



Est. 1897

The Heath & Hampstead Society

NEWSLETTER

May 2023

Vol 54 No 2



Martin Humphery
1929 – 2023

Annual Report for the Year 2022-2023

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Front cover: See Martin Humphery's obituary in this Newsletter

by Marc Hutchinson

I am pleased to report on another successful year for the Society.

Annual General Meeting

Our annual general meeting will be held at St Stephen's, Rosslyn Hill, on Thursday 22 June and we hope you will be able to attend. Our guest speaker will be Tudor Alan, Manager of Local Studies and Archives at Camden's Local Studies and Archives Centre. He is going to present some highlights from the Centre's collections.

Planning

Heath House

Despite our and councillors' repeated lobbying of Camden planning officers, there has been no progress in removing the unsightly scaffolding around Heath House, which is there because of the damaged roof. The Council has no power to compel the owner to renovate the house and we are looking at ways in which public opinion might be brought to bear to that end.

Two major successes

Our major successes during the year have been (i) the forced withdrawal of the planning application for the redevelopment of Murphy's Yard with its proposed 19-storey tower blocks, where we were in the vanguard of a wide group of objectors and (ii) Camden's refusal to allow the construction of five new houses at 55 Fitzroy Park on land zoned as "private open space".

North Fairground site

The saga of the attempted development of this site continues. The owner has applied for a Lawful Development Certificate for an Existing [Mixed] Use as a step to turn the site ("metropolitan open



Photo: An approximation of the scale of the proposed new Archway Campus tower (measured by reference to the existing smaller tower) as would be seen from Parliament Hill. Courtesy: the Highgate Society

land”, on the edge of the Heath) into a commercial caravan park. In 2019, a planning inspector ruled that site was a travelling showpersons’ site and we assert, on the current evidence, that this use is unchanged. With the assistance of counsel, we have objected to the application.

A new threat

No planning application has yet been made but, at Archway in Islington, a 32-storey tower block for student accommodation is proposed on a site to be called the Archway Campus. The tower will damage the view from, and the openness of, the Heath, and we shall, with the Highgate Society and the Islington Society, be objecting in due course.

Camden local plan

With the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum,

we have commented constructively on the update of the Plan.

Private trees

We have supported Camden Council’s request to the Government for legislation to protect privately owned trees and made various suggestions as to the regulation needed.

Heath dog walking

We have continued to play a role in the establishment and implementation of the scheme for the licensing of commercial dog walkers on the Heath. A licensed walker is limited to walking in designated areas and is not allowed to have more than four dogs under his or her control, something for which we strongly lobbied. The wisdom of limiting the number to four

is shown from the consistent commentary by dog behaviouralists on the recent national spate of dog attacks, to the effect that four (not six or some higher number) is the maximum number that can reasonably be expected to be safely controlled by one individual.

Unfortunately, there remains a piece of unfinished business with private dog walking on the Heath which, post the pandemic, has increased enormously because of the 80% increase in dog ownership in London over the relevant period. The increase in dogs is adversely affecting the Heath's beleaguered wildlife and the dogs' flea powder is poisoning the ponds' insect life.

Hampstead Antique & Craft Emporium

With local councillors and the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum, the Society joined the efforts to try to save the Emporium, a unique feature of Hampstead which attracted many visitors from outside the area. The new owner, having evicted the licensed antique stalls in January 2023, plans to develop the site to host upmarket retail outlets. The site was quickly declared an Asset of Community Value by Camden Council and there continues to be a crowdfunding campaign to buy the site: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/savehampsteademporium

Licensing

We had a very disappointing outcome to our challenge to Kenwood's decision to seek, broadly speaking, a licence to hold an unlimited number of large outdoor events anywhere on the Kenwood estate at any time. This application disregarded the long history of the regime of licensing control over Kenwood's outdoor events brought in (and which survived a previous court challenge) in response to complaints from local residents about noise and crowds, and concerns from the Society and others

about the damage to wildlife and the grass. Both Kenwood and the Society were represented at the licensing hearing by expert licensing counsel. To our dismay, the application was waved through by licensing panel councillors with only one brief question being asked. Councillors did not give reasons for their decision, and one wonders whether they were swayed by Kenwood's simplistic claim that, because Kenwood was itself a conservation body, it did not require licensing oversight. It was some consolation to learn of Kenwood's unilateral decision no longer to hold large outdoor concerts.

Rubbish and South End Road

The "rubbish conversation" with Camden Council is, we hope, now scheduled for a date in April 2023.

Some residents would fairly describe the battered and filthy white and red plastic moveable street barriers at South End Road, which have been there now for two years, as part of Hampstead's rubbish problem. In fact, the western pavement of the upper part of South End Road is to be extended to remove the current car parking spaces and allow the erection of permanent outdoor tables, chairs and plant troughs for a street eatery. This delayed project will be completed this year and the reason why the barriers were left in place was a legal and technical one: if they had been removed in the interim, Camden would have been obliged to undertake a second formal – but, to Camden's mind, unnecessary – consultation on the project itself. We, local councillors and local residents are commenting on the proposed designs.

Plaques

We erected plaques to: Sir Isaiah Berlin (49 Hollycroft Avenue); Marie-Louise von Motesiczky and Elias Canetti (6 Chesterford Gardens); and Jennifer Vyvyan (59 Fitzjohn's Avenue).

Annual Report for the Year 2022-2023 (cont)

Events

We enjoyed another kite display by the Kite Society of Great Britain on 26 June 2022 and another Natural Aspect concert on 4 September 2022, popular events which we are repeating in 2023.

Lectures

Society Patron Melvyn Bragg delivered a (fundraising) lecture for the Society on William Tyndale on 22 March 2022 at Rosslyn Hill Chapel. On 29 September 2022, at the same venue, we hosted the annual Springett Lecture where expert Heath tree managers, David Humphries and Alasdair Nicholl, spoke about protecting the veteran tree ecology of Hampstead Heath.

Website and Twitter

Our website has been overhauled and updated, and we have taken steps to stimulate more activity on the Society's Twitter account which feeds onto the website's home and Heath pages.

Martin Humphery

We are pleased to reproduce, on page 26 of this Newsletter, the obituary of our former Vice-President, Martin Humphery, as originally published by the Ham & High.

Gwen Maxwell

The Society is fortunate to have the life-long support of so many members. In that context, I am sorry to report the death of Mrs Gwyn Maxwell at the age of 101. Gwyn lived in Hampstead for over 70 years and she, like her late husband, was a Society member for most of that time. We send our sympathy to her son Douglas, a former trustee of the Society, and to her family and many Hampstead friends.

Committees

The General Committee saw no changes apart from the retirement of Tony Ghilchik to whom we paid tribute in the May 2022 Newsletter.

Planning

This Sub-Committee saw significant changes in membership: the unexpected death of Ellen Solomons and the retirement of Jenny Alderman, Claire Gasson and Liz Wright, but also the welcome appointment of Hampstead resident Alexander Smaga, a RIBA chartered architect with an international practice. His important work includes the design of the Polish-RAF memorial at Plumetot, Normandy, unveiled on the 75th anniversary of D-Day. The Sub-Committee continues its search for new members.

Town

This Sub-Committee likewise saw significant changes in membership: following the death of Martin Thompson and the retirement of Avril Kleeman and Richard Price, the Sub-Committee welcomed new members Alexandra and Andrew Lavery, and Isabel Dedring.

Heath

This Sub-Committee saw the retirement of Mahima Luna and her replacement by Jeska Harrington-Gould.

Conclusion

We continue to have good relations with other local amenity groups, Camden Council and the City of London. I want to thank our increased membership for their continuing financial and practical support of the Society, and in particular our two Hampstead Town Ward councillors, Steven Stark and Linda Chung, who work so closely and helpfully with us.

Notice of the Annual General Meeting 2023

Notice is given that the 125th Annual General Meeting of the Society on Thursday 22 June 2023 at 7.30 pm at St Stephen's, Rosslyn Hill, London NW3 2PP

The business of the meeting will be as follows:

1. Approval of the minutes of the 124th Annual General Meeting held on 15 June 2022.
2. Election of Lord Mance as President.
3. Chair's report for 2022-2023.
4. Treasurer's report on the Society's examined financial statements for the 2022 financial year and adoption of those financial statements.
5. Appointment of Fisher Phillips LLP, Chartered Accountants, as the Society's auditors for the 2023 financial year.
6. Determination of membership subscription rates for the 2024 financial year. The trustees propose that there should be no change to the rates.
7. Determination of the limit on free/discounted memberships. The trustees propose that there be no change to the current limit of 200, approved by members in 2019.

Note: this relates to the figure of 200 specified in Rule 10(4):

"10(3) Notwithstanding Rules 10(1) and (2), the General Committee may determine, with effect from 1 January 2017, that the applicable annual subscription for a new member shall, for the member's first year of membership only, be less than the applicable annual subscription determined under Rule 10(1).

10(4) The General Committee may make such a determination only as part of a particular scheme

designed to increase the paid membership of the Society, and so that the amount of subscription income thereby forgone in respect of such new members does not exceed, in any year, an amount equal to the aggregate of subscription income (for a standard annual individual membership) that would be payable in that year by, subject to Rule 10(5), 200 members.

