



The Heath & Hampstead Society

NEWSLETTER

January 2013

Vol 44 No.1

The Viaduct Pond "Frozen"

photo Sandrine Joseph

Contents

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Chair's Notes | 1 |
| <hr/> <i>Tony Hillier</i> <hr/> | |
| Change at the City | 4 |
| <hr/> <i>Jeremy Simon</i> <hr/> | |
| Annual General Meeting 2013 | 7 |
| <hr/> | |
| Heath Report | 8 |
| <hr/> <i>Tony Gbilchik</i> <hr/> | |
| Ponds update | 10 |
| <hr/> <i>Helen Marcus</i> <hr/> | |
| Planning Report | 12 |
| <hr/> <i>Douglas Maxwell</i> <hr/> | |
| Petition to save Athlone House | 14 |
| <hr/> | |
| Town Report | 15 |
| <hr/> <i>Frank Harding</i> <hr/> | |
| Obituaries | 16 |
| <hr/> | |
| Hampstead Heath In Versailles! | 17 |
| <hr/> <i>Sandrine Joseph</i> <hr/> | |
| Hampstead Theatre on your doorstep | 18 |
| <hr/> <i>Jane Franklin</i> <hr/> | |
| Bulletin Board: Camden History Society: Court Rolls of the Manor of Hampstead; News from Keats Library; Proms at St Jude's; Heath Walks | 19 |

Chair's Notes

by Tony Hillier

I should like to start by wishing all members a happy and prosperous New Year.

Christmas party

The party had a very good buzz about it. This year we celebrated the holiday season at the Camden Arts Centre, which houses a very successful contemporary arts gallery and special exhibitions. The reputation of this registered charity, which receives support from the Arts Council and depends on local fund-raising events, reaches internationally and far beyond the corner of Arkwright Road and Finchley Road NW3. This is a new venue for the Society. We were offered generous terms by Camden Arts Centre and over 150 members attending were able to wander round and enjoy the gallery as well as the festive atmosphere and background accordion.

Our thanks go to Helen Marcus, Janine Griffis and the army of Committee members who worked so hard to make the evening enjoyable.

Independent shops

The last Newsletter published an article by Jessica Learmond-Criqui, a member of our Town Sub-Committee and General Committee, about the Mary Portas Hampstead Shops Campaign, which she was running. It is gratifying to report that the campaign was successful with the support of our local MP, Glenda Jackson, achieving a follow-up bid for a consolation prize of £10,000. This is to be used in the first instance for a prize draw of £1,000, which will be made by Tom Conti, for the winning entry showing the successful completion of the Christmas shopping crawl to visit 23 local independent shops. The balance

Chair's Notes (cont)

of the prize money will be used to continue some of the originally proposed work to win more support for local shops and try to influence landlords to take a more long-term and community-based view of the economics of local independent shops. We welcome this initiative, which Jessica and Ann Eastman will co-ordinate with our very successful Hampstead Card.

Keats Community Library

Keats Community Library (KCL) is steadily showing the strength of the Board of local volunteers in attracting library users, filling the shelves with high-quality books and maintaining a steady stream of stimulating events for children and adults. Generous local support is quietly coming in, but KCL will need all the support it can get from our own membership and others over the coming years to keep up the good work.

The Heath ponds

The plot thickens and the pace quickens for this complex and controversial project. I should make it quite clear that the Society's position is that we object to any disfiguration of the Heath, and that this can only be tolerated if forced by legislation, provided that is properly tested in the light of best current civil engineering practice. Consequently the Society continues to work through the channels of communication and consultation made available to us by the City. These comprise direct contact at a senior level, both formal and informal, and our long-standing membership with many other stakeholders of the Heath Consultative and Management Committees chaired by Jeremy Simons, a senior elected City "father", as well as membership of the recently formed Water Management Stakeholders Group, formed to consider the dam safety project and chaired by

Ian Harrison, chair of the Vale of Health Society, on behalf of the local community. Members owe a great debt to all members of our Heath Sub-Committee and especially to Jeremy Wright for his long months of work that have now gone into understanding all aspects of this project.

Our method of operation remains unchanged. In this we differ from some local activists who choose to attack the City in principle and impugn the actions and motives of their advisers. Our approach is to work co-operatively with the City and their advisers and officers to persuade them in detail how to ameliorate and minimise, as far as public safety will allow, the impact which redesigning the ponds' support and release structures will have on the wild and natural state of the Heath.

Our view is that the legal framework, within which the levels of safety can be determined, at which the re-design must aim, is considerably more complex than the City has hitherto recognised. These issues should be the first to be resolved. They include: the range of risks which must be taken into account; the location of those who need protection, and this of course is of great concern to many of our downstream members; the trade-offs between preventative measures and the response measures, which can be lawfully relied on to give necessary protection; the institutional responsibilities for ensuring those measures are set up, initiated and co-ordinated; as between the courts, Government Departments and the engineers, who should have ultimate say on what levels of loss-of-life protection are mandatory for any design and at what maximum monetary cost and what cost to the environment?

Only when these questions have been settled can a sensible debate be entered into about the

technicalities of risk analysis, dam and spillway structure, meteorological prediction, ground compaction measurement, and water flow and water storage management. Only then, when these technical issues have been settled in the context of what levels of safety the law requires, and that includes deciding whose technical opinion counts as authoritative, can the next debate be entered into, which is the one all our members care about, and that is: Which design satisfies all these conditions? What works, if any, must be carried out on the Heath and how will they affect wild life and the visual enjoyment of walking on the Heath?

With Jeremy Wright's support, and that of many other members with whom he is working, we have a pretty good handle on the technical issues. Early in the New Year we expect to seek specialist Counsel's opinion on the complex legal issues referred to above, to put us in the best possible position to help the City keep their costs down and the Heath safe for posterity.

