

*The Friends of Holland Park*  
*Winter 2012*





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### OUR ADVERTISERS

That we are able to produce this quarterly newsletter for members is in no small measure thanks to the continued support of our advertisers. We are most grateful to them all and would ask you to show your thanks by supporting them, please.

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## Christmas Concert

**Sunday, 9 December, 7.30pm  
in the Orangery**

We are looking forward to our popular annual carol concert given by the Tallis Chamber Choir and their conductor, Philip Simms. There will be a wide selection of carols from the 16th century to the present day ranging from the sublimely beautiful to the light-hearted, and sung in several languages including Latin and Russian. The carols will be interspersed with a special selection of seasonal readings. Afterwards we will enjoy wine and Janice Miles' renowned canapés. Please book using the enclosed order form, also downloadable from our website.



*The cover photo was taken by your editor on 8 January, 2010 on the Yucca Lawn (between the Kyoto Garden and the North Lawn).*

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## Mulled Wine and Mince Pies

**11am to 1pm, Saturday, 5 January  
21 Kenton Court  
356 Kensington High Street, W14 8NN**

Your secretary's seasonal gathering will once again take place on the morning after the Bird Walk. All Friends are welcome whether they have got cold in the park or come straight from a cosy bed. This is your invitation. Just turn up; no reply needed.

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## Crab Apple Trees

Readers might remember that your secretary reported some doubt as to whether there would be any crab apples for jelly this year. The only tree in Holland Park did indeed have a complete rest year and so did others which usually crop prolifically at the same time in September. A month later, though, we found one good tree and others still to drop their harvest. Could it be that early fruiting is on early flowering trees, and the early flowerers had been caught by late frosts?

Thursday, 21 February, 6.30pm in the Orangery

During the late 18th and early 19th century Holland House was a magnet for the powerful, intelligent and fashionable of the UK and Europe. Henry Fox, 3rd Baron Holland, had assured connections with the Whig Party through his uncle, Charles James Fox. Henry and his wife Elizabeth were indefatigable travellers, making contacts that brought all shades of European thinking to their dinner table. This potent mix influenced the careers of everyone who came within its orbit.

A dinner party at Holland House was both serious and amusing but also a challenging experience where snobbery was raised to an art form, risked by guests because it was easily one of the most exciting places in London. The wit was a draw and so perhaps was

the scandal, the Holland family always being a ready source of material for the scandal-monger.

Our speaker, Dr Leslie Mitchell, has researched and written about the Holland House set and the social and political context in which it operated. His books include *Holland House* and *Charles James Fox* and his resources have not only provided many fascinating facts but also engaging anecdotes about the characters and their often eccentric behaviour. Dr Mitchell is Emeritus Fellow in Modern History at Oxford.

Tickets are £12 to include wine and Janice Miles' delicious canapés. Please book using the enclosed order form, also downloadable from our website. Please note the starting time of 6.30pm.

## Chairman's Report and Annual General Meeting

It is only weeks since I was appointed Chairman, and my e-mail box has never been fuller: so many activities undertaken by the Friends to be monitored, and many I am now actively engaged in. I have chaired my first committee meeting, been introduced to and received encouragement from Borough councillors, and attended Sally Miller's illustrated talk and book launch in the Orangery, where I met many members and received a most warm welcome. I do not think I have ever met a more enthusiastic membership in any organisation I have been involved in.

The highlight last week was to be given a guided tour of the gardens with Rhoddy Wood and Barrie Maclaurin, the Parks Manager for the Borough. It was drizzling hard but, with no one in the park, it was very quiet and peaceful, and I felt very much as if I owned the whole park myself. Barrie is brilliant: he knows absolutely everything about it and shared with us what improvements are being made and proposed, and showed me areas of the park which are secret and which will definitely be part of a fuller report later.

I cannot finish without giving a heartfelt thank you to Rhoddy. She knows absolutely everything about the Friends, and is giving me valuable insights into being as good a chairman as I can be. I look forward to working with the committee and meeting many more Friends in the future.