10(5) The number of members specified in Rule 10(4) may be changed by resolution of the members of the Society at any general meeting of the Society."

8. Election of Officers and other Members of the General Committee.

Officers

The following candidates have been duly proposed for election to the following positions:

Chair: Marc Hutchinson
Treasurer: Maureen Clark-Darby
Secretary: Evelyn Ellis

General Committee Members

Dr Vicki Harding has been duly proposed for election for a first term of three years.

Note: Latoya Austin, Frank Harding, Jessica Learmond-Criqui, Robert Linger, Thomas Radice, Maddy Raman and John Weston continue the terms for which they were elected. The Chairs of the three Sub-Committees are trustees and members of the General Committee, but they are appointed from time to time by the General Committee, not elected. Professor Jeff Waage is also appointed, not elected, as a trustee and member of the General Committee in his capacity as the Society's representative on the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee.

9. Any other business.

Notice of the Annual General Meeting 2023 (cont)

Notes on candidate for election

Dr Vicki Harding worked in the NHS as a chartered physiotherapist throughout her career, including in Athlone House and New End Hospital. She helped set up St Thomas' Hospital's chronic pain management unit 'INPUT', led its physiotherapy team for 25 years, and gained a PhD in psychology and measurement.

She has lived in and around Hampstead since 1975 and been a keen Heath Hands member since 1999. She particularly enjoyed surveying 138 veteran trees as part of the Hampstead Heath veteran tree survey

with Jeremy Wright, and as a result was recruited in 2007 as Tree Officer to the Society's Planning Sub-Committee. In this post, she liaises with Camden's tree officers concerning the husbandry of Hampstead's splendid street trees, examines Notices of Intent for work on trees and planning applications that might influence trees or flooding, and initiated a survey and mapping exercise of Hampstead town's veteran trees. She has an interest in the area's hydrogeology and believes this and its interaction with basement construction can be responsible for many cases of building subsidence, rather than trees.

The Heath & Hampstead Society

Please join us for our Annual General Meeting and Reception

St Stephen's, Rosslyn Hill, London NW3 2PP

Thursday 22 June 2023 7.00pm (doors open)



Est. 1897

7.00pm Reception – Refreshments will be served. Trustees and sub-committee members will be present to talk about their work. Come and learn more about that work over the last year

7.30pm Annual General Meeting

8.30pm Guest Speaker – Tudor Allen BA DAA, Local Studies and Archives Manager – Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre

In this illustrated talk, Tudor will present some of the highlights from the collections of Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre, including manuscripts, photographs, maps, newspapers, art works, posters and objects

Born and brought up in Cumbria to Welsh parents, Tudor came to London to attend university where he read English. In 1996, he qualified as an archivist from University College London. Since then, he has worked as Assistant Archivist at St Mary's Hospital in Paddington, as Archivist at the London Borough of Redbridge, and since 2007 as the Archivist at Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre. He has lectured widely on various aspects of Camden's history and has published a short history of London's "Little Italy"

We are grateful to the St Stephen's Trust for hosting our meeting

Treasurer's Report for 2022

by Maureen Clark-Darby

The Society is pleased to present its Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022.

The Society reviews its accounting policies each year. The trustees are satisfied the current policies meet the Society's needs and circumstances. These policies, which have not changed, are disclosed on pages 9 and 10 of the Financial Statements.

The operating loss for 2022 was £1,368 (2021: gain of £11,290), the difference being explained mainly by the reduction, year on year, of donations, and by the exceptional cost referred to below. The Society made an unrealised loss of £259 on its revalued investments. The resulting total loss for the year was £1,627.

Membership subscription income increased by 3% year on year -- 2022: £27,651 (2021: £26,861). This increase is due to the overall increase in membership. Membership increased year on year, standing at 2,092 at the end of 2022, of which 540 were life memberships.

The principal donations received during the year were £5,000, from Society member Peter Noble, and

a £1,032 plaque donation. All donations were for unrestricted funds.

Dividend income increased for the year to £902 (2021: £223). Interest income increased for the year to £254 (2021: £10).

The Society's running costs, excluding exceptional costs, decreased slightly in 2022 to £35,190 (2021: £36,987).

The Society's exceptional costs for the year were £6,000, being the legal costs for challenging a licence application for outdoor events on the Kenwood Estate.

The trustees believe that the Society's Capital and Reserves are satisfactory at £57,283 of which £32,795 are held in unrestricted reserves and £24,524 in restricted reserves.

The Society wishes to thank Fisher Phillips LLP, Chartered Accountants, for carrying out the Independent Examination of the Financial Statements for 2022.

Fisher Phillips LLP, Chartered Accountants

Fisher Phillips LLP is a proactive and forward-thinking UK firm of Chartered Accountants based in North West London providing accountancy, taxation and business advisory services to individuals and businesses.

The Society is very grateful to Fisher Phillips LLP for examining the Society's annual financial statements each year on a pro bono basis.

Contact: info@fisherphillips.co.uk / T: +44 (0)20 7483 6100

Address: Summit House 170 Finchley Road, London NW3 6BP

The Heath & Hampstead Society present
The Inaugural Hunter Davies Lecture

Climate Change – a Report from the Frontline

A Lecture by Justin Rowlatt, Climate Editor, BBC

Thursday 25 May

7:30pm for 8:00pm | Rosslyn Hill Chapel, NW3

A behind-the-curtain view of international climate affairs from the BBC's climate editor, Justin Rowlatt. With a long and highly distinguished career in television and radio journalism, Justin is the first climate editor the BBC has appointed. He describes his role as "reporting from the frontline of climate change on how it will affect our lives and what we can do about it"

This lecture is the first in an occasional series dedicated to lifelong lover of the Heath and dedicated supporter of the Society, Hunter Davies

This event is free to Society members. Tickets will be available for non members for £15

It is our intention to live-stream this lecture -
further details in due course on the Society's website



Spring, Summer and Autumn Musical Events

St John-at-Hampstead Parish Church, Church Row NW3

20 May, 7.30pm: *A Berkeley Celebration*

The London Festival of Contemporary Church Music
marks Michael Berkeley's 75th birthday
Directed by Geoffrey Webber

11 November: *Brahms Requiem*

Come and Sing, Scratch performance.
Arrival 1.30 pm; rehearsal 2.00 pm;
informal performance 6.00 pm

The Hampstead Collective

1 May, 6.00pm:
Theodora by Handel

10 July, 7.00pm: *Fetes Galantes*
Songs and duets of summer, love and celebration

5 June, 7.00pm:
The Judgement of Solomon
Baroque Biblical Dramas and Dialogues

7 August, 7.00pm:
***Bach and Handel Solo Cantatas
with Orchestra***

Autumn Musical

30 November to 2 December: *My Fair Lady*

The Hampstead Players with Orchestra. Performances at 7.30pm with additional matinee at 2.30pm on 2 December

All enquiries to Jenny Macdonald-Hay 0207 794 1193

Dates for your diaries

The Society looks forward to seeing you at these events advertised elsewhere in this Newsletter:

Thursday 25 May, Inaugural Hunter Davies Lecture – see page 8

Thursday 22 June, Annual General Meeting – see page 6

Sunday 2 July, Kite Display – see page 10

Sunday 3 September, Natural Aspect Concert – see page 21

Monday 11 – Wednesday 20 September, Sheep on the Heath – see page 18

Thursday 28 September, Springett Lecture – see page 25



The Kite Society, Heath Hands
The City of London Corporation,
and The Heath & Hampstead Society
present

A KITE DISPLAY AT PARLIAMENT HILL

Come and see members of The Kite Society of Great Britain give a spectacular display of the art of kite flying, with tricks and intricate routines accompanied by music, in the beautiful surroundings of the Heath

2 JULY 2023

12 NOON TO 4 PM • PARLIAMENT HILL FIELDS

Town Report

by Andrew Haslam-Jones

Members of the Sub-Committee have been busy on a variety of matters.

Transport

Regular readers will recall Robert Linger, of this Sub-Committee, last year proposed a scheme to reconfigure the number 24 bus terminal in South End Green to accommodate the number 168 bus. That plan unblocked the impasse preventing the pedestrianisation of the slip road next to the triangular park. As I write, we understand funding has been secured for this project. The final details have yet to be agreed and remain unclear. In particular, there are concerns cyclists might still have access to the pedestrianised slip road. Privately, even experienced and committed local cyclists have been saying it would be inappropriate, creating conflicts with pedestrians. Our local councillors have promised to clarify what are the plans.

Separately, various Society members have raised concerns about the unsightly red and white plastic barriers further up South End Road installed during the pandemic to widen the pavement. Although they have mostly been moved to the side of the road, Camden Council stated, following the consultation it held last autumn supporting making the pavement-widening permanent, it cannot remove the barriers without holding another consultation. We have expressed our concern the flooding in this area during recent years would damage the wooden platform, which we understand the Council plans to use to widen the pavement. Our councillors are taking this up with Camden Council. At the same time, the Society is supporting the design initiative of a group of local residents led by local activist, John Vedelago.