Hampstead police station

It remains nearly as difficult at the time of writing, as it was in the last Newsletter, to penetrate the fog of police thinking on the future of policing and of the station in Hampstead. At a recent meeting of the Camden Community and Police Consultative Group, local representatives had a partially encouraging briefing from the new Borough Commander, Chief Superintendent Richard Tucker. The good news is he is committed to what he claims will be a new and improved brand of local policing. The bad news is he is clearly not in charge of where the teams will be based for local patrols.

This decision will lie somewhere between the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).

That in turn will clearly influence, and vice-versa, the choice of decisions, which appear to lie with MOPAC, about what to do with the building. Our earlier requests to work with MOPAC and the MPS real estate office have been ignored, so we have approached English Heritage (EH) and Camden to see which steps can be taken to ensure that official conditions for retention of appropriate heritage protection and of local public benefit use are incorporated into any proposals for redevelopment of this Grade II listed police station building and Court House. These could of course include continued police presence, a new free school and public meetings spaces for amenity groups. It is gratifying to know that EH would require MOPAC to prepare a Statement of Significance from an architectural historian, which should be taken into account by any developer, and that Camden will consider what routes are open to protect local public benefit.

Basements

It would naturally be inappropriate to finish any of my Chair's notes without some reference to basements, and two cases in particular. The uncertainty on the outcome of the appeal on 16a Lyndhurst Gardens and the appeal decision on 22 Thurlow Road continue to remind us that the application within Camden of its own policies and the interpretation of these by the Planning Inspectorate remain arbitrary. The Society has been invited by Camden to comment on possible improvements to the wording of Camden Policy Guidance 4, which gives detailed advice on the preparation and interpretation of Basement Impact Assessments. We hope that our comments will help remove some of the arbitrariness in future.

Change at the City

Jeremy Simon, the new Chairman of the Hampstead Heath Management Committee, sets out his vision

Hampstead Heath is like nowhere else. It is a much-loved open space, the jewel in the crown of a world class city renowned for its green spaces. As important as the landscapes, habitats and wildlife are the people who use the Heath; the communities that live close to it and who care passionately about its protection, now and for generations to come.

As Chairman of the Hampstead Heath Management Committee I am able to benefit from the extensive knowledge and expertise of the Heath & Hampstead Society built up over many years. The Society provides constructive advice and local expertise through its participation in the Hampstead Heath Management and Consultative Committees. I value this greatly in achieving our shared aim of maintaining the special quality of Hampstead Heath.

The City of London's stewardship of the Heath must meet the varied and sometimes conflicting expectations of local people and the wider community. We are responsible for retaining its unique character. I salute the role that the Society has played over many decades.

The Olympics, Green to Gold and its Legacy

I began my time as Chairman during what has been an unforgettable year for Londoners with the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The City of London's Green to Gold campaign helped us celebrate this wonderful year of sport and culture, encouraging and inspiring

communities to use green spaces to enhance health and well-being.

Particular emphasis has been placed on providing positive experiences for people new to sport and physical activities. The Disability Athletics Quadkids events, held in partnership with Camden Council, are a good example of developing a 'legacy' from the Olympics. That the Highgate Harriers have attracted not far short of 100 new young athletes since the start of September 2012 is a very positive outcome of the programme of events organised on the Heath.

One of the highlights of last summer was the amazing sight of a life-size inflatable Stonehenge being used as a 'bouncy castle' by young and old. The installation, brought to the Heath as part of the Cultural Olympiad, was created by artist Jeremy Deller as part of a UK tour. The popularity of the event was such that over 3,500 people, myself included, bounced up and down!



*An inflatable Stonehenge on the Heath photo: Jennifer Wood
City of London Corporation*

The Legacy 'Give it a Go' event on 9 September 2012, also held in conjunction with Camden Council, provided a fitting conclusion to the London Olympics and Paralympic Games. Over 10,000 visitors took part in sports, games and other entertainments.

The Glory of Hampstead Heath

Despite all of the year's celebrations, I am very mindful that the glory of Hampstead Heath is its landscape. This is what makes the Heath so special, with the sheer variety of its views and habitats.

I can assure the Society that the protection of the scenery, habitats and wildlife of Hampstead Heath is something I care about very deeply. The Heath is, first and foremost, a piece of countryside that just happens to be surrounded by urban development. With over seven million visits a year, it needs to be carefully managed if future generations are to enjoy the Heath.

The Flood and Water Management Project

The Flood and Water Management project is now progressing with the appointment of a Strategic Landscape Architect and the Design Team in late 2012. The first task of the Design



Photo: Adrian Brooker, City of London Corporation

Change at the City (cont)

Team is to conduct a thorough review of all work undertaken to date. The review will be completed early in 2013. In the meantime the City of London is working closely with stakeholders, including representatives from the Society, to gather views and opinions, to help build a vision for the project.

The City of London is required under the 1871 Hampstead Heath Act to preserve as far as may be its natural aspect. Peter Wilder as the Strategic Landscape Architect will champion the Heath's landscape and the environment and ecology of the ponds. Through working with local stakeholders and acting as a critical friend he will provide challenge to the Design Team.

The City of London will engage closely with local communities and stakeholders throughout the project, assisting with the design process as possible options for the work are formulated and then appraised, with then a short list being drawn up, before a final preferred option is chosen.

Although there will be changes to the landscape, I am determined they will be entirely sympathetic to the Heath. Future generations must continue to enjoy the natural beauty and wildlife of this wonderful open space.

Art on the Heath

Visitor 1 came to stay at the Lily Pond in Golders Hill Park during autumn 2012. This sculpture by Hampstead-born artist David Breuer-Weil was enjoyed by many. I would like to see other similarly thought-provoking works visit the Heath on an occasional basis.

