

# *The Friends of Holland Park*

## *Winter 2013*



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# Design Museum Development Site – The Story so Far



Thursday, 27 February, 7pm in the Orangery

It will not have escaped your notice that something big has been going on just south of the park on the old Commonwealth Institute site. The Design Museum, currently at Shad Thames, will open in the iconic building, but not until the end of 2015. We thought you would like an update on the development: what has been involved in restoring the paraboloid roof and the blue glazed walls as well as what we can expect the whole residential development to look like when finished. Our speaker is Sir Stuart Lipton,



*Design Museum in the making*

co-founder of Chelsfield, the company developing the site. As we get nearer to the opening in 2015 we hope to invite someone from the Design Museum to show us what will happen inside the extraordinary building and how the Museum will operate. Tickets are £12, to include wine and Janice Miles' delicious canapés. To

order tickets please use the order form that arrives with your newsletter or download it from our website.

## Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, 9 April 2014, at 7.30pm in the Orangery

The Friends' Annual General Meeting is your chance to hear what your committee has been doing on your behalf and what it plans to do for the rest of the year. Equally it is your opportunity to tell us your views on the committee's work, and what concerns you have about the park that you would like us to address. The meeting will again be chaired by our distinguished president, Sir Angus Stirling.

This has been my first year as chairman, and it is proving a busy one. We co-opted a new treasurer, Madeline Denmead, in April this year and need your formal approval at the AGM for her to continue her work as a trustee. We have been in serious dialogue with the Council about the impact of the Opera on Holland House and its visual impact on the surrounding areas of the park. Planning permission for 2014 is likely to have been agreed by the time of the AGM, but there is the possibility of greater improvements for 2015 and beyond, and our AGM will be a timely opportunity to share views.

As the bi-borough amalgamation continues, department by department, our key contacts are changing and we are working hard to make sure we understand their agendas and they understand ours. While all this happens the park gets ever busier and will continue to do so as The Design Museum opens at the end of 2015, and as big local developments start to be inhabited. The Friends need to work with the Council on how best to protect our fragile asset.

It looks like another busy year ahead. We need your support so we hope we can count on you to join us on Wednesday 9 April. Indeed, we are always keen to recruit new members to help us year round with the work of the committee.

Most of you know that the AGM takes place during our annual art exhibition in the Orangery. After the AGM you can enjoy the paintings and other exhibits and discuss them over a glass of wine, or buy one you really like.

*Jennie Kettlewell*



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On 24 October Inspector Danny Butler, from the Hammersmith division of the Metropolitan Mounted Police, gave us a fascinating insight into the selection, training and deployment of police horses. We see them walking peacefully through Holland Park and find it hard to imagine how skilled and courageous they are in their real role in crowd management. And that is just the horses. Those who ride the horses: policemen, and increasingly policewomen, undergo equally tough training and can find themselves in the front line when hostile crowds are intent on trouble. They helped keep us safe during the Olympics and regularly do so at football matches.

Inspector Butler had many surprising stories to tell, including a reminiscence about a race horse recruited



*Inspector Butler putting a horse through its paces. The horse, effectively seeing a wall, would need to trust its rider completely*

into the police team. He remembered seeing his senior officer disappearing up Caledonian Road at a hectic and undignified speed and thinking he was not going to stop before Hendon.

We were told that the police look for horses from many backgrounds but they must be able to tolerate considerable weight because a mounted policeman, fully clad in riot gear, might weigh up to 18 stone. He also used some

distinctly unhorsy terms, like looking for 'low mileage' in a candidate horse.

Next time you see the Met horses in Holland Park, enjoy their presence as ever, but give both horses and riders even more respect for their bravery; and a wave – it might be Danny.