Environment

Pam Castle, a member of this Sub-Committee and host of the Castle Debates on environmental and related legal topics, is organising a talk on Camden Council's various air quality initiatives with Tom Parkes, Camden Council's Air Quality Programme Manager. Members of this Sub-Committee, the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum and the Hampstead Transport Partnership will be attending. This talk will promote greater knowledge of Camden's anti-pollution work which we hope will better inform the work of all our respective committees and we are very grateful to Tom Parkes for agreeing to do this.

Post boxes

In addition to her work on monitoring replacements and repairs required to the characteristic street tile road signs of Hampstead, Alexandra Lavery has had a look at Hampstead's post boxes. Apart from the decommissioned octagonal Victorian post box on Hampstead High Street renovated some years ago, they are in a very poor state.

Alexandra has found them in different states of disrepair, varying from the pictured post box on Willow Road, whose recumbent position, as one member of the committee quipped, brings a whole new meaning to the phrase *dead letter*, to extreme deterioration in their paintwork. Councillor Linda Chung has agreed to take the matter up with Royal Mail. We are hopeful we can achieve the same results as we understand the Highgate Society proposes to achieve in having all Highgate post boxes stripped and repainted.



A hard-working post box having a little rest

Planning Report

by David Castle

Murphy's Yard

It is now a while since there has been any news about the enormous and high-density development proposed for Murphy's Yard (stretching from Kentish Town to the edge of the Heath).

Since the application for this development was made, the invasion of Ukraine and the resulting energy crisis and inflation have caused an economically uncertain future, with fast-rising building costs and flat-lining and, possibly, falling house prices.

Will this cause investors to look elsewhere than London and hence cause developers of large areas like Murphy's Yard to drastically revise their plans?

This could result either in delay for years until the economic situation becomes more settled or even a reduction in the size of the proposal, with lower heights and densities to meet the very different economic circumstances.

Retrofitting listed or conservation area buildings

The Society is often asked about planning restrictions in connection with the installation of heat pumps, solar panels, insulation or other means of decreasing the energy usage in buildings. The answer is: planning permission is required only in some cases – and not as many as you might have thought.

The most thorough and clear definition of which type of retrofitting needs approval is available on Camden Council's planning website in the document entitled [Retrofitting Planning Guidance](#).

More general advice can be found on Camden Council's planning website in the document entitled [Energy Efficiency Planning Guidance for Conservation Areas](#).

The disgraceful dereliction of Heath House

For year, the Society has been attempting to persuade the agents responsible to improve and bring back into use this prominent listed building on the edge of the Heath. Its current state of dereliction spoils one of the loveliest areas of Hampstead.

Last year, we were promised building work would start at the beginning of this year. According to Camden's Planning Department not much is happening.

The Society has agreed we should attempt to put more pressure on the agents and the owners, at the very least, to make the building water-tight and remove the scaffolding and plastic-covered eyesore.

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.

WHAT'S ON AT HAMPSTEAD THEATRE



HAMPSTEAD THEATRE
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HAMPSTEADTHEATRE.COM
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**WE LOOK FORWARD TO
WELCOMING YOU SOON!**

Heath Report

by John Beyer

Tree planting

Eleven disease-resistant elms were planted over the winter on the Heath Extension. The Italian elms (*ulmus pumila hybrid*) will replace native elms which had succumbed to Dutch Elm disease. To combat the effects of disease and future climate change impacts, the traditional policy of planting only native varieties will need to be revised. The elms are part of the Queen's Green Canopy project launched before Her late Majesty's death. A total of 33 trees, representing the 33 boroughs of London, were planted. Eleven

native oaks (*quercus robur*) were used to restore an ancient hedge line to the east of Tumulus Mound, while the final eleven were traditional apple and pear varieties which found a home near the Kenwood Nursery Yard, on a site which was traditionally an orchard. In addition, an alder from the Tree of Trees, which stood opposite Buckingham Palace, was planted in Golders Hill Park. The Society hopes to complement this activity by replacing the fallen beech tree planted by King George V in the 1920s.



One of the oaks planted east of Tumulus Mound



William Upton planting one of the trees

Heath staff restructure

The City is undertaking a staff restructuring. Given the sensitive nature of the process, the Society has been giving advice in private as issues arise. It is expected to be completed in April/May.

Biodiversity boards

The Society continues to organise with partners a seasonally changing set of boards to introduce visitors to nature on the Heath. They are placed at six entry sites by the City and English Heritage. This year, their theme is Heath habitats, and the spring board features woodlands and their management.

Sheep

Once again, the Society will be working with the City, Heath Hands and Mudchute Farm to bring sheep to the Heath on 11-20 September (provisional dates).



Heath Sub-Committee member Will Coles soothes a Norfolk born in 2019

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 SUMMER FESTIVAL

HAMPSTEAD, GET READY TO PARTY!

THE SUMMER FESTIVAL IS HERE!

Four events across two weekends in the beautiful gardens of Keats House

Art Fair

Sunday 18 June 12-5pm

An open exhibition of paintings and sculptures, as well as *Picture the Heath* competition entries, children's art activity table, add a contribution to the community canvas. Beautiful craft stalls, delicious freshly-cooked food, and a wine bar.

Keats House Garden, Free Admission

Hampstead's Art Street

22 June to 4 July

See the canvas murals along the walls of Keats Grove, painted by local artists and school groups.



Macbeth

Friday 23 June, 7pm

Saturday 24 June, 1pm & 6pm

An open-air, family-friendly production of Shakespeare's tragedy, performed by Drama Impact.

Tickets £25/£20 concession/£78 for a family of two adults and two children. *Keats House Garden*

To book go to: www.eventbrite.co.uk

Family Garden Party

Sunday 25 June, 2-5pm

Rhyme-time, storytelling, art activities, giant chess set, magician, Birds of Prey demonstration, tea and delicious cake and a wine bar. Sponsored by TK International.

Keats House Garden, Free Admission

Big Fair in Heath Street

Sunday 2 July 12-5pm

Over 100 stalls with high quality crafts and fabulous food and drink, a funfair, a children's circus school and a film school, a sportzone, giant chess set, and of course bands on the music stage to get everyone dancing in the street. The highlight of summer in Hampstead. *Free Admission*

Please check our website www.hampsteadsummerfestival.com for latest information and ticket links.

*The Hampstead Summer Festival committee is delighted that all proceeds will go to two popular and vital local charities:
Hampstead School of Art and Keats Community Library.*

**Keats Community Library and Keats House,
Keats Grove, NW3 2RR**



**Hampstead
School of Art**



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HAMPSTEAD
SUMMER
FESTIVAL



Hampstead
School of Art

Picture the Heath

Sunday 18 June

Exhibiting your artworks including *en plein air*, painting and drawing inspired by the Heath and the surrounding area

Win up to £500 plus other prizes

Let the Heath, Hampstead Village and surrounding area inspire you and inspire others

Picture the Heath is an annual drawing and painting exhibition which celebrates the Heath and its surrounding area, organised by **Hampstead School of Art**, an Art Fair Day event exhibition, part of Hampstead Summer Festival annual events. It is open to everyone 16+ and takes place on **Sunday 18 June**, at Keats House Garden, Keats Grove NW3 2RR.

All submitted artworks will be exhibited and judged during Hampstead Summer Festival Art Fair Day in Keats House Garden on Sunday 18 June. For full details go to www.hampsteadsummerfestival.com or www.hsoa.co.uk.



Xiaolan Gu at the Art Fair

Registration for both is through **Eventbrite**. £20 entry fee (+ £2.15 booking fee) or call Hampstead School of Art on **0207 794 1439** for further information. All artworks to be delivered to Hampstead School of Art no later than Monday 12 June 5pm, 2 Penrose Gardens NW3 7BF. Please register asap as numbers are limited.

Heath Hands

Heath Hands is the conservation and community charity for Hampstead Heath, and we work across the Kenwood Estate, Golders Hill Park, Keats House and Highgate Wood.

We have grown from a volunteer-led conservation group and now deliver a wide range of projects and contribute over 15,000 hours of volunteering to our green spaces each year. Our programmes include practical conservation, learning, wellbeing activities and ecological monitoring, and we work with our local schools and community groups to give everyone the opportunity to get involved on the Heath.

We collaborate with a range of partner organisations to protect our green spaces and get the local community active on our busy programme of nature walks, events and activities. We are pleased to work with the Society on wildlife connectivity projects and initiatives such as sheep grazing.



Find out more about what's happening here: www.heath-hands.org.uk/whatson – including the Heath's annual Community Fun Day on 25th June.



The former Dairy at Kenwood House in summer flowers



Heath Hands youth volunteers on Parliament Hill fields

New Nature Interpretation Centre appeal

Heath Hands is turning a room at the Kenwood Dairy into a new nature interpretation centre to provide information and activities about the wildlife and nature of the Kenwood Estate and the wider Heath. The aim is to create a resource centre to help engage visitors and new audiences about the natural heritage

of our green spaces, and we are fundraising to enable us to develop resources and displays, as well as to help us open the space on a regular basis. Find out more and support the project here: www.heathhands.enthuse.com/cf/dairy-interpretation-centre-appeal



Green woodpecker – a West Meadow resident. Photo courtesy: Adrian Brooker

Quarterly Walk by Members of the Heath Sub-Committee: The Kenwood Landscape – Balancing Historic Views with Wildlife Conservation

by Jeff Waage

A successful contemporary conservation is a multi-faceted puzzle, which takes into account biodiversity as an equally important component. We see this in action at Ken Wood where over two centuries of changing practices pose challenges for English Heritage and Kenwood's gardeners.