Finally, I wish to give you all plenty of advance notice of the next Annual General Meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, 20 March at 7.30pm in the Orangery.

*Stewart Katz*



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*Wollemi Pine*

On a rare sunny morning, Dr Alan Harrington led fifteen keen students on a walk to examine the conifers of Holland Park. Conifers are non-flowering trees which bear naked seeds attached to the scales of their cones. Most, but not all, are evergreen. We started with the two pines between the iris fountain and the Dutch Garden. They and the adjacent silver birches are all that is left of the heather garden transplanted from an

RBK&C stand at Chelsea which might explain why they are two uncommon species – the Bosnian Pine and the Japanese White Pine. Although both pines they differ in all their details: the number of needles in each bunch, the angle, length and stiffness of the needles, the colour and texture of the bark, the size, shape and colour of the cones. Those who wish to distinguish between similar species have many clues.

## Difficult Problems Solved

We are not much good around the garden but...

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The walk continued in similar vein, looking at more pines and contrasting species of junipers, cypresses, firs, cedars and redwoods. Holland Park has no monkey puzzle but it does have a young tree from the same family, the Wollemi Pine on the West Lawn. In spite of its name it is not a pine; very similar trees have been found fossilised but living ones were only discovered in a remote gorge near Sydney at the end of the twentieth century.



*Japanese White Pine*

We also had special permission to enter the Yucca Lawn to look at the Incense Cedar with its typical spire shape. We do not often go in there, so it was the first time that Alan had identified the Maritime Pines there. But the real surprise was to find a Wellingtonia there – how could a middle-aged specimen of what the Americans call just The Big Tree have been hiding unnoticed? For those who want to see one close up, there is a newly-planted one near Lord Holland.



*Incense Cedar*



*Maritime Pine*

Thank you, Alan, for an instructive walk with a surprise at the end.

*Rhoddy Wood*

How fortunate we are to have two books published for the Friends in one year, telling us about the people who lived in Holland House (*The Families of Holland House* by Carolyn Starren) but also the history of the House's surrounding land and gardens (*The Pleasure Grounds of Holland House* by Sally Miller). They are both beautifully produced, with many delightful illustrations, and complement each other perfectly.

On 24 October Sally Miller gave a fascinating talk about the pleasure grounds of the House, illustrated with wonderful old photos, plans and maps, which she had discovered during her painstaking research for the book. It is amazing to think that the estate once stretched from what is now Holland Park Avenue almost to the Thames, and in the west to as far as where the railway line is that runs through Kensington Olympia Station. If one knows Holland Park well it is great fun to find the traces of how the grounds were laid out and altered over 400 years. Did you know, for instance, that the arches to the north of the Belvedere Restaurant are all that is left of the original stable block built in grand style by Sir Henry Rich around 1638 at a cost of £4,000. They were the arches of the coach house. When the present stable block was built in 1812 it was decided not to demolish the arches of the old one because the impression they gave of a ruined aqueduct was thought attractive, and for many years they were clad in ivy; and who would have known that the alcove known as Rogers' Seat (named after a Samuel Rogers), immediately to the north of the arches, was the fireplace of the coach house's