The addition of this temporary art installation complemented the Affordable Art Fair which

successfully returned to the Heath from 1 to 4 November 2012, providing valuable income as well as an interesting day out for many first-time visitors to the Heath. The Fair will return in June 2013.

Wild About Hampstead Heath

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) has received a confirmed grant of £440,600 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to build links between people and nature on Hampstead Heath. Work preparing facilities for the three year Wild About Hampstead Heath project started in 2012, with activities and events starting in spring 2013.

Wild About Hampstead Heath aims to enthuse tens of thousands of Londoners, many from some of the most deprived areas of the UK, about the Heath's wildlife and natural heritage through a programme of activities and the creation of new wildlife areas.

And Finally

The Heath would not be the Heath without the Superintendent and his staff. I am enormously impressed by their enthusiasm and commitment to the Heath. We are all extremely fortunate to have such dedicated and hard working staff.

I am confident that the City of London Corporation and the Society share the common aim of ensuring that current and future generations can continue to enjoy the beauty and ecology of the Heath. I look forward to the support of the Heath & Hampstead Society in achieving this shared objective.

Annual General Meeting June 2013

Elections to General Committee

Officers

The existing Officers of the Society who are elected annually (President, Vice-Presidents, Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) propose to stand for re-election.

General Committee

If these Officers are re-elected, there will be seven vacancies on the General Committee.

Robert Linger (Membership Promotions Secretary, Town Sub-Committee) will have completed his first term of three years as an elected member of the General Committee and will stand for re-election for a second term of three years.

Stephen Taylor (Website management team and communications) will have completed his first term of three years as an elected member of the General Committee and will stand for re-election for a second term of three years.

Nigel Steward (Police liaison, Keats House, Keats Community Library) who is currently an appointed member of the General Committee under Rule 21(2)(b) will stand for election for a first term of three years.

Jessica Learmond-Criqui (Hampstead Shops Campaign, Town Sub-Committee) who is currently an appointed member of the General Committee under Rule 21(2)(b) will stand for election for a first term of three years.

Peter Tausig (Heath Hands, Heath Sub-Committee) who will have completed his term as a member of the General Committee, filling the casual vacancy caused by the election of Marc Hutchinson as Secretary, will stand for election for a first term of three years.

John Weston (Website management team) who will have completed his second consecutive term of three years as an elected member will not be eligible for re-election.

If there remains a vacancy on the General Committee after the elections at the Annual General Meeting in 2013, it is the General Committee's intention to appoint John Weston as a member of the General Committee for a term of one year under Rule 21(2)(b).

The maximum number of members of the General Committee is 20. If the above persons are elected and appointed as described, there will only be one vacancy on the General Committee. There is no constitutional requirement that this be filled.

Nominations for elections must be received by the Society in writing before 15 April 2013 in accordance with Rule 21(4). The Society's constitution can be viewed on the Society's website.



The Hampstead Card

The current list of businesses taking part in the scheme can be found on the Society's website

www.heathandhampstead.org.uk

*Benefits offered are granted at the traders' discretion.
The Society cannot be held responsible for changes in terms or availability of any discounts or offers*

Heath Report

by Tony Ghilchik

Heath Ponds

The past few months have seen the appointment of W. S. Atkins to manage the engineering, planning, landscape and ecology design packages within the Design Team; the appointment of Capital Symonds as cost consultants and the Client Representative; the first few monthly meetings of the Water Management Stakeholders Group of 13 representatives from local groups to act as a link between the Design Team and the local communities, and the appointment of Peter Wilder of Wilder Associates as the Strategic Landscape Architect to act as a champion of the landscape and environment of the ponds to ensure that these are not damaged by the proposals. Pop-up consultations are now taking place once a week at various locations around the Heath to canvass opinion and spread information to visitors and these will become more frequent as the project progresses.

The first task of the design team will be to review, verify or amend the fundamental data on which the project is based, and Atkins has produced a Design Review Method Statement. Whilst we are pleased to see that it satisfactorily covers the various technical points we have raised, it does not include a clear brief on the underlying detailed legal issues and how these should be interpreted by the Design Review Team when developing the project. This, we believe, comes from haziness in some aspects of the underlying legislation which need to be clarified before the project goes much further.

The gas main

A casualty of the many wet months has been that the work on the medium pressure gas main, which crosses the Heath from Parliament

Fields to the Heath Extension, is taking a couple of months longer than originally expected. However, it is now drawing to a close and by late January the pipe will be out of use.

Kenwood

Over in Kenwood both the House and the Dairy above the West Meadow are under scaffolding now that the restoration work is well under way. English Heritage is still seeking donations to complete their matching funding that is needed to cover the balance of the total cost over and above the Heritage Lottery Fund Grant of £3.3m. The H&HS has agreed a contribution of £5,125 to cover the restoration of the windows in Lady Mansfield's tea room in the Dairy, a room built for Lady Mansfield to entertain her guests after a walk from the House to visit the model dairy. The Duke of Wellington was once entertained to tea there.

Half of one of the generous donations is conditional on it being spent on restoring the historic landscape around the Dairy. English Heritage are sounding out local groups on the possibilities of restoring the old wooden bridge which took a continuation of the path from the House to the Dairy above the path from West Meadow to the car park and along the original line of Hampstead Lane; and also of opening up two of the old views from the Dairy – to the House, and to the Sham Bridge. Restoring either of these views would require removal of some trees and, to minimise this, only a narrow opening is being canvassed. English Heritage are preparing artist impressions of these restored views to help local groups give their considered opinion; the restoration of a remarkable survival of early nineteenth-century landscaping is a very important objective.