While Kenwood is most famous for its spectacular house and art collection, most visits are directed at its 112-acre estate. In January, the Society's Heath Sub-Committee made its winter walk there, guided by Crissy Mulrain, Kenwood Head Gardener, to discuss how English Heritage was managing this historic landscape. Crissy and her small team of gardeners manage both Kenwood's formal ornamental plantings

and its broader landscape which includes habitats rich in wildlife and flora, including an ancient woodland and UK Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a rare sphagnum bog, and ponds with many breeding waterfowl and dragonfly species.

English Heritage has a mission to maintain and restore the famous vista-rich landscape designed in the 1790s by Humphry Repton. Stretching down from Kenwood House, this used to have long views towards the Dairy, West Meadow and even up to Beech Mount at the southern end of the estate. With the cessation of grazing in the last century, wet areas inaccessible to mowers have sprouted birch

Quarterly Walk by Members of the Heath Sub-Committee: The Kenwood Landscape – Balancing Historic Views with Wildlife Conservation (cont)

copses. An historic holly hedge has become a holly tree line, and meadowed slopes have become scrub and woodland. Now, these are all wildlife habitats. Some of West Meadow's most familiar wildlife, like Brimstone Butterfly, Green Woodpecker, Kestrel, Jackdaw and Rabbit, depend on the mixture of meadow and bordering wooded edges. Removing trees and shrubs to expose historic views could have unwanted ecological impact, so English Heritage must find a balance.

Working with the Society and through the Kenwood Landscape Forum, Kenwood's gardeners are finding solutions to restore views while conserving biodiversity. Trees and bramble around the sphagnum bog, for instance, are being cut back to open views across West Meadow, but only in annual sections, leaving enough dense vegetation for nesting birds and feeding bees and butterflies. Special efforts are being made to protect important habitats, including one of the Heath's three remaining patches of wild Lily of the Valley (pictured) and the sphagnum bog itself, one of London's very few bogs, in which the London Natural History Society continues to find new plant species. Surprisingly, we learned this bog itself is less than 80



Lily of the Valley. Photo courtesy: Adrian Brooker

years old, and some of its sphagnum may have come from potting material discarded there decades ago.

On the west side of West Meadow runs a line of veteran oaks, remnants of an old hedgerow. Adjacent birches have been pruned back to ensure the canopies of these oaks are not overshadowed. Deeper into those woods, a forest school has been running for some time. Because many small feet are damaging to the soil and vegetation, it is moved around the wood to reduce impact on biodiversity.

Because it is an SSSI with rare species, including beetles who thrive only in ancient woods, English Heritage manages the magnificent Ken Wood with guidance from Natural England. Its wooden-fenced paths have been very important protection for this ancient woodland, and Crissy's team has now completed its restoration. Other management activities in the SSSI include removing invasive alien plants like rhododendron and laurel, and thinning holly in some parts to let more light onto the forest floor. These actions benefit the natural recruitment of oaks eventually to replace the towering veterans above.

We finished our walk on the Pasture Ground below the House, with a conversation on English Heritage's decision to discontinue its summer rock concerts. This was welcomed by our Sub-Committee members, as were new activities with less impact on landscape and wildlife, like the successful Christmas at Kenwood, which will hopefully fill some of the funding gap this has left. English Heritage is now developing a Master Plan for Kenwood aimed at securing its future, and a new Kenwood Landscape Plan is also in development, which should achieve that balance between restoring views and supporting nature-rich habitats on the Kenwood estate.

NATURAL ASPECT

AN AFTERNOON OF LOCAL LIVE
MUSIC ON THE HEATH



HEADLINED BY LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL
JAZZ GUITARIST JOHN ETHERIDGE, WITH
ACCLAIMED JAZZ SINGER VIMALA ROWE, AND
SUPPORTED THIS YEAR BY LOCAL PERFORMERS
IN A CELEBRATION OF OUR CULTURAL
HERITAGE DRAWN FROM THE COMMUNITIES
SURROUNDING THE HEATH.

PARLIAMENT HILL BANDSTAND

FREE TO ALL

3

SEPTEMBER

12-5PM



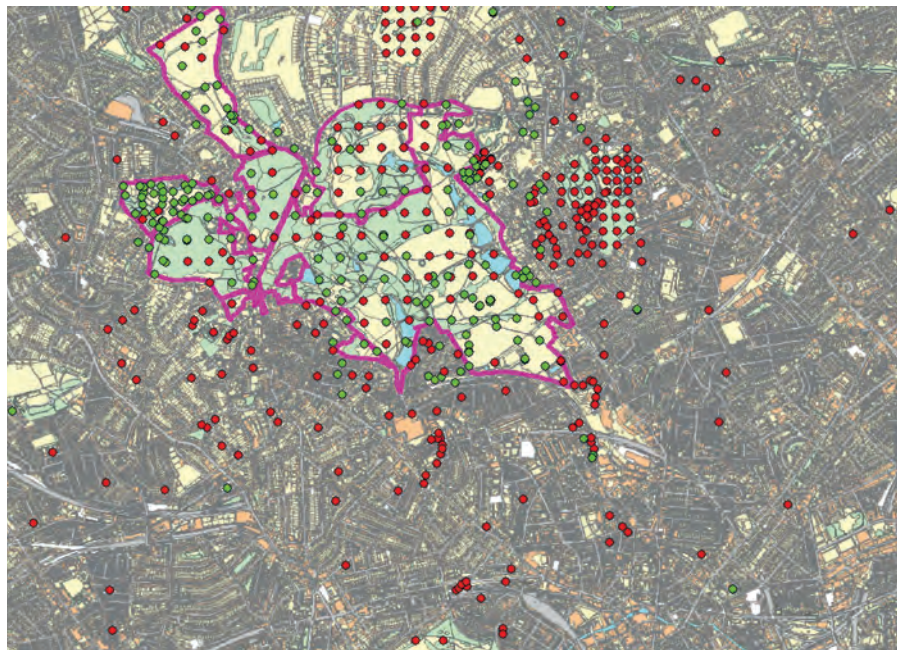
Helping Hedgehogs: Building Green Corridors in the Fringes of the Heath

by Jeff Waage

Last Spring, Society members were invited to participate in a survey of hedgehog sightings near their homes and around Hampstead Heath (see *Newsletter* May 2022, Vol 53 No 2). This was part of a project supported by the Mayor's *Rewild London* programme, and run by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), our Society, Heath Hands, City of London, the London Natural History Society and others. The aim was to explore the potential to connect, with "green corridors", central London's two significant populations of hedgehogs, at Regent's Park and Hampstead Heath. The Regent's Park population has been falling in recent years and may soon disappear. Hampstead Heath remains a London hedgehog

stronghold, but is at risk as well. Increasing disturbance on the Heath, and injuries caused by growing numbers of dogs and foxes, could affect populations there.

The project generated a map of hedgehog records, some from camera trapping on the Heath and around by ZSL, and others from the online survey, in which no less than 15 local neighbourhood forums and organizations participated through their membership. The figure below shows some of the results. Green dots indicate where hedgehogs have been seen in the past five years, and red dots where they have not been seen for ten or more years, or never. The border of the Heath is outlined in magenta. Clearly, building a corridor between the Heath and Regent's Park



Map of hedgehog sightings on and around the Heath. Photo courtesy: Adrian Brooker

Helping Hedgehogs – Building Green Corridors in the Fringes of the Heath (cont)

will be a challenge, but our team was encouraged by evidence of hedgehog sightings from residential areas around the Heath, suggesting they do move in and out. Creating more habitats in the fringes of the Heath could be important to their survival, connecting them with sources of food in gardens and allotments. And, of course, it would improve nature experiences for local residents and their families.

Based on the survey and local interest, several potential corridors have been identified. One reaches from the East Heath, through Fitzroy and Holly Lodge communities to the Highgate Cemetery and Waterlow Park. The Fitzroy Park Residents Association records many hedgehog sightings, possibly because of nearby allotments which provide good shelter and food for hedgehogs. They have even created hedgehog road signs. Highgate Road remains a serious barrier to further movement. Beyond that, there are many green spaces which could be improved. Another very promising corridor would stretch west from the Heath Extension into Hampstead Garden Suburb. The Suburb is particularly well suited to a corridor because, in its planning many decades ago, hedges were used as property barriers, rather than fences and walls, which today allows free movement of hedgehogs. Other



Hedgehog on the Heath. Photo courtesy: Adrian Brooker

corridors include one from the Lido area to Kentish Town, via Murphy's Yard, where the Society has now submitted to Camden and Murphys & Sons Ltd a detailed plan for a green corridor. Kentish Town City Farm had hedgehogs as recently as 2021. A potential corridor of green spaces and allotments also stretches from West Heath and Golders Hill Park down into the RedFrog and Childs Hill areas, and from the north side of the Heath into Highgate.