## Autumn Tree Walk Led by Dr Alan Harrington on 19 October

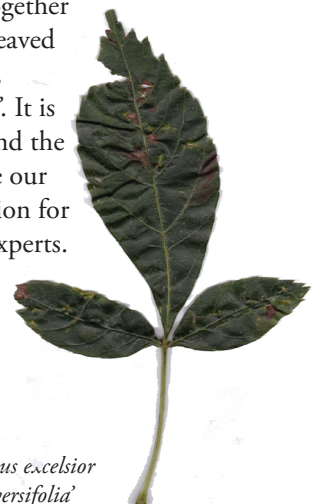
Alan varies the route of his tree walks each time, and for the latest one we concentrated on the family *Fagaceae*. This includes the sweet chestnuts, beeches and oaks, so of course we went into the Oak Enclosure. Holland Park really has some uncommon oaks, most of them quite mature, and we worry that we ought to be refreshing the collection, though it is difficult to find space where this can be done. Most of our newer trees are comparatively common species especially red or scarlet oaks, though there are two young cork oaks. One of our few champion trees is the magnificent Burr Oak, *Quercus macrocarpa*, which is best seen from the Daffodil Lawn and which Alan Mitchell wrote was 'the best specimen this side of the Atlantic'. Sadly it never fruits because it needs a companion to fertilise it. Perhaps we should aim for that. Arguably the most interesting tree find of the day happened after the official end of the walk and was not in the *Fagaceae* but was an ash.



*Fraxinus angustifolia 'Veltheimii'*

The Common English Ash is *Fraxinus excelsior* which normally has 9 to 13 leaflets. There is a form of it called the Single-leaved Ash or, more accurately in Latin, *diversifolia* because the same tree might have mostly single leaves but some with 3 or 5 leaflets. One can be seen just outside the north-east corner of the playing field. We had thought there was another on the triangle beneath the steps to the Kyoto Garden; then one of our regulars pointed out that all the leaves there were single and had more jagged edges, and the ends of the branches were very upswept. Together this means that it is the single-leaved form of the Narrow-leaved Ash, *Fraxinus angustifolia 'Veltheimii'*. It is the possession of such species and the more uncommon oaks that give our park its reputation as an attraction for botanists, both beginners and experts.

*Rhoddy Wood*



*Fraxinus excelsior 'Diversifolia'*

What have a moss called *Cryphaea heteromalla* and a mushroom *Geastrum coliformis*, or Daisy Earth Star, got in common? They both grow in Holland Park, they were both first seen there this autumn on wildlife walks led by FHP-sponsored experts, they are both unusual and, though both British natives, were both growing in habitats provided by exotic species.

Holland Park also has the Common Earth Star which is like a miniature puffball enclosed by four fat triangular 'petals'. With the Daisy species the 'petals' are split into up to 12 parts, so looking very like a daisy. On October's Fungi Foray Dr Mark Spencer said he knew only one other site in London which was in Shadwell under a row of Leylandii – a cross between two North American species. Our smaller group was also under a Leylandii. This is because they prefer a dry Mediterranean climate and the dusty leaf litter under the Leylandii provides a similar habitat. So even that most vilified tree has its wildlife uses.

Many of you know Dr Alan Harrington as a tree expert but you might not be aware that though a qualified botanist, his tree knowledge is self taught and almost a hobby. His working life in Nigeria and with the Natural History Museum was concerned wholly with mosses. So when looking at trees he always keeps half an eye open for mosses growing on their trunks. He spotted three large patches of the *Cryphaea* on the leaning trunk of a tulip tree (from North America) in the Oak Enclosure. Apparently, mosses are not concerned with the species of their support as long as the aspect and texture of the bark suits them. Alan was interested because the *Cryphaea* does not like pollution and this was the nearest to Central London he had seen it.

So it was a natural thought that Alan might lead a moss walk for us. He wanted a date in winter when the mosses were easy to see, though warning that it would have to be cancelled if snow was lying. Otherwise it will be 11.00–1.00 on Saturday 22 February. Attendance is free but numbers are limited so booking on 020 7602 0304 is a must. Also please bring your own magnifying glass of at least x 10 magnification.