The wild flower meadows

The various wild flower meadows have been another casualty of this year's very wet weather. The annual meadows, such as the one on the Heath Extension which were so wonderful last year, never came into their full glory this year. They will be reseeded again next year and we hope the weather will be kinder to them. Some of the meadows do, however, create a problem with fencing around them. These annually sown meadows need to be fenced for a few months each year until the newly sown seeds become established and in most areas the fencing is then removed. However some locations, such as the one in Parliament Hill Meadow below Highgate No 1 Pond, are more of a problem in that we are told that the fence must remain all year because of the number of dogs being walked around there. For us that just proves that the meadow is in the wrong place.

The continuing problem of tree diseases

Tree diseases are a continuing problem with the latest worries being Massaria on plane trees and ash dieback. Massaria of Plane is a very fast growing fungal disease which affects the upper part of lower lateral branches near their junction with the trunk. The disease has been found on the planes on the Heath. The good news is that it does not kill the tree but the infected branches break off, so all the 300 planes on the Heath have had to be inspected and suspected limbs removed. Monitoring is a continuous operation and all the staff, not just the tree teams, are being trained to spot the signs. A salutary statistic is that more people are killed by working on trees than by falling trees.

Ash dieback reached nurseries in Britain in the spring. It is thought to be *Chalara fraxinea* from

Japan or Korea where it does not cause problems to the local ash but which has caused devastation crossing Europe. It has not yet been found on the Heath and seems mainly to affect the younger trees. The majority of the ash on the Heath are old trees on the Extension so it is still uncertain how serious it will be here.

Finally, those of you who were at Burgh House on 15th October for the seventeenth in our annual Springett Lectures heard Bob Gilbert on *From Pig Keepers to Parakeets: how history shaped the wildlife of the Heath* – his fascinating study of the links between local human history and landscape.

Members' email addresses

If you have not given us your email address you may be missing out on important local and Society news and initiatives. Email is invaluable for letting members know of important issues between newsletters

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

info@beatbandbampstead.org.uk

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

This will enable us to update our Membership Records and simplify our communications with you.

Thank you.

Ponds update

Helen Marcus rounds up some recent developments

As our Chairman has indicated there have been interesting developments and significant changes in recent weeks.

As mentioned in the Heath Report on page 8, the City has announced the appointment of the project design team led by Atkins, and the appointment of the Strategic Landscape Architect to work with them:

“Work is needed on some of the pond dams on Hampstead Heath to satisfy reservoir legislation safety requirements.” The City “are determined that this work causes the least possible disruption to the Heath, at the same time as safeguarding the communities who live around its borders.” They also say that “Work is now underway on a thorough review and double checking of the hydrological data.”

Jeremy Simons, the new Chairman of the Hampstead Heath Management Committee said: “It’s important to remember that we have no firm designs at present and images you might have seen two years ago were concepts rather than proposals. As designs are developed following the review, protecting the existing natural beauty of the Heath will be at the heart of the project.” A new date has now been set - August and September 2013 – for a full public consultation on the outline options to help identify the final preferred option.

Strategic Landscape Architect appointed

Another significant appointment is that of the Strategic Landscape Architect Peter Wilder, to advise the City on the landscaping. Internationally known, his experience includes major urban regeneration projects such as Potsdamer Platz in Berlin, work at the Villa La Pietra in Florence, the Royal Botanical Gardens in Moscow and the Gardens of Forgiveness in

Beirut. He is currently helping to design huge sustainable cities in China.

His role at the Heath sits outside the design team, and his job is to champion the landscape, to find out and represent the views of the Stakeholders Group and the community, and then to argue/persuade CoL/Atkins to solutions with minimum possible adverse impact on the Heath.

Members may have seen Mr. Wilder’s interview in the Ham & High in December when he spoke of how a “dip in the ponds’ murky waters” was “when I got it, what the Heath is all about.” “It was a really liberating experience and one which is unique, you can’t do that in many European cities.” He “pledged to protect London’s best-loved open space from “municipal” designs in favour of a softer overhaul of the archaic dam system.”

He says he has taken on board the public outcry when the last plans for the controversial project were unveiled in January 2011. The reaction to the stark concrete structure on the Model Boating Pond, originally shown, encouraged him that the scheme should be softened: “The scheme will be one of the first major projects in the country to work towards the principles of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, building less unsightly infrastructure, and relying more on the natural landscape to pass water safely down through the ponds.” Mr Wilder’s view is “that the lower, more ‘municipal’-looking ponds – like the Model Boating Pond and Hampstead Number One and Two ponds - are likely to undergo the greatest upheaval to protect the more wooded and ‘intimate’ sites higher up the Hampstead and Highgate chains like the Ladies Pond.” Mr Wilder also sees the Viaduct Pond as among the more “intimate” ponds which will be the least affected, though he insists that all options are still on the table.

He said: “It’s likely that all ponds will have some work done but we are working towards having a hierarchy of the more sensitive ponds.”

Mr Wilder felt that if a better infrastructure can be achieved “by being more environmentally sensitive, and which is cheaper, then we will have laid down a very strong foundation for the future – not only for this country but as an exemplar for the rest of the world.”

The H&HS stance remains that, whatever the outcome, the “wild and natural” appearance of the Heath must not be compromised.

The controversy continues

At the same time H&HS Committee member, Jeremy Wright, who has been monitoring the situation and the controversy surrounding the subject for the H&HS, greatly welcomed a recent letter published in New Civil Engineer by Rod Bridle, a Panel Engineer highly experienced in the fields of dams, reservoir safety and geotechnical engineering. This letter argues, as Jeremy points out, exactly the same approach that the Society has consistently urged over the last year: that 'high risk' reservoirs are actually 'high consequence', and that 'high risk' ones can only be identified by applying quantitative risk assessment.



photo Andrew Morley

Mr. Bridle pointed out that risk-based legislation had been promised but that “the new law is not based on risk. What is called a ‘high risk’ reservoir is actually a high consequence reservoir defined as any reservoir that would kill at least one person if it failed. Without using risk assessment and estimating the probability of failure and the probability of loss of life, it is difficult to identify reservoirs that are definitely not “high risk” ones”.