What would building corridors involve?

First, areas would have to be mapped to identify barriers to hedgehog movement, such as fences and walls. To understand how to improve hedgehog movement in and out of that green space, the City has mapped barriers at Highgate Wood. Other actions to help create hedgehog highways include placing holes in walls and fences. *Hedgehog Crossing* signs could be put on busy roads. Green spaces could be improved for hedgehogs by creating log and brush piles, ponds and compost heaps, or putting in hedgehog houses. And remember, actions making gardens friendly for hedgehogs are generally good to increase all wildlife. If you would like to learn more about these for your own garden, visit www.hedgehogstreet.org.



Hedgehog Crossing in Fitzroy Park

At the time of writing, ideas for corridors are still in development. Heath Hands will be recruiting a staff member to help with corridor development, and the Society will continue to work with neighbourhood organizations to facilitate improving hedgehogs and biodiversity in the fringes of the Heath.

New Local Community Initiative: Growing Green

by Jeska Harrington-Gould

The newest Heath Sub-Committee member, Jeska Harrington-Gould, has recently helped form a local climate action group to do something positive in reaction to the current situation with climate change. Growing Green raises funds and seeks volunteers to help with biodiversity, clean air and carbon capture in the local area, starting with schools.

In the two months they have been active so far, Growing Green has worked at four local schools (Parliament Hill, Acland Burghley, La Sainte Union and Hampstead School) planting 860 native trees, hedges and orchards plus adding nesting boxes, a wildlife pond, hedgehog homes, wildflower meadows and log piles.

If you want to get involved, Growing Green is looking for planting volunteers, donations, expertise and suitable sites. Email Jeska at jeskamail@gmail.com, visit their website www.growinggreen.org.uk, or donate here: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/rewildinglondonschools



Planting a mini-forest at Parliament Hill School, February 2023

The Heath & Hampstead Society present
The Springett Lecture

Hampstead Heath & Climate Change

A Lecture by Jonathan Meares, City of London
Corporation's Conservation and Trees Manager
for Hampstead Heath and Highgate Wood

Thursday 28 September

7:30pm for 8:00pm | Rosslyn Hill Chapel, NW3

The landscape changes over the last 100 years or so have made the Heath less vulnerable to the increasing temperatures and extreme weather

The extensive woodland that now covers half the Heath's area offers refuge to an increasing number of wildlife species including the song thrush and woodcock, and even buzzards are now choosing to nest and raise their young on the Heath

This event is free to Society members. Tickets will be available for non members for £15

It is our intention to live-stream this lecture -
further details in due course on the Society's website



Martin Humphery

5 October 1929 – 1 January 2023

From Marc Hutchinson, Chair of the Society: Martin's past involvement, for nearly 30 years, as an officer of the Society in so many different roles was exceptional. He became a member and the Chairman of the Town Sub-Committee, and a Vice-Chairman of the Society, in 1995. 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. He finally retired as the Society's Vice-President in 2022.

We mourn his loss and, by kind permission of the Ham & High, reproduce below the obituary which they published.

Martin Humphery died on New Year's Day, with his beloved wife Angela by his side.

"I sat with Martin holding his hand as he slipped away at 9.40am on New Year's Day, 25 years to the day that his beloved mother died," Angela said.

"He was my husband for 66 and a half years and we had a wonderful life together."

With a deep love for conservation and animal welfare he was a member of and supported multiple charities including Born Free, Animal Asia Foundation and Greyhounds In Need ("GIN").

A retired businessman, Martin lived in Hampstead for nearly 70 years.

Former chair of the Society, he resigned as its vice-president on January 1 last year.

In his 'My Life in Hampstead and the Society', Newsletter (May 2022, Vol 53 No 2), he wrote

he walked on the Heath every day and had a strong interest in its conservation. He was deeply concerned at the declining condition of Hampstead's townscape and in 1995 joined the Society's Town Sub-Committee as co-opted member and then Chairman until 2004. He investigated the reasons for the poor state of rubbish collection and road cleansing by Camden Council for the Sub-Committee 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.

He joined a newly-formed Planning Sub-Committee in 2008 on which he served as a member until 2014.

Marc Hutchinson, said:

The Society is immensely saddened to learn of Martin's unexpected passing. He served the Society in many leading roles for nearly

30 years, stepping down finally in 2022. He will be terribly missed by the many that knew him through his charitable work, over decades, for conservation in Hampstead and animal welfare. We send our deepest sympathy to his wife Angela and his family.

Will Travers, son of Dame Virginia McKenna and co-founder of Born Free, said:

Virginia and my thoughts are with Angela at this sad, sad time. Martin Humphery was one of the kindest, most generous and considerate gentlemen you could ever wish to meet. Together with his wife Angela, he supported many charities, with a particular emphasis on animals in need. They were amongst the first supporters of Born Free, joining our family more than 30 years ago.

He added:

In the summer of 2019, shortly after he'd recovered from open heart surgery, the intrepid duo, both aged 90, decided to walk for wildlife in aid of Born Free, resolutely marching every day for two months and raising more than £30,000 for our work. Our co-founder, Virginia McKenna, made a Dame in the 2023 New Year Honours, joined them for one of their daily treks to personally thank them for their outstanding efforts and dedication. Martin was our true friend and Angela remains so, always.

Carolyn Davenport, general manager of GIN, said:

We were sad to hear that Martin Humphery has passed away, aged 93. Martin joined GIN as a Trustee in August 2003, and was chairman from June 2008, until September 2019. He retired as a Trustee in January 2022. Martin will be missed by many but especially by GIN for whom he gave so much of his time and effort proving, without doubt, his love for the greyhounds and galgos (Spanish greyhounds).



Martin with the Duchess of Cornwall (as she then was) and Dr Salab of the Brooke Hospital for Animals

Jill Robinson MBE, founder and chief of Animals Asia, said:

Martin Humphery was simply a legend. A mighty champion for the animals. Together with his wife Angela, he forged a path of relentless help and support for multiple animal charities throughout their remarkable life.

For nearly two decades, they supported our rescued bile farm bears at Animals Asia by holding countless events and making multiple generous donations. A big, gentle bear himself, he was without doubt the kindest, most active and tenacious soldier of welfare, with a wonderful sense of humour and the most enormous heart. We will miss him and send Angela our love and condolences for the loss of her right-hand animal advocate who never stopped making a difference and truly made this world a kinder place.

Fading Memories of Hampstead's Past: Built, Carved and Fixed Memories

by David Castle

The first part of this series, Fading Memories of Hampstead's Past, found in this Newsletter; Vol. 53 No 3, October 2022, dealt with the few fading, painted signs which may still be seen on the walls of Hampstead's buildings. This second part focuses on those buildings and structures with built-in, permanent signs of brick, stone or tiles.

All the buildings illustrated in this article were built between 1869 and 1913, the period when Hampstead changed from a large village full of alleys, dwellings of both good and poor quality surrounded by fields and paddocks, into a town and a fully functioning large borough. This transformation included the installation of drainage, electricity and gas, and the building of a hospital and workhouse (1845 – 1903), orphanage (1869), fire station (1873), town hall (vestry) (1877), schools, swimming pool (1888), bath-houses (1887 and 1888), public library (1897), charity dwellings, and a police station and magistrates court (1913).

Unsurprisingly, in 1965 with the ending of the Borough of Hampstead, together with other reasons, not one of these buildings now serves its original

function, though all but one still exists. Also, during this same period, all of the surrounding fields and paddocks were filled with detached, semi-detached and terraced houses. Hampstead then had a thriving local economy with many builders, a brewery, small workshops, stabling, and numerous local shops.

Hampstead Brewery, Rosslyn Hill (1869)

The brewery established in 1720, changed hands several times and made beer on the premises until the 1920s or 30s. The entrance to the building from Rosslyn Hill is clearly designed for horse traffic only. The very decorative entrance arch is deservedly listed. It is very exuberant with symmetrical decorative beer-barrels and bunches of hops (below left).

Monro House, 116 Fitzjohns Avenue (1869)

Now sheltered housing run by Camden Council, originally the site was the Royal Sailors' Daughters' Home and an orphanage for 100 girls. This somewhat stolid building was built before Fitzjohn's Avenue was laid out across open fields in the 1870s and



Fading Memories of Hampstead's Past: Built, Carved and Fixed Memories (cont)

before the road-widening of the Hampstead Town Improvements (1887) was driven through the mean alleys of Hampstead Town.

Public Drinking Fountain, Well Walk (1882)

This impressive memorial to The Wells and Campden Charities is in the middle of the six acres of Hampstead Heath given to the poor of Hampstead. It commemorates the generous gift made by the Honorable Susanna Noel in 1698. The charity now has no ownership of any of the six acres, having recently sold the Wells Tavern.



The Wells And Campden Baths, Flask Walk (1888)

This is one of two bath-houses provided by The Wells and Campden Charities. It was converted into a house in the 1980s.



Express Dairy, Heath Street (1889)

Together with a large working area at the back, the Express Dairy lasted for about 80 years. It is now a supermarket.