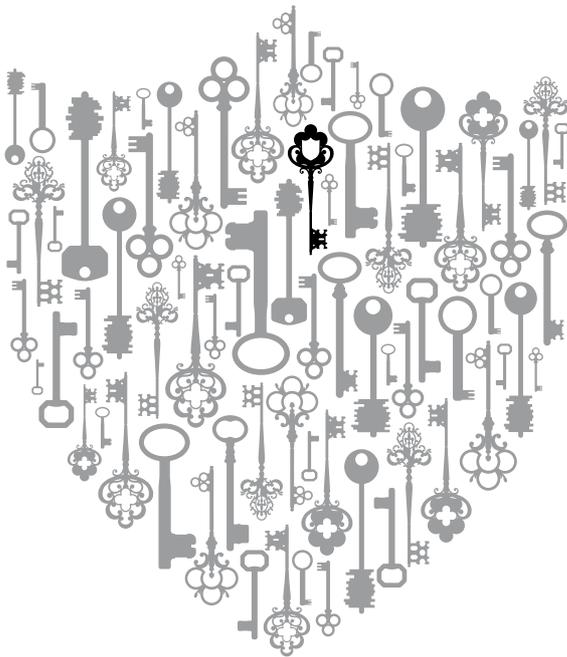
wash house. We also heard that the Napoleon Garden facing Rogers' Seat, where dahlias are now crowding around a sculpture, was so named because the 3rd Lord Holland and his wife were admirers of Napoleon and had a bust of him placed on a marble pillar there.

The Kyoto Garden had a forerunner: in the early 1900s an 'Anglo-Japanese' garden was created below and to the west of the Kyoto, running down towards where the Adventure Playground is now. This garden had oval pools of water with stepping stones, and quite a lot of the rockwork is still visible in winter from the path by the playground. (On the recent guided tree walk some of us walked right over these rocks in our search for exotic conifers.)

Sally Miller left until last her telling us of her 'bingo moment'. This was when she was perusing the 1694/5 survey map of the estate. She noticed an unusual pattern and rightly suspected that it was a water maze. Sir Walter Cope, who had built Holland House (then 'Cope's Castle') 90 years earlier, had been well acquainted with William Cecil, Lord Burghley, who owned Theobolds in Hertfordshire with its beautiful Elizabethan grounds complete with a water garden. Perhaps this had inspired Sir Walter's maze of ponds, gravel walks, islands and bridges.

Reading about such features in greater detail is a delight awaiting you.

*Joy Puritz*



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For those of you who are unaware, this year was my first year as organiser of The Friends of Holland Park Annual Art Exhibition, and I am really looking forward to next year's exhibition.

During and after the 2012 exhibition I spoke to many of you about it and its administration, and you were very keen to convey your thoughts and ideas on the subject. One of your main areas of concern was the lack of publicity and awareness of the exhibition outside The Friends' newsletter and Holland Park notice boards. As the Friends spend almost no money on the advertising it is difficult to lift attendance figures this way, but with sponsorship and the application of a few new initiatives we expect attendance figures to rise, which might result in more sales.

As well as the traditional exhibition of paintings, sculptures and the Mini-Mart, the new initiatives include:

**Feature Artist:** We will introduce a feature artist each year who has had a distinguished association with The Friends and the exhibition. This year we have selected the late Sir Hugh Casson, a past president of The Friends of Holland Park, and the architect responsible for the repair works of Holland House after it was bombed during the Second World War. A small exhibition of Casson's paintings plus a presentation of his work on the East Wing of Holland House and the youth hostel will be hung in the Orangery. In May 2013 the Royal Academy are holding an exhibition of Casson's work so we should be able to drum up some good publicity for our exhibition which prequels the RA's. We have obtained the full cooperation of Sir Hugh's family who are lending us the watercolour of Lord Holland.

**Young Painters Competition/Exhibition:** Holland Park is always full of children but you, the Friends, and we, the trustees, believe that their involvement should go further. The Friends of Holland Park are dedicated to the protection and preservation of our beautiful park but, as the Friends tend to be of the older generation we need the next to be aware of just how important the conservation of Holland Park is. This is where you, the Friends, can help.

Last year I tried to launch a Young Painters



*Watercolour by Sir Hugh Casson of the Lord Holland statue*

Competition but, unfortunately, I went directly to the schools in the borough, and the competition failed owing to the fact that teachers did not encourage their pupils to enter in case it interfered with their school work. This year we are asking you, the Friends, to approach your children, grandchildren and/or any young artists you know and believe might want to enter. They do not need to live or go to school in the borough. All they need to do is enter the competition. If the Friends feel a competition is the way to go forward, or at least a step in the right direction, the details of the competition will be outlined in full. Initially I am thinking we would invite young artists aged 8-18 to enter one work, in any medium; the subject: Holland Park. There would certainly be prizes and, ideally, I would

like the winning entries to be displayed in conjunction with the Friends' exhibition, on its last weekend, preferably in the Ice House (near the Orangery), but I would have to check its availability. At this stage we would like to know what you think about a Young Painters Competition or if you have any other ideas about how The Friends of Holland Park can involve children.

