian, author and curator): "Neither jails nor any type of building

looks good empty. How much more fun to see The Police in jail and on the walls of holding cells, in stairways and hallways. Rock photography is social history and the Department for Education which owns the old jailhouse could make it rock. These historic photographs must be cherished, exhibited and preserved."

Arnold Kransdorff, author of *Corporate Amnesia*: "I reckon that a rock museum would attract a large proportion of the tourists that come to London every year. Done imaginatively it could be self-financing."

John Etheridge, musician: "What a great idea from Jill Furmanovsky, to use the disused police station to house exhibitions taken from her voluminous archive. I'm sure this would be an international attraction and would be bring revenue for the building."

Lee Benjamin, artist: "Camden Council has a real chance here to create a centre that would be unique. It would not only celebrate a rich heritage of performing art culture that occurred over the years in the UK but could also bring this culture alive again by involving visitors in a rich and diverse range of participative activities that would encourage and grow creativity. Not to mention the revenue that this would undoubtedly generate. So, if anyone out there is actually listening: why not?"

Ronnie Gurr, of Scottish publishing house *Hanging Around Books*: "There is clear evidence that there is a mass audience for work that palpably documents a rich history and offers a lasting legacy of the totemic music-related images that have benchmarked my life and the lives of many others."

Chalkie Davis, vintage *NME* photographer, explained why his exhibition, which ran from May to September 2016 at the National Museum of Cardiff, was unable

There is a light that is about to go out (cont)

to tour despite its huge success: “I spent three years working on this ground-breaking show, but Arts Council cuts almost caused its cancellation. The museum people were wonderful. When the union went on strike for a few Saturdays, the management manned the front doors, the demand was so great to see it – 43,000 people came. The sad part is that the original idea was to tour it, but the cuts were so deep 30 per cent of the staff were let go; the first was the photography director. So, nothing was done to move it around the country; there was nobody left to make the phone calls.”

That exhibition was decanted and put into storage.

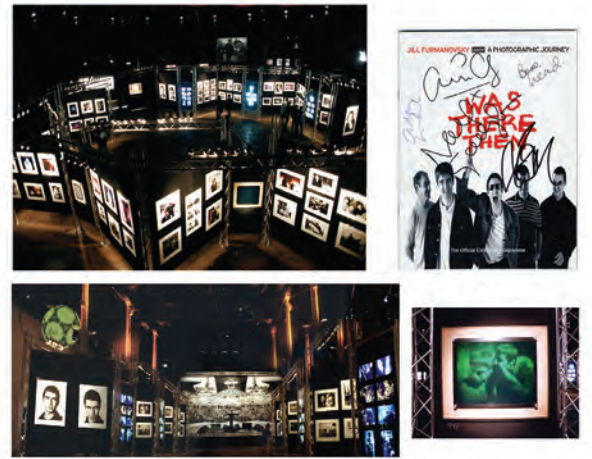
Dean Chalkley, photographer and film maker, and Harris Elliott creative director, faced a similar problem at Somerset House in 2014, with their roots-reggae-fashion exhibition, *Return of the Rude Boy*. Mostly funded by the duo’s shallow pockets, the show exceeded all expectations for visitor numbers and diversity of audience, which included the Windrush generation. It should have toured and been a beacon of creativity for the UK. Fans in Japan managed to find funds to ship it there for a showing and then returned it with glowing reviews. Eight years later, it is still in storage.

Noel Gallagher, astute as ever, just looked at me quizzically and said: “It’s a good idea, but I bet you anything that building will be turned into posh housing in no time.”

And he was right.

The neglect of the UK’s rock and roll heritage

Why doesn’t the UK care about its rock and roll heritage? This is a question I have been pondering since 1997 when I had a ground-breaking Oasis exhibition called *Was There Then* in London’s Roundhouse. It was held on the cusp of the digital revolution, so it had a lot of sponsorship from



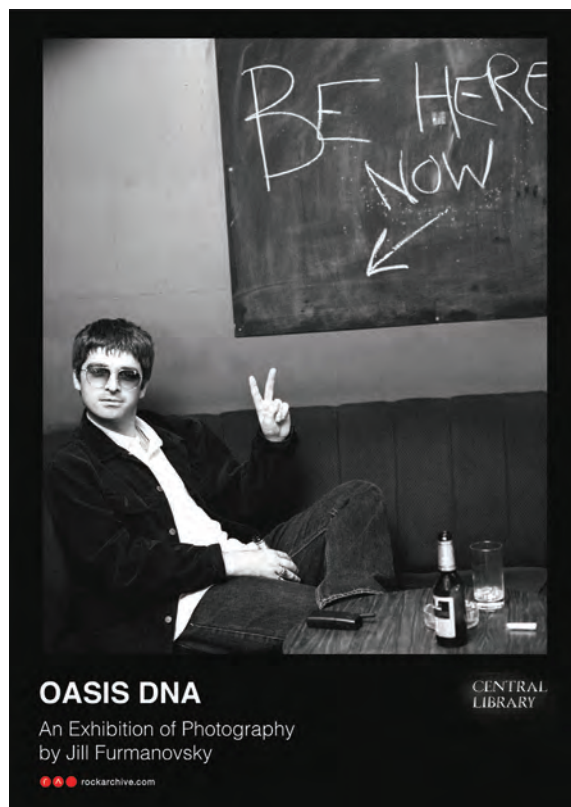
*Oasis Was There Then montage of 1997 exhibition in the Roundhouse.
Courtesy: Jill Furmanovsky*