Fading Memories of Hampstead's Past: Built, Carved and Fixed Memories (cont)

Hampstead Hill Mansions, Downshire Hill (1896)

This structure demonstrates another exuberant design. Victorian mansion blocks became popular in Central London during the 1870s. They arrived in Hampstead during the 1890s, when nine such block of flats were built across the area. The construction of The Pryors in 1905, two large, tall mansion blocks on previously copyhold land (a legal enclosure of the Heath), shocked the citizens of Hampstead (below).



Hampstead Police Station and Magistrates Court, Rosslyn Hill (1913)

This fine, urbane, neo-baroque building served as a police station for a century until 2013. It is now empty. This photo is of the Downshire Hill façade, an accomplished, beautifully crafted, asymmetrical design, very different from the Police Station front.

The inevitable reduction in the variety of the uses of buildings, diminishing local economy and narrowing of the range of people who live in Hampstead continues to shrink Hampstead's cultural, economic and social complexity. Unfortunately, as we have witnessed with the recent closure of the Hampstead Antique & Craft Emporium, it is so profitable to convert every workshop, social or commercial use building into luxury commercial outlets or dwellings (above).



Once again, world class music and writers will be coming to Hampstead Garden Suburb, with performances in the iconic Lutyens listed buildings of Central Square, principally in St Jude's Church, in the neighbouring Free Church, and the equally imposing Henrietta Barnett School. Other events will spill on to the Square itself.

Full details of everything Proms at St Jude's can be found on www.promsatstjudes.org.uk

Proms at St Jude's is many faceted. As well as bringing outstanding performers and events to north London, it also raises money for charity. During the first 30 years of the festival, over £1 million was raised. In 2022, we donated £50,000 to support our two charities, the North London Hospice and Toynbee Hall, as well as funding much needed musical outreach and our Schools' Prom for local schools. You can support these fantastic causes by attending the Proms or joining our Friends' scheme to do even more and accessing priority booking and other privileges.

Musical events include something for all tastes. Sunday night is jazz night with the Echoes of Ellington Orchestra led by Peter Long, Music Director at Ronnie Scott's, whilst the following weekend Emma Kershaw and Katie Birtill bring Music of the West End and Broadway to the Suburb. On the opening night, Fantasia Orchestra return with soloist Jennifer Pike, playing the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto, which is followed by Beethoven's Eighth Symphony. There is also an Opera Night with the Armonico Consort which including a semi-staged performance of Purcell's Dido and Aeneas. Maybe you are a Sci-Fi aficionado or a fan of silent film – one of the world's leading conductors of silent film, Ben Palmer, leads the Covent Garden Chamber

Orchestra in the British premiere of a new arrangement accompanying a live screening of Fritz Lang's Metropolis, and there are free lunchtime concerts too.

Not musical? The Proms also host a Lit Fest on Saturday 24 June and Sunday 25 June. Anyone for Comedy? Late(ish) Night Comedy in the tent on Saturday 30 June will follow the concert.

On the afternoon of 1 July, the first ever Proms Family Festival will take place for the younger members of the family. There will be a free musical journey on Central Square, with a mix of other activities such as art sessions and face painting. The afternoon concerts provide for all ages with a Teeny Prom for pre-schoolers and the family concert is aimed at primary school age children. A Brush with Art features music from a string quartet, accompanying acclaimed artist and author/storyteller James Mayhew who will illustrate stories based on Grimm's fairytales on screen during the performance.

Our programme of Heritage Walks is the biggest ever. These venture beyond Hampstead Garden Suburb to the Heath, Hampstead, Highgate and even central London. Many are led by notable professional guides. Hampstead Garden Suburb is world famous in planning and architectural circles whilst also being one of London's best kept secrets. Staff from the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust will lead a number of walks looking at aspects of the Suburb. Alternatively, why not combine a short pre-concert introductory walk around Central Square on Friday 30 June and stay for a Night in Vienna with the Pico Players?

All walks must be pre-booked and early booking is advised as they often sell out.

Political Animals: The Story Behind the Blue Plaque on 47 Downshire Hill

by Professor John Hyatt

Polymath, academic and multi-talented artist, John Hyatt tells us the remarkable story of survival and resistance of John Heartfield, a master political photomontage artist who lived in Hampstead.

Rabbits!

Imagine it is one day in the middle of the Second World War. You catch the number 24 bus, the oldest route in England, from Hampstead to the National Gallery and Parliament. A little man gets on. He is not very noticeable, in a regular suit, hair short at the back and slightly receding to reveal a domed forehead atop two bushy brows and a pair of kind but piercing eyes. After a stop or two, a fluffy bunny appears next to the chap. You are sure you saw a rabbit! Then, yes, another and another and another. Soon the bus is pandemonium, hopping with rabbits everywhere. The little man shouts something in German.

You might think, “What a crazy guy!”, and move to keep out of his way. However, remember, there is always a story behind what you see. What you do not know is this little man was an émigré who had come to Britain because he was near the top of the Gestapo’s most-wanted list in Prague. He was given a house to stay in by a charitable friend and two rabbits to eat. He was the gentlest animal-lover you might wish to meet. Instead of cooking them, he kept the rabbits in the back garden of 47 Downshire Hill, Hampstead, until they bred so vigorously he had to try to move some out. Hence, the bus trip.

Blue plaque

Today, there is a blue plaque on the house at 47 Downshire Hill, not because of the rabbits. It reads: *John Heartfield 1891–1968 Master of Political Photomontage lived here 1938–1943.*

So, what is the story behind this plaque? Well, it seems our innocuous little animal-lover was also a giant of anti-Nazi art.

Here, I want to introduce you to him as – even though he has been massively influential to some artists – he is not as widely known as he should be. I will briefly tell you his story so you can explore his powerful work further if you are interested. I recommend www.johnheartfield.com as a place to start.

War and revolution

John Heartfield was born Helmut Herzfelde in Berlin in 1891. In 1899, his parents mysteriously disappeared, leaving their young children to fend for themselves. Fostered, Helmut studied arts and crafts in Munich and worked for a printing company. In 1914, he was conscripted into the German army to fight in the First World War, but he pretended mental illness to be sent home. He objected to the war and anglicised his name to John Heartfield to protest the prevailing climate of anti-British jingoism.

Photomontage and propaganda

John Heartfield and his friend, the artist George Grosz, began cutting-up newsprint and advertisements and recombining them by gluing them back together in new configurations as subversive images. He published an underground journal, *Neue Jugend* (New Youth). With his brother, Wieland Herzfelde, Heartfield set up *Malik-Verlag*, a radical publishing house and bookshop. All three men were disgusted with the war, which they saw as the needless

Political Animals: The Story Behind the Blue Plaque on 47 Downshire Hill (cont)

death of the working class in a conflict for markets by two giant capitalist powers. Heartfield, Wieland, and Grosz joined the newly formed German Communist Party (KPD) and formed the Berlin branch of a revolutionary, anarchic *anti-art* movement called Dada, which had begun in Zurich in 1916. Heartfield was also a founding member of the Red Group of artists, committed to revolutionary propaganda.

From 1930-38, Heartfield's most famous photomontages were produced for the *Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung* (Worker's Illustrated Journal): over 200 photomontages, often featured on the cover, with a print run of up to half a million. Heartfield visited the Soviet Union in 1931 and was the first western artist to have a solo exhibition in red Moscow. On Heartfield's return in 1932, Germany suffered mounting election irregularities, spiralling unemployment, and violent street battles between Nazis and Communists. Both sides used photomontage as mass propaganda on posters, magazines, and pamphlets.

During that time, Heartfield produced some of his most powerful photomontages. Pictured here, courtesy of his grandson, Professor John J Heartfield, is *War and Corpses – The Last Hope of the Rich*. The art depicts a top-hatted hyena prowling the bodies of dead soldiers, whilst *The Meaning of the Hitler Salute* shows unambivalently in one instantly-understood, scathing image how German capitalists are giving Hitler back-handers. Note Heartfield regularly portrayed Hitler as very small in relation to surrounding items to negate his public persona.

Exile

The appointment of Hitler as Chancellor in 1933 brought mass persecution. You can imagine how a man abandoned by his parents as a child might be able to place unconditional love in animals and the natural world, but never in a self-styled Fuhrer, as National



War and Corpses – The Last Hope of the Rich. Courtesy: Liverpool John Moores University Special Collections and Archives. © Heartfield Community of Heirs – All Rights Reserved



The Meaning of the Hitler Salute. Courtesy: Liverpool John Moores University Special Collections and Archives. © Heartfield Community of Heirs – All Rights Reserved

Socialism demanded. Heartfield narrowly escaped arrest by the Gestapo, fleeing to Prague, where he was reunited with his brother, Wieland, and the *AIZ* staff. In exile, he continued his photomontages for *AIZ* (later *Die Volks Illustrierte*). He also took many of the photographs which he used in his montages. He was a stickler for capturing exactly what he needed, as testified by Erwin Geschonneck, another émigré to Prague via Soviet Russia.

Geschonneck, later an East German movie star, was a German Communist Party member and the photographic model for the figure in Heartfield's photomontage, *Wie im Mittelalter ... so im Dritten Reich* (As in the Middle Ages... in the Third Reich), which is pictured below.