He goes on to say: “More importantly, whether a dam is adequately safe, and would not fail and cause loss of life other than in the most extreme of circumstances, cannot be estimated without using quantitative risk assessment.”

He further suggests that “In view of these fundamental shortcomings,for the present no aspects of the new law be implemented, and no changes be made to the existing Act, other than to transfer the responsibility for its enforcement to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE). The HSE understands public safety. It is renowned amongst the international community of dam safety engineers for its rational advice. A particular strength is on the vexed issue of the level of risk that those living in floodways downstream of reservoirs should bear in order that we can all enjoy the benefits that reservoirs bring. The HSE could guide engineers into making risk assessments of all reservoirs, so that in due course the minister can reliably determine which do or do not need special statutory attention from Panel engineers.”

We will keep you posted!

Meanwhile more information can be found at:
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/damsandponds

Your questions or comments can be sent to
damsandponds@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Planning Report

by Douglas Maxwell

It's Christmas, and my quill pen travels across the pristine white pages in the manner of Scrooge doing the books; a task relieved occasionally by the smell of cooking, the sound of Noddy Holder, and online retailer deliveries at the door (it used to be carol singers). Glancing at the wider perspective, I hear the Mars Rover has discovered clay substrates on the red planet which may indicate the presence of groundwater. Scientists are reportedly excited by this find. I hear too that developers are already trying to work out if the ground conditions will be suitable for basement development ...

Good In Parts

To our disappointment, the appeal against refusal of permission at 22 Thurlow Road was allowed; but we were delighted to hear that the latest application for The Garden House, Vale of Health had been refused planning permission by an eight to two majority of the Development Control Committee, and against the advice of council officers. For our newer readers, this is the site on which an earlier grant of permission by the council was successfully challenged by the Society by way of judicial review.

Casework

The Society continues to review every planning application made in the area; a remarkable achievement for which great credit is due to Gordon Maclean and the other members of the planning committee engaged in casework. The proportion of applications to which we object continues at about 25%.

Athlone House

Since the appeal was turned down there have been intermittent rumblings concerning a new

proposal which has now been unveiled (although at the time of writing it is not yet the subject of a planning application). As many of you will know, the issue turns on whether the proposed house is "materially larger" than the existing.

The applicant claims that the proposed new house is not materially larger by including in his calculations parts of the original building now demolished. Advice obtained by the Society confirms that this is incorrect in law, and the size of the building as of now should be the starting point.

Depending how it is calculated, the new proposal seems to be between 25% and 65% larger and so on any interpretation, "materially" larger. This should constitute a 'threshold' question ie. if the new house is materially larger the application cannot succeed. However the applicant has introduced other arguments such as how visible the new house would be.

Many members will be aware of the existence of a Section 106 Agreement covering the preservation of the house, and the efforts of successive developers to circumvent it. A short film has been made by a local film-maker, Jack Boswell, to raise awareness of the case; it is an excellent summary, well researched and highly recommended for those interested in this long running planning saga. (see more on page 14)

Local Shops

Support for independent local shops is a Society-wide initiative but some remarks on the planning context seem appropriate. Business uses in the centre of Hampstead are mainly retail, in planning terms Class A, and these are divided into five sub-classes, broadly speaking covering shops; banks and estate agents;

restaurants; pubs and bars; and hot food takeaways.

A change from a use within one class to another use in the same class requires no planning permission, while certain changes between classes are permitted under the regulations. So for example a greengrocer or post office may become a mobile phone shop or internet café (both are class A1), or a building society become a betting shop (both are class A2).

Even where planning permission is required it can be applied for and may be granted; a recent change from shop to offices in Heath Street was permitted in spite of the Society's objections. And of course quite apart from the planning issues, smaller independent traders are not usually able to afford the same rents as large multiples.

Hampstead For Sale

More than one organisation is looking to property sales to boost its coffers; proposals by the council to sell off part of the site of Wells House in Well Walk were abandoned after strong objections by tenants, ward councillors and local groups including the Society. Other proposed sales, including land adjacent to Flask Cottages, are under review by the council at the time of writing.

As most members will be aware, Hampstead Police Station is being considered for sale by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), a proposal that has aroused widespread opposition. The building dating from 1910 /1913 is by architect J Dixon Butler and listed Grade II, and the interior includes the former Hampstead Magistrates Court. Along with local councillors and others, we are seeking to

maintain a police presence on the site and are also working to ensure the preservation of the police station building, whether in police use or not. The Society recently met with English Heritage to discuss the second of these issues, and is investigating whether any restrictions exist on the disposal of the site.

Final Word

With thanks to my colleagues in the Society, particularly the members of the planning committee, our local councillors, and all our members and supporters.

Delivering the Newsletter by email

We can send your Newsletter by email in the form of a PDF so that you can read it on screen if you prefer.

For those of you who do not keep your Newsletters, it is environmentally more friendly, saving paper and unnecessary waste. The occasional extra flyers could also be sent via email, if wished.

It would also save the Society a great deal of cost. With postage costs increasing enormously this is now becoming a major consideration.

If you would like to try this please let the Editor know at

info@heathandhampstead.org.uk

You can be sent a PDF to try out, to see if you like it. PDFs of the Newsletter can also be seen on the website.

Petition to save Athlone House

As referred to in our Planning Report, an excellent website has been set up by Jack Boswell, a documentary film director who lives locally, with, in addition to a two-minute film about the House, an on-line petition to Camden urging them not to allow Athlone House to be destroyed. This is supported by both the H&HS and the Highgate Society.