*There is a Light and Oasis DNA exhibition from Manchester.
Courtesy: Jill Furmanovsky*



*Jill Furmanovsky and Johnny Marr at Oasis DNA exhibition.
Courtesy: Barrie Leach*



companies like Epson and Olympus who wanted to publicise the first consumer digital printing machines and cameras. Using projection, video, holograms and oversize prints, it looked incredible. It successfully toured the country, including stops at Manchester's The Hacienda, Glasgow's Tramway and Dublin's Museum of Photography.

After that exhibition, I had a lot of experience and knew about the power of websites. I thought about starting one dedicated to the "rock and roll era" which was fast becoming modern history. In 1998, www.Rockarchive.com was born with the idea of bringing to light thousands of unseen rock and roll images from my and my colleagues' archives. Between us, we had the whole of rock's visual history just waiting for an institution to manifest itself so this rich legacy would have a home.

Twenty-four years on we are still waiting.

There is a light that is about to go out (cont)

Historically, there had been an attempt at making a rock museum for the country. It was called the *British Music Experience* and began at the o2 arena in 2009 before moving a few years later to Liverpool's Cunard building. Unfortunately, it had two problems. First, it was not well located with it being placed at the back of the o2 tent. And second, it was not very good. The special effects were not special and their attempts to show rock and roll history were gimmicky, without gravitas.

We had a long way to go before we could match the brilliant curation by Gail Buckland of the thrilling show *Who Shot Rock & Roll*, which opened at the Brooklyn Museum in 2012.

After that, two exhibitions held at the Victoria and Albert Museum really broke new ground: *David Bowie Is*, in 2013, and Pink Floyd's *Their Mortal Remains*, in 2017. With further improvements in technology and the cooperation by David Bowie, who understood his legacy, and members of Pink Floyd, who backed theirs with eye-popping props from shows like *The Wall*, both retrospectives had a star quality to match that of the stars they were representing. Both shows were seen by more than a million people.

Rockarchive's exhibitions

After *Was There Then*, Rockarchive has done its best to show how something fabulous can be achieved even on a shoestring. We had no choice. Once the digital revolution was established, sponsorship dried up. Nevertheless, we curated and funded four exhibitions in public libraries.

Our first was in 2016 and was called *Chunk of Punk*. It was curated by Michael Southwell, a brilliant jewel in the Barbican Music Library. Without a budget, we used the energy of punk to guide us. By photocopying copies of *Sniffin' Glue and Other Rock 'N' Roll Habits*, showing fanzines and punk singles in glass cases,

There is a light that is about to go out (cont)



Chunk of Punk poster for Barbican. Courtesy: Jill Furmanovsky



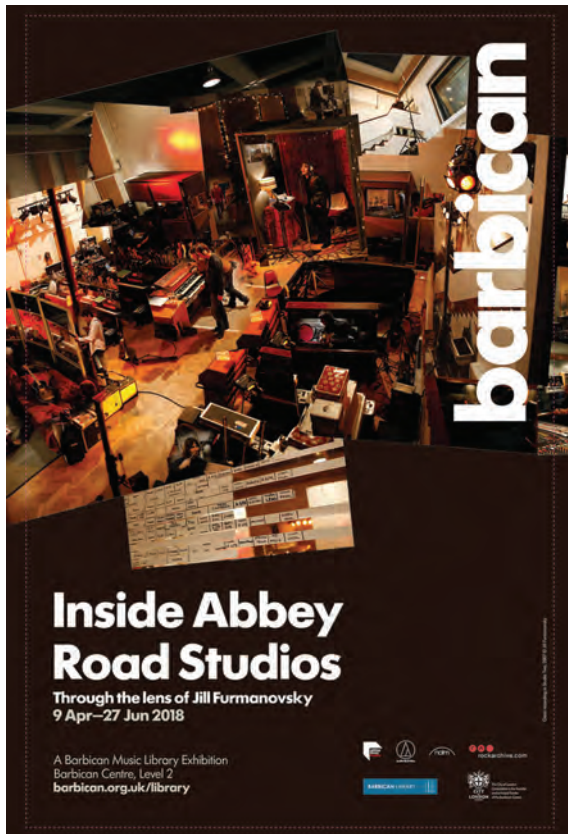
*Chunk of Punk Anarchy in the Barbican Library.
Courtesy: Jill Furmanovsky*

collaborating with Central Saint Martins School of Textile Design on punk-inspired wall hangings, delving into my own punk archive, and printing everything in-house. We made sure it was top quality. It became known as “Anarchy in the Library” because it was so popular, we were outstripping visitors to the Martin Parr exhibition in the official Barbican gallery.