As in the Middle Ages ... in the Third Reich. Courtesy of Liverpool John Moores University Special Collections and Archives. © Heartfield Community of Heirs – All Rights Reserved

Geschonneck recalled later:

It was very hot when we took the pictures. We went to the roof of a small, low house on which Johnny von Comrade had built a wooden frame because he needed [to know] about the posture of the body. This wooden frame was a cross, of course not a Swastika as in the montage, but a wooden cross – and I had to make the effort [...] to lie down on it. It was about a metre above the ground, and I had to lie naked all the time until he had photographed everything with his Leica several times.

Heartfield's dogged professionalism and attention to detail, not to mention a particular sense of humour, made his work very effective propaganda against National Socialism.

In 1938, Germany demanded the Czech government hand Heartfield over. Heartfield's name was high on the Gestapo's most-wanted list when the Nazis marched into Czechoslovakia.

Hampstead

Fearing for his life, Heartfield left Prague for London. In this, he was assisted by left-wing intellectuals within the Hampstead set: art dealer Paul Wengraf, himself an émigré from Nazi Europe, and the architect Ove Arup, whose wife was Jewish. These two men devised a way to help radical artists leave Nazi-occupied Europe and come to Britain. Wengraf offered them a solo exhibition at his Arcade Gallery in Bond Street.

In London, Heartfield helped found the Free German League of Culture (FGLC) with other German-speaking émigrés. The FGLC, under the ever-watchful eye of MI5, met at 47 Downshire Hill. This anti-fascist cultural organisation included artists, writers, and intellectuals such as the painter Oskar Kokoschka and author Stefan Zweig. The FGLC helped organise Heartfield's solo exhibition, *One Man's War Against*

Political Animals: The Story Behind the Blue Plaque on 47 Downshire Hill (cont)



Two photographs of John Heartfield and Paul Wengraf (both with a monkey) in London, 1932. Photographs published with thanks to members of the respective families: Professor John J Heartfield for Heartfield, and, for Wengraf, Pip Butb

Hitler, at Wengraf's Arcade Gallery in 1939.

Along with other refugees, Heartfield was interned as an enemy alien in Huyton in Liverpool in 1940. Released after six weeks on the grounds of ill health, he spent the next decade living in Hampstead. He was unhealthy and unhappy because he was forbidden from working. Life improved after meeting Gertrud ("Tutti") Fietz at the FGLC, who was to become his third wife.

Together, they explored the British countryside, and Heartfield, a great lover of animals, bred those escapologist rabbits in his garden. From 1943, he was permitted to work, producing book jacket designs for Lindsay Drummond on mainly nature-related topics. He later worked for Penguin Books before being forced to move to East Germany in 1950. It was an unhappy move. He did not support the Communist regime as it had evolved under Stalin and afterward. He died in Berlin in April 1968.

So, next time you are on a bus full of rabbits, remember there may well be a good story behind what you see!

About the Author

John Hyatt has been a painter, digital artist, video artist, photographer, designer, musician, printmaker, author, and sculptor for 48 years; a university teacher for 41 years; Head of Department for 10; Professor for 29; and, founding two Research Institutes, a Research Institute Director for 19 years. In September 2016, John moved to become Professor in Contemporary Art at Liverpool John Moores University's School of Art and Design. In 2019/20, he co-curated, with Four Corners Gallery, London, a large John Heartfield exhibition, *Heartfield: One Man's War*. He draws upon its co-authored catalogue, with Sam Berlin and Carla Mitchell, for this article. As an artist, Hyatt has exhibited worldwide. Music fans know John as singer/songwriter with the legendary post-punk band, The Three Johns.



*Professor John Hyatt with John Heartfield's self-portrait photographic poster print. Note Heartfield has a small bird on his head.
Courtesy: © John Hyatt, 2018 – All Rights Reserved*

An Arch and a Tree: A Story of Entanglement

by Tim Edensor

Tim Edensor is Professor of Social and Cultural Geography at Manchester Metropolitan University. He is also a Hampstead resident. His original piece on the wonderful coexistence of Pitt's Arch and its beech tree was published in an academic journal. We believe the story deserves a wider audience. This adaptation allows all of us to look at the history of Pitt's Arch and understand what goes into its and the beech tree's survival.



Pitt's Arch and beech tree in winter

Pitt's Arch

A remarkable sight greets walkers in a quiet glade of Sandy Heath. A brick and stone arch is conjoined by two flanking walls to comprise a six-metre-long, four-metre-high structure. This is Pitt's Arch. This venerable structure is not alone though, for it is entangled with a colossal beech tree, its huge bole dividing into four mighty subsidiary trunks each supporting hefty branches. The tree has wholly enveloped parts of the arch's flank wall, forcing it towards the ground. It is difficult to separate the two things constituting this intertwined ensemble.

What happens in the future is difficult to guess. In the present, a gathering of heritage managers, experts and enthusiasts have collaborated to arrive at a temporary solution. An ongoing consensus has emerged to conserve the arch-tree assembly for as long as possible. This has involved the skilful application of maintenance and repair for both companions. Without these, the tree might have already obliterated the arch.

Much of Sandy Heath's landscape remains pockmarked by the ponds and hillocks created by 18th and 19th century sand excavation. Now, it is primarily covered with trees and shrubs. Like most of the Heath, it was once rough heathland, covered with gorse and heather and sustained by grazing and scrub-clearance to prevent woodland encroachment. Over the past hundred years, however, extensive woodland has replaced much of the heathland. An arboreal landscape rapidly became favoured by many Londoners, instilled with notions of the picturesque and the wild.

Where Pitt's Arch stands today was untouched by sand extraction. In the later 18th century, it was part



The beech tree absorbing Pitt's Arch

of the family estate of Charles Dingley, a wealthy merchant and sawmill owner. The landholding was located south of the village of North End, a 17th century semi-rural retreat for wealthy Londoners. Dingley extended the family estate by two and a half acres between 1742 and 1769 and, when completed, it accommodated a coach house, stables, garden, grotto and four other houses. In 1766 and 1767, Dingley invited the then British prime minister, William Pitt the Elder, to his house when Pitt suffered prolonged periods of debilitating depression. At this time, Dingley made improvements to the garden, including what became known as Pitt's Arch.

The redesigned garden was a contemporary example of the fashionable picturesque style inspired by

landscape architect William Kent. Such designed landscapes, with their fake ruins and follies, excluded any disruptive evidence of labour or industry. They were intended to be viewed from various prospects while walking. The arch is embellished with Portland stone and constructed out of handmade stock bricks, probably manufactured at one of the local brickworks extracting material from one of the Heath's 18th century clay pits.

The tree

Beech trees are native to south-east England and mark the border between the European deciduous forest zone and the northern pine forest zone. Like other old beech trees, the large specimen next to Pitt's Arch provides a habitat for hole-nesting birds, wood-boring insects, fungi, mosses and lichens. Beech trees carpet the woodland floor with leaves and mast, rendering it inhospitable for only but a few specialist plants, yet beech mast provides food for badgers, rodents and wood pigeons. As with other large trees, this beech relies on an underground network of mycorrhizal fungi to which it passes sugars in exchange for minerals.

This tree has inserted itself into the environment, occupying space, transforming the nature of the soil, limiting the growth of other organisms and hosting others. Its growth has been accompanied by a multitude of non-human participants – soil nutrients, rain and sunlight, and innumerable animals, insects, birds, invertebrates, micro-organisms and fungi have lived on it, providing nourishment, breaking down the soil, and co-producing the ecological environment in which it has prospered.

The origins of the beech are obscure. David Humphries, the City's tree management officer, conjectures it is possibly, "the remnant of a linear hedge that's been left and it's just been allowed to

An Arch and a Tree: A Story of Entanglement (cont)



Inosculation – the beech tree

grow... you just wouldn't plant a tree so close to a structure." The beech has adapted to changing conditions in seeking maximum opportunities for growth, and above all, its multi-stemmed form has contributed to its longevity and size. Strikingly, the unusual process of inosculation, whereby branches have come into contact with neighbouring branches and grafted together to create a strengthening buttress, has extended the tree's stability and size.

The arch-tree assemblage

Decisions about the maintenance of the arch-tree assemblage are agreed upon by local groups, environmental managers and national heritage and conservation organisations. For both arch and tree, ongoing maintenance and care are complex, and each has allowed the ensemble to co-exist for the time being.

In earlier times, the destructive effects of the beech tree on the arch may have led to its removal, yet contemporary evaluations increasingly regard trees as intimate, cherished symbols of place, markers of time and seasonal change, and important for the

mental and physical health of city-dwellers. They have become the focus of environmental anxiety, spurring campaigns to preserve them. As with other ancient and veteran trees on the Heath, the beech is subject to practices seeking to conserve and manage it for as long as possible, under the care of the City's tree management department, with decisions about specific trees typically made in consultation with the Ancient Tree Forum.

Not old enough to be assigned status as an ancient tree (for beech trees, these are over 350 years old), the beech is classified as a veteran tree, valuable biologically, culturally and aesthetically because of its age, size and condition, and especially because of its remarkable inosculated branches. Indeed, for the Heath's Open Spaces Department, "the tree has as much heritage as the arch," and this is reflected by the inspections and interventions to which it has been subject, including the following.