As you will all know from the many reports in this newsletter, and from our Patron, Sir Simon Jenkins's articles in the Evening Standard, Athlone House was sold in 2004, to property developers who signed an agreement to restore this historic building overlooking Hampstead Heath, in exchange for planning permission to build flats in its grounds. However, after building the flats, they reneged on the agreement and sold the house to an anonymous billionaire.

Destruction of historic Heath skyline

The new owner wants to knock down the building and replace it with an enormous, ostentatious home which we fear will alter the historic skyline overlooking the Heath (see H&HS Newsletter January 2011).

Despite the condition to restore Athlone House not being kept, Camden Council now claim they are powerless to stop it being torn down. It is therefore vital that as many of us as possible write to urge Camden Council to reject any applications to knock down Athlone House, and to enforce the original agreement to restore the building.

Greed, egos and another blot on the horizon

From Sir Simon Jenkins' article:
"Described as "a magnificent new landmark" or, by its critics, "a mix of Stalinist palace and Victorian asylum", the proposal for Athlone House is bold and bombastic..... an unashamedly dominant palace, towering over the landscape on the northern perimeter of inner London.

"The history of the Athlone House project illustrates all that is most vulnerable in London planning. Camden has been blitzed with 15 planning applications for Athlone, with various so-called 'sweeteners'..... so-called "section 106 agreements. Allow any exception and a planning rule is defunct. One blot spoils the picture. A new rule is thus established, that there is no rule. These destructive and costly London arguments have always the same cause, the authorities gutless in the face of serious money coming over a horizon it wants to spoil."

If you object to the destruction of Athlone House please sign the petition which can be found at:

<http://www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/camden-council-save-athlone-house-from-destruction-2>

This -



or this?

"a mix of Stalinist palace and Victorian asylum"

Note how much taller the tower is in this new design

Town Report

Life and Death in Hampstead

by Frank Harding

Since I last reported to members, there has been some progress on the projects currently being developed or reviewed by the Town Sub-Committee. Much is still "work in progress".

Old Hampstead Rediscovered

The second of these exhibitions, Village Scenes, at Burgh House closed in late September. Planning is currently underway for a third which is likely to feature the taverns of Hampstead. Opening is scheduled for late September 2013.

The Toll Gate House

There have been a few expressions of interest in using the Toll Gate House opposite the Spaniards Inn for commercial purposes and it is hoped to continue discussions with a view to finding a tenant in the weeks to come.

North London Heights - trail booklets

These have been selling well and the Society has already recovered a significant part of its share of the production costs. They may still be ordered by completing and submitting the order form on page 21 to Northern Heights Publications.

Plaques

A Heath & Hampstead Society plaque was unveiled recently to commemorate the period that JB Priestley lived at 27 Well Walk.

Fleet River walks

These walks along the route of the River Fleet are again proving popular. There is already a list of those who have indicated an interest in the walks scheduled for the Spring; anyone who wishes to add their names to the list should let me know by email at frankaharding@btinternet.com.

I shall inform those who have registered their interest of the proposed dates as soon as that information is available.

Sound Trail completed - a report from Camden History Society Newsletter

The Life and Death in Hampstead Sound Trail has now been launched, after three years' work, by Hampstead Parish Church, Church Row in partnership with Camden Council. It shines a light on the lives of those buried in the St John-at-Hampstead churchyard over the last 250 years.

This major conservation project, to upgrade, enhance and refurbish the churchyard, the oldest surviving unspoiled churchyard in the centre of greater London, and additional burial ground at Hampstead Parish Church, was funded by the Heritage Lottery. The project also included a programme of repairs and improvements to the paths and gravestones and enhancement of the wildlife value, with education and engagement sessions with schools, guided walks and events.

The resource, available on Camden Council's website, consists of more than 40 recorded interviews with direct descendants and family members, as well as academics and experts. It offers a unique biography of some of the well-known, and the almost-forgotten - from poets to servants to chimney sweeps - who have been buried at St. John's since around 1745.

A full collection of all the interviews is held by the Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn Library, with a further collection of texts about many other fascinating people buried in the two churchyards. For more information:

<http://www.camden.gov.uk/large/ccm/navigation/leisure/local-history/life-and-death-in-hampstead-project/>

Obituaries

John Bourne



We are sad to report the death of John Bourne on 24 October 2012 at the age of 86, one of the most distinguished political journalists of his generation.

Born in London in 1926, he joined the Royal Navy in the final year of the second world war, serving for two years as an RNVR sub-lieutenant, and was awarded the minesweeping medal. In 1948 he went to Downing College, Cambridge, where he read English under FR Leavis.

His career in journalism began at the Yorkshire Post from where he moved in 1953 to the Manchester Guardian, and then to the London office as deputy to the labour correspondent.

He joined the Financial Times in 1960 first as a labour correspondent, then covering Westminster, ultimately as lobby editor, and then becoming features editor and the first editor of the Weekend FT before retiring in 1987. His work was acknowledged to have made a huge contribution to the FT and greatly enhanced its reputation.

John met his wife, Jean Stead – for many years the Guardian news editor, one of Fleet Street's first women in that role - in their days on the Yorkshire Post. Both he and Jean were keen supporters of the Heath & Hampstead Society, devoting time to be active members of the Society's Town Sub-Committee in the 1990s.

He will be remembered with great affection by all who knew him. We send our most sincere condolences to Jean and their family.

Mary Maclean

David Kitchen of SEGA writes

We were so sad to hear in October that Mary had died suddenly and peacefully.

Her funeral, in November, was in Southend-on-Sea.

Those of us who attended were uplifted by the celebration of her notable and distinguished 96 years. We joined Ray Softly, her companion and our friend of those many years. Ray is 97 and moved with Mary three years ago to their new home in Rochford. He is still an active entomologist as he was, to distinction, on the Heath.