Our next show was *Oasis DNA* held at Manchester’s Central Library. It welcomed 25,000 visitors. Then we returned to the Barbican Music Library with *Inside Abbey Road Studios*. It was the first time the recording studio, immortalised by The Beatles on their album cover, had ventured out of St John’s Wood. A small amount of private sponsorship allowed us to put up more images at larger sizes, including a huge blow-up that still straddles the lift shaft today, of Oasis recording in Abbey Road’s famous Studio Two.

Our most successful exhibition to date has been *There is a Light That Never Goes Out*, about the Manchester music scene. It was held in Manchester’s Central Library and it ran from October 2018 to spring of 2019. Entry was free, as all our other exhibitions have been. It featured images taken in clubs such as The Hacienda, and focused on band such as Joy Division, The Stone Roses, The Smiths, New Order, The Fall, Morrissey and, of course, Oasis, photographed by top UK photographers including Kevin Cummins, Pennie Smith, Paul Slattery and myself. When Pete Shelley of the Buzzcocks died, the exhibition became a place of pilgrimage for fans who left notes of appreciation around the images. It was seen by at least 35,000 people and also had a section on contemporary Manchester bands, giving young photographers and musicians a chance to sit alongside their revered peers. It ended with a visual dedication to those who had died at the Arena bombing.

Manchester University’s John Ryland’s Library bought the exhibition from us. They only paid our expenses,



*Inside Abbey Road exhibition poster from Barbican.
Courtesy: Jill Furmanovsky*

but at least we were not out of pocket and the pictures now belong to an educational institute, in Manchester. Which brings me back to the quest for a jailhouse museum in Hampstead Police Station.

Disappointment in Hampstead

I naively thought the Department for Education would want to see their building, originally bought to house the Abacus School for which planning permission was repeatedly denied, remain as an educational establishment. But I was wrong and Noel Gallagher was right.

Hampstead Police Station is prime real estate. Now, it has been sold and will be turned into luxury flats and offices. One fact haunting me is that apparently the Department for Education bought the building for £14 million and sold it to the property company for £10 million, leaving a shortfall in their coffers of £4 million, presumably taxpayers' money. My team could have done a lot with that money.

Open up the doors

There needs to be a permanent home for the UK's rock legacy. Our "cousins" in this quest are the distinguished writer, Barney Hoskyns, and his priceless team of writers at www.rockedbackpage.com. They have a library of articles and interviews from the music press written by the best music writers of the last 60 years. They also broadcast a weekly podcast that is revered worldwide by scholars and music fans.

Both our independent companies started at the same time. Both of us would be delighted to contribute to a rock and roll museum or institute, preferably based in London. Liverpool was sorted a long time ago and Manchester is now on its way.

The phantom Rock Museum of my imagination could start by housing my 50-year archive of rock pictures. If not, it may end up sold, probably out of the country.

Rockarchive will be 25 years old next year and the Beatles' song "Help!" is going through my head as I write this. Who wants to take it on and save more of the legacy for the UK? It's really a no-brainer – all these exhibitions in storage need to be rotated. The public loves what we do, but it will need more than my enthusiasm. I've done my bit. Now we need a council with insight, or the lottery heritage fund, or maybe just an old-fashioned philanthropist, to make this happen before the light goes out.

Photographic Competition #myhampsteadheath



Grey heron roosting on one leg to conserve heat

The Society runs a regular photographic competition on Instagram. Aviva Raichelson's image is the Society's current winner. She took the photo in October 2021 at Hampstead No 2 Pond. Professional photographer and author, Matt Maran, is the Society's judge for the competition. See the Society's website for competition rules.

Camden Art Centre
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Allison Katz and Julian Creuzet
to 13 March 2022

Two exhibitions are currently on view: Allison Katz's *Artery*, her first institutional solo exhibition in London, and Julien Creuzet's *'Too blue, too deep, too dark we sank...'* Julian is the second recipient of Camden Art Centre's Emerging Artist Prize.

For your safety and the safety of our staff, everyone must book a complimentary slot in advance.

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Julian Creuzet



Allison Katz

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John Burningham: An illustrated life **until 29 May 2022**

“Down with the simpering 19th century goody-goody books that deprived children of their animal nature, wild imagination and lust for living,” Maurice Sendak, author and illustrator of *Where the Wild Things Are*, introducing Burningham’s autobiography.

For some visitors this exhibition will be a chance to re-connect with childhood favourites, including the featherless Borka, the ever-patient Mr Gumpy, and the mighty Shirley. For others it will be a chance to discover the wild, wonderful, irreverent work of author, illustrator, and beloved Hampstead resident, John Burningham (1936-2019).

Sally Hyman: Heath Scapes **20 April to 24 April 2022**

An exhibition of new oil paintings by local artist, Sally Hyman, celebrating Hampstead Heath.



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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: 2022

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 per adult, 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

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

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

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

Birds of the Heath in Spring led by Pete Mantle, member of the Heath Sub-Committee.

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

Details of this walk will be announced on the Society's website.

Walks for the remainder of 2022 are still being planned.

Further walks will be announced in the May 2022 Newsletter. Details of walk programmes are available on the Society's website:

www.HeathandHampstead.org.uk

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