*Geastrum coliformis*

*Rhody Wood*

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## Art Exhibition

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My second year organizing The Friends of Holland Park Art Exhibition was as eventful and exciting as my first. This year the standard of work was very impressive and despite attendance being down, largely due to bad weather, we managed to match last year's sales. Next year the exhibition is at the beginning of April so there is a chance of better weather, but this is England. At least we can depend on the Orangery being a riot of colour and creativity. This year a number of new initiatives were put in place and I am pleased to report that they will be incorporated in next year's exhibition.

**Sponsorship** We are very grateful to Killik & Co for sponsoring our art exhibition for the first time in its history. This sponsorship enabled us to advertise in some local papers, offer a free catalogue to all visitors and print a beautiful colour poster advertising the event. Killik & Co have agreed to sponsor us again next year and it is lovely to have them on board. My personal thanks to Fabrizio D'Argiolas who has left the Kensington branch; we look forward to working with Julian Chester on next year's exhibition.

**Feature Artist** This was a great success and beginning the tradition with a timely tribute to an old president, Sir Hugh Casson. Next year we plan to have larger panels to display the work of the feature artist who will be announced in the spring newsletter. As a result of the Hugh Casson tribute the Casson Family would like to continue their involvement in the art exhibition, donating a prize in their father's name, *The Hugh Casson Prize for Drawing*, the winner of which will receive a framed limited edition print of Casson's Lord Holland drawing.

The **credit card facility** was a success. Credit cards made up 85% of the transactions and made the general administration much more streamline. The free catalogue was another excellent initiative which we plan to repeat next year.

This brings me to an important point – **late entries**: I am sorry but the acceptance of late entries does not work, either for the artist or for the administration of the exhibition and, I think you will agree, it looks unprofessional. Next year, all forms must be with me by Friday 7 March. There will be no exception (and no extensions) to this rule.

The **raffle**, which was made possible by the generous

donations of local businesses, was well supported and we intend to grow on this next year. There was also a **new layout** in the Orangery which gave the space a better feel and flow and seemed to be appreciated by both the visitors and artists.

Now to the 2014 exhibition. As always we need to know of any volunteers who wish to be stewards so that we can organize a rota. The exhibition will be hung by Alison Beckett with the assistance of Tony Walker, and we welcome back our regular judge Isabel Langtry. There will again be one private view, on Friday 4 April. Artists are given five complimentary tickets for the private view; additional tickets can be bought for £3 each.

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, 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, the mini-mart or both 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 Friends of Holland Park Art Exhibition is available on our website, [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org) or from my assistant Alex French, 19 Kensington Court Place, London, W8 5BJ, tel: 020 7937 7222, e-mail: [gordon.l.french@gmail.com](mailto:gordon.l.french@gmail.com)

*Gordon French*

# Art Exhibition Timetable



**Friday 7 March**

All exhibit details forms must be received by this date to allow listing in the catalogue

**Friday 4 April 8.30-11am**

Artists deliver artwork to the Orangery, Holland Park  
*All artists will be required to sign the catalogue to certify that the details shown are correct*

**Friday 4 April 11am-6pm**

Hanging and judging

**Friday 4 April 7.30-9.30pm**

Private View, entry by ticket at £3

*Artists are entitled to 5 complimentary tickets*

**Saturday 5 April-Sunday 13 April**

Exhibition open to the public, 10.30am-6pm  
FREE OF CHARGE

**Sunday 13 April 6-7pm**

Artists and buyers collect works

**Monday 14 April 9-11am**

Artists and buyers collect works

*Artists are particularly asked NOT TO COLLECT THEIR WORKS BEFORE 6pm ON SUNDAY 13 APRIL, as this would spoil the exhibition for others*

Enquiries to Alex French, 19 Kensington Court Place, London W8 5BJ

Tel: 020 7937 7222

Email: [gordon.l.french@gmail.com](mailto:gordon.l.french@gmail.com)

## Russian Virtuosi of Europe

We are pleased to announce that Natalia Lomeiko has promised that she and her friends will play for us again on the last Saturday of the Art Exhibition, 12 April, at 7.30pm in the Orangery. Details of the programme will be in the spring newsletter but those who know the verve and passion with which they play will need no urging to put the date in their diaries now. We are extremely fortunate to have such consummate professionals perform in the Orangery.