Mary lived in Parliament Hill from the 1950's and supported SEGA from its inception in 1966, becoming Secretary in 1981, Chair in 2001, and later President of the Association. During her twenty-year stewardship of SEGA's affairs Mary gave meticulous, diligent and persevering attention to SEGA throughout those tumultuous times. This included the campaign to save Hampstead Town Hall, in which she was instrumental. Her contribution is highlighted in SEGA's records which are held in the London Borough of Camden Archive. They are testimony to her work and dedication.

Should any member wish to remember Mary through her charity, it is RSPB, The Lodge, Sandy, Beds SG19 2 DL; charity no. 207076.

We send our most sincere condolences to Ray, who was for many years a stalwart of the Heath & Hampstead Society's Heath, and General Committees.



Hampstead Heath In Versailles!

by Sandrine Joseph

French journalist and photographer, Sandrine Joseph discovered the Heath in 2000 and instantly fell in love with “this unique place on earth”. She has been living in Hampstead for the past 7 years, and is a member of the H&HS. She has been inspired by the Heath to write poems and record it in photographs, and participated in Nick Hillel's Heathlife project and exhibition at Burgh House last year. Her picture of the Viaduct Pond on our front cover is even more beautiful in colour and can be seen on our website.

I must say I am quite obsessed with the Heath! Nick Hillel's Heathlife project provided me with a unique chance to fulfil my own desire to bring my tiny part to the history of the Heath. It enabled me to explore the Heath's richness and history, and contribute to its ongoing memory throughout time, generations and communities.

The Heathlife workshop helped me finalise an artistic project I had in mind for a long time: to show how the trees of the Heath can hide and reveal hidden shapes and images. If you look for them you can find wild animals and fantastic creatures you never imagined finding on the Heath. Walking there can almost be like visiting a museum or like flicking through images of a fantasy book. I took children from year 3 at Heathside Preparatory School to visit the Burgh House exhibition. They loved it.

In 2013 I hope to follow up with an 'animal safari walk' around the Heath to show the children some of these images and produce new content for the

Heathlife project website. The adventure is only beginning!...

Last year I had the opportunity to exhibit some of my work at a show in Versailles - The City of Versailles 10ème Parcours dans L'Art Actuel - Les Ateliers Portes Ouvertes 2012, so bringing Hampstead Heath to France!

Sandrine's website is at: <http://sand-jo.com>.

The Heathlife project is at: www.heathlife.co.uk



A “baby diplodocus”

Hampstead Theatre on your doorstep....

by Jane Franklin of Hampstead Theatre

An exciting and successful programme

As a local resident you may be aware that 2012 has been one of the most exciting and significant years in the long history of Hampstead Theatre. More than half our audience members are drawn from North London and we are grateful to residents who are already regular visitors.

Since Edward Hall and Greg Ripley-Duggan introduced themselves to H&HS readers (Newsletter September 2011) they have stabilised the institution after a period of restructuring, and the theatre is now enjoying a period of unprecedented artistic success. The last four Main Stage productions have been critical successes and complete sell-outs, all playing to larger audiences than ever before. Chariots of Fire and The Judas Kiss have transferred to the West End.



Become a Friend

To avoid the returns queue you may like to consider becoming a Friend of Hampstead Theatre. Our Friends play a vital role in supporting the theatre as our statutory support decreases.

For just £40 our Friends receive the following benefits:

- Priority Booking
- Guaranteed advance notice of forthcoming Hampstead Theatre productions
- Quarterly e-newsletter – Hampstead Backstage – featuring interviews with actors
- Invitations to exclusive events at Hampstead Theatre including breakfast with the Artistic Director
- 10% discount at Hampstead Theatre bar
- No Charge on ticket exchanges for the same production

For details of our membership schemes please visit us at

www.hampsteadtheatre.com/support-us

or contact Scott Sheridan
ssheridan@hampsteadtheatre.com

Tel: 020 7449 4174.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Theatre soon.

Bulletin Board - local community news

Court Rolls of the Manor of Hampstead - From the Camden History Society

Camden History Society has recently completed a project to make the Hampstead Manorial Court Rolls available in electronic form. Over 100 years of Court Rolls of the Manor of Hampstead (16th - 18th century), have been translated and transcribed into English and are now on the CHS website, Hampstead Court Rolls page.

They afford fascinating glimpses into the development of the manor, which originally belonged to the monks of Westminster Abbey and stretched from Kilburn and Chalk Farm in the south to North End Way. From 1620 to 1706 Lordship of the Manor was in the hands of a single family, although by the time of their arrival it had greatly shrunk in acreage by the detachment of Belsize in the 12th century and Chalk Farm in the 15th. This didn't deter the Lady of the Manor in the 1690s from trying to extort rent from the owners of the detached parts.

Join Camden History Society

If you are interested in the history of our area then membership of Camden History Society is a

must. It researches the history of institutions, houses, people and social movements within what is now the London Borough of Camden, which includes the old boroughs of Hampstead, St Pancras and Holborn and the districts of Highgate, Kentish Town & Camden Town.

Members are encouraged to undertake and publish research themselves, and help and advice are available for beginners. When there is sufficient interest, a group may be formed to study a particular topic or district. The Society has an active publishing arm, with more than 70 publications to its credit since 1970.

The Society has a monthly programme of talks held in different parts of the Borough. Outings are arranged in the summer. An illustrated newsletter is distributed free to each member every two months. Subscriptions, which are extremely reasonable, are due on 1st March each year and new members joining after 31st December need not renew their subscriptions on the following 1st March. For more information and how to join:

<http://www.camdenhistorysociety.org>

News from Keats Community Library

The Events programme continues with

"Churchill" - Thursday 31st January, 7.30pm, performed by Pip Utton

Tickets at £12 are available in the library or mail us and reserve.

Note: We are trying out events on Thursdays and starting earlier in order to open up to more people, and you won't have to wait in the cold!