**Credit cards:** I believe more sales were lost than for any other reason because The Friends could not accept credit cards, and trying to remedy this will be one of our priorities.

**Prize money and raffle:** With sponsorship we hope to increase prize money. Next year there will also be a raffle with wonderful prizes on offer.

**Free catalogue:** From next year the catalogue will be free of charge, although there will be a box should visitors wish to leave a donation.

**Private View:** The Private View will now take place on the first Friday evening only (not Saturday morning and Monday evening).

**Poster Competition:** Next year we will not be running the poster competition owing to the fact that we have been given permission to reproduce Sir Hugh Casson's watercolour of Lord Holland as the poster of the exhibition, and we need to have it displayed well in advance.

**Advertising and editorial:** We would like information about the exhibition to be more visible in the park, more posters on public notice boards and in shop windows as well as more editorial in local magazines and newspapers.



## Administration

- Fri 22 Feb** All exhibits details forms must be received by this date to allow listing in the catalogue.
- Fri 15 Mar 8–11am** Artists deliver work to The Orangery, Holland Park.  
*All artists will be required to sign the catalogue to certify that the details shown are correct.*
- Fri 15 Mar 11am–6pm** Works will be hung/displayed and judged.
- Fri 15 Mar 7.30pm** Private View, entry by ticket at £3.  
*Artists are entitled to 5 free tickets (to be ordered on the exhibits details form)*
- Sat 16 Mar 10.30am** Art Exhibition open to the public.
- Sat 23 Mar 10.30am** Young Painters Presentation (to be confirmed).

## ART EXHIBITION OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FREE OF CHARGE

**Saturday 16 – Sunday 24 March from 10.30am-6pm**

Collection of works after the exhibition:

- Sun 24 Mar 6–7.30pm Buyers collect sold works. Artists collect unsold works.  
Mon 25 Mar 9–11am Buyers collect sold works. Artists collect unsold works.

*Artists are particularly asked NOT TO COLLECT THEIR WORKS BEFORE 6.30pm ON SUNDAY 24 March, as this would spoil the exhibition for others.*

Enquiries to Gordon French on 020 7937 7222, 19 Kensington Court Place, London, W8 5BJ  
or e-mail: [gordon.l.french@gmail.com](mailto:gordon.l.french@gmail.com)

## Art Exhibition (*contd*)

The conditions of entry remain unchanged from previous years. Friends who are artists and artists who become Friends are invited to exhibit up to ten works: **two framed works** to hang on the walls and up to **eight unframed works** for display in the portfolio stands with a maximum size of 70 x 100cm (including mounts, but no wooden mounts in the stands, please). Friends are also invited to exhibit up to **ten three-dimensional objects** such as ceramics, glassware and small sculptures or enter the Mini-Mart of small works on offer at £40 and under, including cards and craft items. The minimum price for works in the main exhibition will be £50.

Friends interested in exhibiting in the art exhibition, either in the main exhibition or the Mini-Mart, need

to register by filling in the order form (enclosed with this newsletter) and pay the £10 entry fee. Please note that artists who have registered for the main exhibition may also include small works in the Mini-Mart at no additional cost. Completed registration forms should be sent to Rhoddy Wood as soon as possible because space is limited, and when enough artists have registered we cannot accept any more.

Information on the art exhibition is available on our website, [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org) or directly from Gordon French (please see e-mail and postal addresses above), if by post with a stamped and self-addressed DL-sized envelope enclosed (standard oblong business-letter size).