## Christmas Concert

Barely two weeks to go before our most popular event of the year when we welcome The Tallis Chamber Choir and their musical director Philip Simms to the Orangery to sing carols interspersed with seasonal readings. The evening of 8 December ends with wine and Janice Miles' mouth-watering canapés. If you have not already booked we urge you not to hesitate: the tickets just fly off Rhoddy's desk. Please use the enclosed order form which can also be downloaded from our website.

## Mulled Wine and Mince Pies

The usual celebration of the New Year chez your secretary will take place 11.00 to 1.00 on Saturday, 4 January. All members are welcome. This is your invitation, just turn up and come as you are, whether you have been on the Bird and Nature Walk or just cosily indoors.

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Pigeons are becoming a real pest in Holland Park, largely because some people insist on feeding them. The café is a prime site for the birds to forage for food left on tables and dropped on the ground – but maybe no more. Our Parks Police had the clever idea of putting a fake hawk in the trees above the café. Suspended from a long pole the hawk is meant to swoop and ‘fly’ realistically enough to scare off the pigeons but this one is obviously still a learner and tends to get caught up in the branches. It has however convinced the pigeons it is a danger, and café users have reported fewer of the unwelcome birds than for many years. Let us hope the pigeons are not bright enough to work this one out.

### **Subscription Reminder and Gift Aid**

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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 2014. 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 2014.

Well over half of you have also signed Gift Aid forms, which means that the Friends can reclaim 20p in the pound from HM Revenue & Customs, and 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 that 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)

### **Wanted: Assistant Treasurer**

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Would you like to volunteer and get more involved with the Friends of Holland Park? We are looking for a new Assistant Treasurer to support the administration of our finances. You would ideally have some experience in accounting or basic book-keeping. Time commitment is around one day a month with potential to be involved in other areas of running the charity if desired.

If you are interested please contact our Treasurer Madeline at [madelinekdenmead@gmail.com](mailto:madelinekdenmead@gmail.com) or look on our website for further details.

### **Any Beekeepers out There?**

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Holland Park has kept its own bees for the past few years and the result has been excellent honey, bought by those quick enough to do so before it sells out.

Does any member have beekeeping experience, or know someone who does, with time to commit to managing Holland Park’s four hives? An alternative would be someone who already keeps their own bees and is prepared to establish some of them in a new home in our park. A local resident is preferred so as to be able to deal with any swarming problems.

If interested, please contact [barrie.maclaurin@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:barrie.maclaurin@rbkc.gov.uk)



The little girl's eyes were wide with amazement as she was handed a leopard gecko to hold. She cradled it carefully, and gently stroked it, then it shot up her arm and she offered it back very fast indeed.

All this excitement happened when Cllr Daniel Moylan, Chairman of Kensington and Chelsea Environmental Ltd (KCEL), opened Holland Park's new Ecology Centre

on 19 September. The launch was attended by a group of local school children, Cabinet Member for the Environment Tim Ahern, councillors, ecologists and local associations. Special guests Richard Deverell, Director of Kew, and Dr Ian Bride, lecturer in biodiversity at the University of Kent, gave encouraging talks about involving the local community in the ecology of the park. This was KCEL's final project as a grant-giving body that used landfill tax money for green initiatives in the Royal Borough.