100 new DVDs to rent!

We have greatly enhanced our DVD collection with a wide range of new discs

New Treasurer needed

We would welcome ideas and offers from our supporters. Please contact Steven Bobasch as Chair of Trustees on keatscommunitylibrary@gmail.com

More details about the play and other events on our website:

<http://www.keatscommunitylibrary.org.uk>

Bulletin Board (cont)



Burgh House Museum, Buttery, Bookstall

Exhibitions, talks, concerts and classes
Burgh House, New End Square NW3 1LT
Tel: 020 7431 0144

*Open Wed - Fri, & Sun, 12 - 5.00pm
(Saturdays by appointment)*

Exhibition Constable

200 years in Hampstead continues until 7 April

supported by a programme of associated
events including

Imaging and Imagining Hampstead Heath

A display showcasing complementary
images from the Burgh House Collection
exploring other artists who took Hampstead
Heath as their inspiration

For the full programme

of walks, talks, concerts and clubs see the
Burgh House website
www.burghhouse.org.uk

Support the Friends of Burgh House Honorary President Piers Plowright

For more information or to join the
Friends tel: Burgh House on 020 7431 0144

Proms at St Jude's Festival

Saturday 22 June to Sunday 30 June

Central Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb

*Free lunchtime concerts, evening concerts
featuring musical stars to suit all tastes, a
'LitFest' on the first weekend in association
with The Henrietta Barnett School and a
programme of guided walks, many of which
are in the Hampstead area.*

All money raised goes to support Toynbee Hall and North London Hospice

Become a Friend of the Proms

Contribute to the success of the Proms and its
charities; enjoy priority booking and range of
other benefits.

For further information, and how to become
a Friend, contact the Friends' Co-ordinator:
Madeleine Melling, Tel: 020 8458 2669.

The Proms website: www.promsatstjudes.org.uk
will be available by the end of January.

Hampstead Film Society

Hampstead Town Hall Centre
213 Haverstock Hill, London, NW3 4QP

Tuesday evenings at 7pm:

A wide range of world cinema

Membership fee: £15.00 Adults (£10.00 Concs)
Admission fee: Members £3.00 per film; £5.00
for guests.

For more information & programmes

Tel: 020 7692 5811

Email: hfs@interchange.org.uk

www.interchange.org.uk/movies

Northern Heights Publications Order Form

Order Form for H&HS Members

Cut here

Discount for H&HS members: £1 off for second and for each subsequent booklet ordered
ie £1 off if ordering 2 booklets, £2 off if ordering 3, £3 off if ordering 4 etc.

A complete set of all 10 booklets will cost only £25.00

| Booklet name | Cost | Quantity | £ |
|---|------|----------|---|
| Set A) Circular Walk through Highgate, Hampstead and Hampstead Heath | | | |

| | | | |
|--|-------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Highgate Village to Kenwood House | £3.00 | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| 2 Highgate Village to Parliament Hill Fields | £3.00 | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| 3 Parliament Hill Fields to South End Green | £3.00 | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| 4 South End Green to Golders Hill Park | £3.00 | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| 5 Golders Hill Park to Kenwood House | £3.00 | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

Set B) Hampstead Heritage Trail

| | | | |
|--|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| A Hampstead to Belsize Park | £4.00 | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| B Belsize Park to Camden Town | £4.00 | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| C Hampstead to Temple Fortune | £4.00 | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| D Temple Fortune to East Finchley | £4.00 | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| E East Finchley to Muswell Hill | £4.50 | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Complete set of all 10 booklets | £25.00 | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

| | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| Sub-total | <input type="text"/> |
| Discount | <input type="text"/> |
| Total payment | <input type="text"/> |

Name:

Address :

E mail :

Cheques should be made payable to Northern Heights Publications and sent to:

Northern Heights Publications, HHS, 10a South Grove, London N6 6BS

Heath Walks 2013

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.burghouse.org.uk)

***NB:** parking is extremely difficult locally, especially in spring and summer. 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 10.30 am (9.30 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 £3.00 per adult, to be collected at the beginning of each walk, to help support future development of the walks programme 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.

Please note starting times and meeting points

Further information from walks organiser, Thomas Radice,
mobile: 07941 528 034 or
email: hhs.walks@gmail.com



No walk in January

3 February 10.30am (meet at Burgh House) Ponds of the Heath led by Marc Hutchinson, Secretary, Hampstead Heath Winter Swimming Club; Secretary of the Heath & Hampstead Society and member of the Heath Sub-Committee

3 March 10.30am (meet at the Flagstaff, Whitestone Pond) Heroes and Villains: the history of the Heath as we know it led by Thomas Radice, member of the H&HS Heath Sub-Committee and organiser of monthly walks programme

7 April 9.30am (meet at Burgh House) Birds of the Heath in Spring led jointly by John Hunt, former Chairman of the Marylebone Birdwatching Society and Sash Tusa, members of the H&HS Heath Sub-Committee

5 May 2.30pm (meet at the cattle trough and flower stall in Spaniards Road, near the Spaniards Inn) Sandy Heath and the Heath Extension led by Lynda Cook, member of the H&HS Heath Sub-Committee

2 June two walks (morning and afternoon)

10.30am (meet at Burgh House) Spiders and other invertebrates led by Edward Milner, former BBC producer and National Spider Recorder for Middlesex and London; Member, Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

2.30pm (meet at Burgh House) The wildlife and management of Hampstead Heath led by City of London Ecologists

7 July 2.30pm (meet at Burgh House) How local history shapes natural history led by Bob Gilbert, writer and broadcaster, author of The London Green Way and nature correspondent, Ham & High and other local papers

4 August 2.30pm (meet at Burgh House) Flora of the Heath led by David Bevan, Conservation Officer and Past President, London Natural History Society, and Fellow of the Linnean Society of London