*Gordon French*



*Photo by Mary Lambert*

*Choir, orchestra and dignitaries at the torch ceremony*

On Thursday, 26 July Holland Park was a hive of musical and sporting activity. From 11am to 3pm families were engaged in a large range of sports and 'healthy living' with advice and try-out sessions organised by Age UK, British Judo, England Volleyball, RBK&C Leisure Services, etc. From 1pm to 4pm Opera Holland Park and the City of London Sinfonia with a community choir presented a programme which included a 'Minute Maestro': an opportunity for members of the public to conduct the orchestra for one minute in, among other pieces, the *Overture to William Tell* (Rossini), the Can-Can from *Orpheus in the Underworld* (Offenbach), the *Hallelujah Chorus* (Handel) and *Jerusalem* (Parry); for the latter the words were distributed so that all could join in the singing.

All this was in honour of the Olympic Torch which was to be carried through Holland Park on its progress to the Games. As I entered the park

from the north at about 1.30pm I could hear the sound of lovely music, and joined the crowd which was assembling in front of Holland House. The musicians were on either side of the gate piers beside the steps. They were soon joined by the choir. The conductor, Stuart Stratford, invited children from two or three years of age upwards to come and conduct the orchestra. They loved this.



*Tabitha-skye holding up the torch in Holland Park*

When asked where they came from cheers went up as they said things like 'London, Portobello Road' or 'the USA, New York'. They waved the baton enthusiastically and the orchestra played on. The highlight was when the conductor lifted a very small boy onto his shoulders and grasped his right hand to help him wave the baton. The Leader of the Council, the Mayor, the Mayoress, the Deputy Mayor, Councillors Lightfoot and Paget-Brown assembled in front of the choir as the torch-bearer ran from the High Street park entrance up to the House.



*Tabitha-skye McDuffus*

She was Tabitha-skye [*sic*] McDuffus, an athletic star pupil of the latest secondary school to be built in the borough, Chelsea Academy. The Leader of the Council announced that this was not the first time that an Olympic torch had been welcomed

to Kensington: in 1948 the weather had been so bad that a torch ceremony had had to take place in Earl's Court Stadium.

After this welcome the flame was put into its Davey lamp for a rest break. It left the park at Abbotsbury Road from where the convoy took it to the site of the finishing line of the 1908 Olympics at White City, and the wall plaque giving details of the medal winners, now in the BBC media village. It was carried from the BBC Television Centre by Sir Bruce Forsyth and then returned along Holland Park Avenue before it was taken by bus to Oxford Street and the West End. It was a truly memorable day with good weather which we all enjoyed.

*Mary Lambert*

## Russian Virtuosi of Europe Concert

**Saturday, 23 March at 7.30pm,  
in the Orangery  
(during the Art Exhibition)**

Natalia Lomeiko has again promised to display her musical wizardry for us and this time she will be joined by her husband, Yuri Zhislin, whom we all missed last year. Both are professors at the Royal Academy of Music. In the New Year, they will be making a recording of Ysaÿe's *Sonata for Two Violins* and this will be one of the pieces they will be performing for us. The story goes that Ysaÿe composed it to play with his patron, Queen Elisabeth of Belgium, but this never happened as it was too difficult for Her Majesty. Further details of the programme will be available in the spring issue.

If you are very quick after reading this, you might be able to catch the Russian Virtuosi of Europe in the Cadogan Hall on 23 November at 7.30.



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This is to remind you that Christmas is almost upon us and if you have not already stocked up with cards, it is time to do so. All readers got a brochure with the last newsletter which gave them illustrations of the Mountbatten cards with views from all over London. If you have lost yours and want another copy, please ask. Or you can see them on the website [www.mbcards.co.uk](http://www.mbcards.co.uk)



*Holland House from the West*

Meanwhile, here are pictures again of some of our own Holland Park cards, including this year's new full-sized one of Holland House from the West at 75p. It clearly shows the area now open to the public out of the opera season due to ten years' work by the Friends. Other available cards include two smaller ones: of the Stable Yard, which is exceptionally pretty, and the East Wing of Holland House, both at 55p. Bargain

seekers go for packs of 10 mixed old designs in mixed sizes at £5.00.