The new centre is purpose built for minimal carbon emissions, made with sustainable materials such as larch cladding and rammed mud walls, and has energy-efficient lighting. And who knew that lino flooring was a sustainable option, being made from renewable materials such as linseed oil? The wood-clad walls of the classroom have an enormous window which virtually brings the woodland into the room. It can accommodate around 30 people, the same as the old centre, but is a much more convenient shape and so much brighter than the dark old room in the Stable Yard. A big plus is the welcoming reception area, so that visitors can come in and learn what is going on with the park's ecology projects. The lino flooring is bright duckweed green, which adds to the feeling of being outside. The centre is already popular and children rush in, look around, and immediately get involved with one of the many displays. That is after they have been encouraged to wash their muddy boots and grubby hands in the very practical facilities just outside the



*Matt Rose teaching in the new centre*

entrance. There are three loos inside, as well as two public ones for use when the centre is closed (one is wheelchair accessible).

All this gives the Ecology team many more opportunities to provide interactive and innovative learning, in addition to the regular programmes. It is early days yet and it makes sense to pause to get used to the building

before deciding on which

new activities to offer. It is a blank canvas full of opportunities. Whatever they decide on, the new facilities mean children can carry on learning inside during wet weather. Right outside the building is a 'wild space' where the team will run creative conservation activities such as making hedgehog boxes and bug houses. There is also an enclosed lawn where young children can picnic in safety after learning all about the wonderful home Holland Park provides for wildlife.

It all sounds great fun for children, but what about the adults? The Friends would like to see more evening talks and other events for those of us who love nature but left school a while ago. If you have ideas, let Rhoddy Wood or me know. Maybe you would like to make friends with the leopard gecko.

*Jennie Kettlewell*

*The new Ecology Centre is located next to the Adventure Playground by Abbotsbury Road car park. It is open to the public Monday to Friday from 3-5pm (except when it is booked for a group).*



*The new Ecology Centre*



## Dates for your Diary

All FHP events in the diary are printed in **bold**. The Friends are determined that our Bird and Nature Walks (BNW) will continue although, sadly, Ian Thomson is no longer with us. While we look for a permanent leader with the requisite skills and commitment, the walks will be led by varying regulars. We will have strolls through the park looking at birds, plants, butterflies and park management of current interest. There is no charge and all are welcome without booking. **Note one change: meet outside the café** at 9am on the first Saturday of each month. No dogs, please, as even well behaved ones on leads disturb the wildlife. We recommend you bring binoculars if you can.

Events organised by the Ecology Service of RBK&C are listed as 'ES', some of which are sponsored by FHP where indicated. Unless otherwise stated the meeting place is in the **new Ecology Centre** near the Adventure Playground. Some must be booked, in which case please call 020 7938 8186 or e-mail [ecology.centre@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:ecology.centre@rbkc.gov.uk). There is a charge for those marked £.

The Holland Park Conservation Volunteers sessions are on every third Saturday of the month. For more information call 020 8762 0322 or visit [www.groundwork.org.uk/london](http://www.groundwork.org.uk/london)

Sat 7 Dec	<b>BNW</b>	
Sun 8 Dec	<b>Christmas Concert: Tallis Chamber Choir</b> (see p.7), in the Orangery, £17	7.30pm
Sat 5 Jan	<b>BNW</b>	
Sat 5 Jan	<b>Mulled Wine and Mince Pies</b> (see p.7)	11am-1pm
Sat 1 Feb	<b>BNW</b>	
Sat 22 Feb	<b>Moss Walk</b> with Alan Harrington, Stable Yard. Must book on 020 7602 0304. Bring magnifying glass (x 10 minimum).	11am-1pm
Thur 27 Feb	<b>Design Museum Development Site</b> (see p.3), in the Orangery, £12	7pm
Sat 1 Mar	<b>BNW</b>	
Sat 5 Apr	<b>BNW</b>	
Sat 5-Sun 13 Apr	<b>Annual Art Exhibition</b> (see pp.6-7)	
Wed 9 Apr	<b>Annual General Meeting</b> , in the Orangery	7.30pm
Sat 12 Apr	<b>Russian Virtuosi of Europe concert</b> (see p.7), in the Orangery, £15	7.30pm

## Your Committee

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