First, although the tree retains strength and stability, this has been reinforced by the sturdy tethering together of large branches to minimise the possibility of their breaking off.

Second, to ensure the tree garners an adequate supply of light for photosynthesis, the City has undertaken halo pruning, which is the removal of branches belonging to the canopies of neighbouring trees. David Humphries emphasises there must be a measured approach to halo pruning. If too much surrounding foliage is removed, excessive exposure to sunlight could scorch the beech's thin bark.

Third, the tree's relationship with fungi is taken into account. Contemporary advances in knowledge about the role of fungi in ecosystems has transformed tree management. A plethora of fungal forms thrive in different conditions, rely on different trees and exploit diverse parts of the tree, stages of tree growth

and decay. The Heath is a fungi-rich environment accommodating several rare species amongst its decaying trees and piles of rotting wood. This beech has been colonised by *perenniporia fraxinea*, a tough, woody, creamy-white fungus living on the rotting heartwood of the tree, but leaving the bark, cambium and sapwood intact, safeguarding the flow of nutrients and water. The tree's interior condition was assessed by a sonic tomograph to happily confirm more harmful fungi were not present.

Finally, as with many other trees on the Heath, an additional threat to the beech is heavily compacted ground caused by the increasingly large numbers of people walking across its terrain. Soil compaction affects the capacity of tree roots to access water and nutrients and impacts upon the gaseous exchanges in the soil. In combination with periods of drought, this could potentially weaken roots and render the tree vulnerable to strong winds. Some partial protection is offered by the creation of a dead hedge limiting access to one side of the tree.

As with most buildings, the arch is a habitat for myriad non-humans for whom it affords nourishment and accommodation, and they exploit its succouring qualities of chemistry, temperature, humidity and light, eroding its brick and stone constituents at varying rates. Repairs to Pitt's Arch have been sporadic. Repointing of brickwork was undertaken in the 1960s and the arch was subject to emergency repairs in 1982. Some replacement bricks were inserted. Following the advice meted out by the Society of the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), existing bricks were used to minimise the loss of the historic fabric. Repair also followed SPAB's initial advice to carefully remove any original bricks and then reversed to hide any decay.

In 2009, given the increasingly perilous state of the arch, as the beech tree inexorably bore down upon it,

Camden Council, English Heritage and concerned members of the Society considered the arch required substantive intervention to secure it as an enduring feature in the landscape. Subsequently, the design consultancy, Alan Baxter Ltd, was contracted to write a structural engineering and conservation report to advise on how this objective might be met. As their report, Pitt's Arch, Hampstead Heath Structural Engineering and Conservation Study Draft, acknowledges, the greatest threat to the arch remains the tree, for the "fundamental problem is that both the brickwork and the tree are trying to occupy the same space" (2009: 12). They suggested five options.

One suggestion was to take no action, with an acceptance the arch would eventually dissolve into indistinction, and decay and erasure are part of dynamic change. Its time as a fixture in the landscape would have come to an end, and nature would take its course without intervention.

A second option proposed the effects of the tree on the adjoining flank wall should be circumvented by its removal. This would have reshaped the arch, truncating its form so a full appreciation of its proportions and dimensions would be curtailed. A longer-term strategy was suggested whereby this removed part of the arch would be carefully stored for the future and rebuilt once the tree died.

Third, the arch could be dismantled and reconstructed at a nearby location to avoid the depredations wrought by the tree, although the existing brickwork embedded in the tree would need to be left behind to avoid the risk of damaging the tree. A problem with this approach is the site on which the arch stands was originally chosen to best bring out its relationship with the landscape and this singular vision would be lost – as would a sense of the tree's power and the extraordinary juxtaposition that the scene offers.

An Arch and a Tree: A Story of Entanglement (cont)



Dead hedge and buttress

A fourth solution would be to remove the tree. However, the prospect of losing a charismatic veteran tree such as this was, the report admitted, unlikely to be acceptable to the Ancient Tree Forum and many other users of the Heath.

The fifth proposal, which Baxter's strongly recommended and was eventually chosen by all parties, involved the creation of a robust buttress placed on a concrete plinth supporting the flank wall affected by the tree. This structure slides backwards, allowing the wall to slowly incline towards the ground. Building the structure was a collaborative operation among tree specialists, architects and engineers to avoid damaging any of the tree's roots.

In theory, the arch could be preserved indefinitely, though it is likely its entire composition would

need to be replaced as the remaining original bricks inevitably decay and crumble.

The future of the tree is more certain: it will die and fall; when, is indeterminate. From its demise there will be a vast quantity of dead wood and the beech will have a valuable afterlife. Out of its decay will emerge future life. At present, I like to celebrate the work of the many people who have held the two tethered companions together, allowing us to continue to revel in this unlikely juxtaposition.

The academic article from which this adaptation is derived is Tim Edensor (2022) "Heritage assemblages, maintenance and futures: Stories of entanglement on Hampstead Heath, London," *Journal of Historical Geography*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhgc.2022.12.001>

A Magical Contrast of Light at the Hampstead Ponds



Photo courtesy: Ron Vester

Photographic Competition #myhampsteadheath



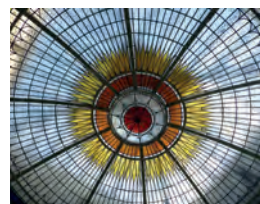
'Snowy Landscape' by Gavin Butt

"The layers from front to back of this composition give the picture great depth. Snowfall on the Heath is rare, so capturing scenes like this, with beautiful, soft light makes it all the more special," says Matt.

The Society runs a regular photographic competition on Instagram. Professional photographer and author, Matt Maran, is the Society's judge for the competition. See the Society's website for competition rules.



The Keats Community Library is open to all



- **The adult library** has a huge variety of books to borrow from literary fiction to crime, biography, history, cookery, travel, and an amazing selection of books on art. Join our monthly Reading Group
- **Evening cultural events:** talks by authors such as Sir David Hare, Dame Margaret Drabble or Sir Michael Palin; celebrity conversations such as Sir Derek Jacobi, Simon Russell Beale; talks on local artists, and readings by Dame Janet Suzman and Simon Callow
- **High quality used books** are always on sale, the Giant Spring & Autumn Book Sales are legendary
- **The children's library** has a wide range of books for all ages, with regular activities such as Rhyme-time for under '5s on Tuesday and Friday mornings, ballet classes, and chess classes for 6yrs+ every Saturday afternoon
- **Other children's events** such as author readings, with Julia Donaldson for example, a magician, film school, and art activities

The library is run by volunteers and an apprentice. Its truly a community library – run by the community for the community. Drop in anytime to our beautiful Grade II listed building.

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Thursday 10–7

Friday 10–7

Saturday 12–4

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Camden Art Centre
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Martin Wong
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16 June to 17 September

Martin Wong is widely recognised for his extraordinary depictions of social, sexual and political scenographies from the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. Weaving together narratives of queer existence, marginal communities, and urban gentrification, Wong stands out as an important countercultural voice at odds with the art establishment's reactionary discourse at the time.



Art Centre, Café & Garden Open:
Tuesday–Sunday 11am–6pm; Thursday 11am–9pm

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

Burgh House & Hampstead Museum

Lancelot Ribeiro: *Finding Joy in a Landscape* **until 17 December 2023**

A journey through the changing landscapes of Hampstead-based expressionist poet and painter Lancelot Ribeiro, from his roots in pre-Independence 1930s India to life in mid-20th century Britain.



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House & Museum: Open Wed, Thu, Fri & Sun 10am–4pm (last entry 3pm)
Café: Open Wed, Thu & Fri 10am–5pm, Sat, Sun & Bank Holidays 9:30am–5:30pm

Heath Walks: 2023

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 the next Newsletter. Details of walk programmes will be available on the Society's website:

www.HeathandHampstead.org.uk

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

In view of other potentially competing activities and attractions over the Coronation weekend, the Society will not be running a walk on Sunday 7 May.

Sunday 4 June 2.30 pm (meet at **The Bandstand, Parliament Fields**) *From Parliament Hill to Highgate: History and Landmarks*, led by Jeska Harrington-Gould CTGA, Member of the Heath Sub-Committee

Sunday 2 July 10.30 am (note morning start and meet at **Spaniard's End** by the flower stall and cattle trough near the Spaniard's Inn; walk ends at St John's, Hampstead Parish Church, Church Row) *Constable and Hampstead*, led by Suzanne Grundy, qualified walk leader

Sunday 6 August 2.30 pm (meet at **Spaniard's End** by the flower stall and cattle trough near the Spaniard's Inn) *Sandy Heath and the Heath Extension*, led by Lynda Cook, Member of the Heath Sub-Committee

Sunday 3 September 9.30 am (meet at **Burgh House**) *Bird watching* led by Pete Mantle, Member of the Heath Sub-Committee

Details of 2023/2024 walks will be announced in the October 2023 Newsletter and on the Society's website when available. Please note the following provisional dates and start times in your diary:

Sunday 1 October 10.30am or 2.30pm

Sunday 5 November 2.30 pm

Sunday 3 December 2.30 pm