We will also be holding stocks of some other previous



*The Stable Yard*

cards, including both the full size Alcove and the Dutch Garden, at 75p each. There are other Holland Park designs as well as a large variety of London views in the brochure and an even wider selection on the website [www.mbcards.co.uk](http://www.mbcards.co.uk)

If you send your order to 21 Kenton Court, the minimum order is 10 cards and we will deliver free within our newsletter hand-delivery area but have to charge £1.40 postage per ten beyond that. If you order from Mountbatten

cards directly, delivery is free to most West and Central London postcodes but is £5 if outside that area or the order is for less than £30. Overprinted cards must be ordered from Mountbatten. In either case envelopes are included and there are discounts of 5% on 100 cards, 10% on 200 and 15% on 300. We hope that you will all nominate FHP as the recipient of the charity donation from Mountbatten of 25% of the profits but you are free to choose any charity.



*The Alcove*

## Subscription Reminder and Gift Aid

We are very grateful to all our members without whom there would be no Friends. It is your impressive numbers (nearly a thousand) which give us influence among the Councillors who make policy and ensure that we are at least listened to if not always agreed with. We hope you will all want to renew.

The Friends' subscription year is the calendar year, so now is the time to pay for 2013. Over half of you give us standing orders, payable on 1 January, and to these we say 'thank you' and you need do no more. To the others, please use the order form and make your cheques payable to The Friends of Holland Park. Minimum dues are £12, or £9 for seniors (those 65 or over). Joint members living at the same address pay £20, or £15 if both are seniors.

The only exception is that those who have joined since 1 September have their membership valid for 2013.

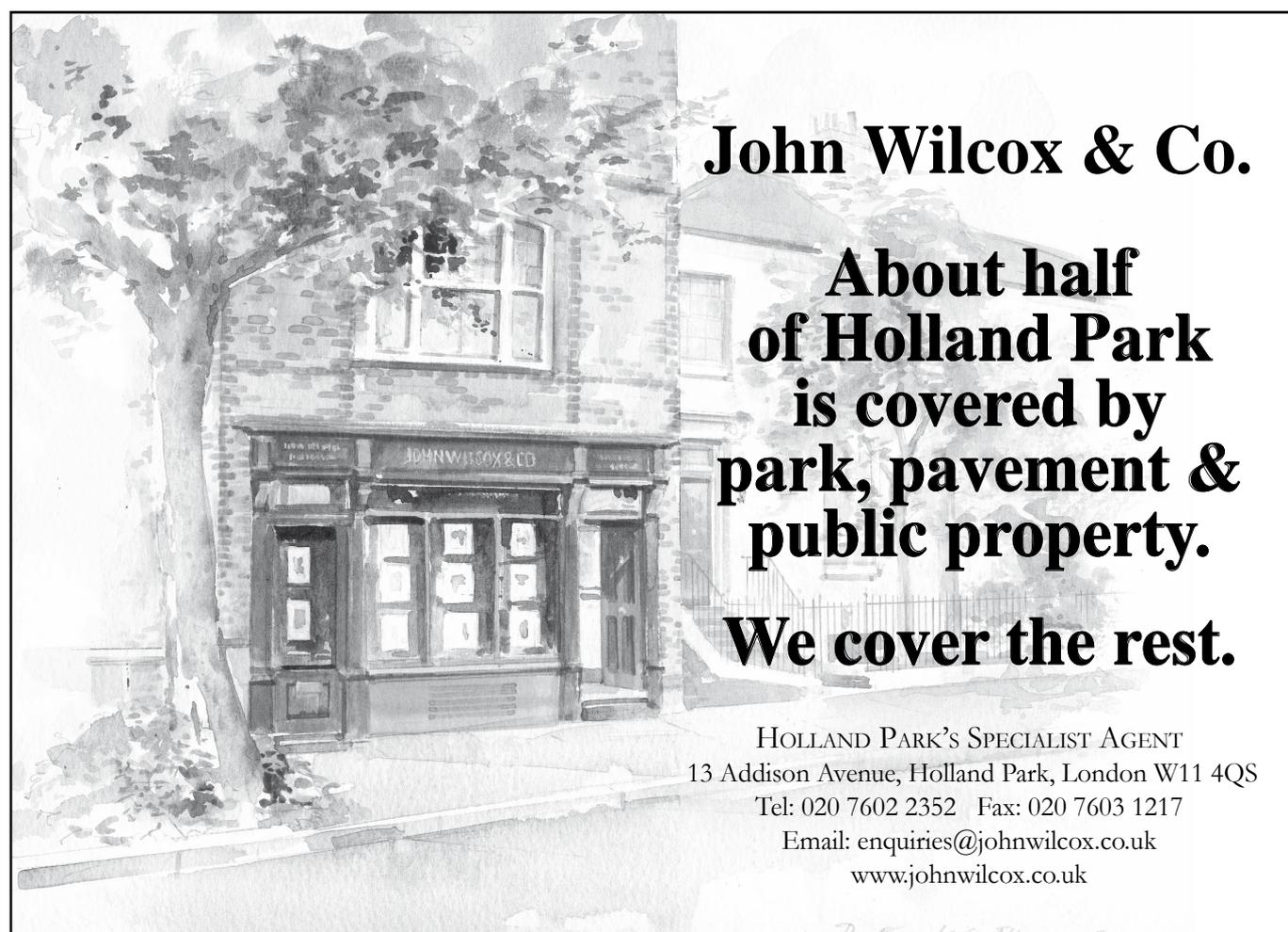
Well over half of you have also signed Gift Aid forms, which means that the Friends can reclaim 25p in the pound from HM Revenue & Customs; this adds up to over £1,000 a year. If you find a Gift Aid form with your newsletter, please sign and return it if you pay UK tax. If you do not pay tax and tell us, we will try to ensure we do not ask again. Thank you.

All queries about membership (e.g. 'Have I got a standing order?') to Rhoddy Wood on 020 7602 0304 or [rhoddy.wood@virgin.net](mailto:rhoddy.wood@virgin.net)

All events listed below are FHP events. Our bird/nature walks (BNW) will continue to take place on the first Saturday of each month (except August) under the direction of our knowledgeable and informative guide, Ian Thomson. Meet him at Lord Holland's statue at 9am. The walks are free and everyone is welcome, not just members, so please come and encourage your friends: they might become members too! We recommend you bring binoculars if you can – they make such a difference.

The Holland Park Conservation Volunteers sessions are on every third Saturday of the month. For more information call 020 8743 3040 or visit [www.groundwork.org.uk/london](http://www.groundwork.org.uk/london).

Sat 1 Dec	<b>BNW</b>	
Sun 9 Dec	<b>Christmas Concert: Tallis Chamber Choir</b> (see p.2), in the Orangery, £17	7.30pm
Sat 5 Jan	<b>BNW</b>	
Sat 5 Jan	<b>Mulled Wine and Mince Pies</b> (see p.2)	11am – 1pm
Sat 2 Feb	<b>BNW</b>	
Thur 21 Feb	<b>The Holland House Set</b> (see p.3), in the Orangery, £12	6.30pm
Sat 2 Mar	<b>BNW</b>	
16-24 Mar	<b>Annual Art Exhibition</b> (see pp.6-7), in the Orangery	
Wed 20 Mar	<b>Annual General Meeting</b> , in the Orangery	7.30pm
Sat 23 Mar	<b>Russian Virtuosi of Europe concert</b> (see p.9), in the Orangery, £15	7.30pm
Sat 6 Apr	<b>BNW</b>	



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