FRIENDS OF GREENWICH PARK
NEWSLETTER
Spring 2022 Registered Charity No: 1029933 Number 90

GETTING UP THE HILL NO LONGER A PROBLEM!
Electric Mobility Vehicle Beginning at Easter

The mobility vehicle on loan from Hyde Park

From Easter onwards there will be a free mobility vehicle service as part of the Greenwich Park Revealed project. The vehicle is a wheelchair-adapted golf buggy that runs from St Mary's Gate up to Pavilion Café and back again. The service is primarily for visitors with mobility issues but others can use it depending on availability.

Helen Wallis from the Greenwich Park Revealed project team said: "We trialled the service in 2018 and 2019 using a petrol-powered golf buggy but visitors were keen that we switched to electric. We got quotes for several models but none were available until late summer. Luckily, we were able to borrow one of Hyde Park's Liberty Drives vehicles for six months – and even better, some of their volunteers. Liberty Drives was a highly successful, volunteer-run charity in Hyde Park and was incorporated into the Royal Parks charity on the death of its founder. Volunteers Carol and Jane have years of experience driving visitors and have kindly offered to help train our new volunteers. More volunteers are needed. If you are a reliable, friendly driver with a clean driving licence who would enjoy trundling round the park at 5mph Helen would love to hear from you! Volunteers will work in pairs and be expected to commit to at least one four-hour shift per week. If you would like more information about the service or becoming a volunteer driver please contact Helen direct at hwallis@royalparks.org.uk

Volunteer drivers, Carol and Jane

THE FRIENDS ARE 30 YEARS YOUNG THIS YEAR.
JOIN US TO CELEBRATE ON SUNDAY 5 JUNE (see page 3)
The Friends of Greenwich Park were founded in the Spring of 1992 when the Government intended to privatise The Royal Parks. We began with a few hundred members and we have gone from strength to strength. Our membership is now over 1700 households. Please continue to support us as we continue to support this wonderful space and get more and more involved in Greenwich Park Revealed.

WILDLIFE ACTIVITIES IN THE PARK

It has seemed a long and dismal winter but all the signs of spring have gradually unfolded which seems to be ever more important after all the lockdowns.

The Drop-Ins

Now also known rather more accurately as Family Wildlife Activity Afternoons, they will again be under gazebos outside the Wildlife Hut, on the last Saturday of each month starting on 30 April and continuing until the end of September, if the weather permits. Our Wildlife Hut is too long and narrow to be acceptable in the current environment and, in any case, it is pleasant to work outside, especially when we are planting flower and vegetable seeds with our visitors. The exciting news is that we have been asked to sort and gather all our equipment to be ready to move it out by the end of September into store in the works' yard. This is the beginning of the process leading to the new Education Centre. Our Wildlife Hut, when upgraded, will have the very valuable role of providing the reception area, the kitchen, loo facilities and storage for the new Education Centre. This has enabled the Centre itself to be a very streamlined green building that was achievable on the much reduced budget. And it is nice to think that our venerable old building (it is timber framed) is being "up-cycled" to be a valuable part of the Park infrastructure in the future.

The Sunday Morning Bird Walks are now run on a regular basis on the last Sunday of the month by Julia Holland and there is quite a following. A good group gathered for the RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch walk at the end of January. You can read the full report on our website under Wildlife and then click on Birds

Long tailed tit *Photo Pat Taylor*

and scroll down where you will find many reports including the one from January. The end of April walk will be replaced by the Dawn Chorus walk the following week.

Guided Tree Walks

The Friends continued to offer free **Guided Tree Walks** to members and they have been very well received. They have all been fully subscribed and afterwards the participants received a bud identification sheet and a list of good reference books. There are 2 more walks in late April when it should be warmer and the buds will have burst into leaf, hopefully making it easier to identify the trees in question.

The next two walks are planned for Saturday 23 April at 12.45pm and Sunday 24 April at 10.30 am. Again the walk is restricted to members only and a limited number. The lists will open on our website www.friendsofgreenwichpark.co.uk at 10.00 am on Tuesday 5 April for both walks and each one will have a waiting list. If two of you from one household want to come, please put both names on the list.

International Dawn Chorus Bird Walk

Covid permitting, the Park has given us permission to get into the park at **4.00 am for an International Dawn Chorus Bird Walk on Sunday 1 May**. This was not possible in the last 2 years. It is hard getting up at that time but it is an exhilarating and worthwhile experience. There is a little admin to join the group because the Park's team and police insist that they know who will be coming into the park at that time of night. To join add your name(s) to the list on the website www.friendsofgreenwichpark.co.uk before 21 April to qualify for joining the group. Should be fun.

FRIENDS A G M 16 MAY 2022

The 29th AGM takes place on Monday, 16 May at 7.30 for 8 pm in the Howe Lecture Theatre, Queen Anne Building, University of Greenwich, Old Royal Naval College.

Copies of the Chairman's Report and the Financial Report are enclosed with this Newsletter.

Officers and committee members proposed and seconded for the coming year are:

Chairman: Sue Yates, 34 Hyde Vale, SE10 8QH

Vice Chairman: Tony Butler, 19 Maidenstone Hill, SE10 8SY

Committee Members:

Norman Adams, Richard Jones, Esme Partridge and Susan Taylor stand for election.

Jonathan Chandler and Clive Corlett stand for re-election

Tina Challacombe continues to serve.

Cindy Sheehan and Cliff Wilkinson resigned during 2021.

Lesley Jones is standing down at this AGM.

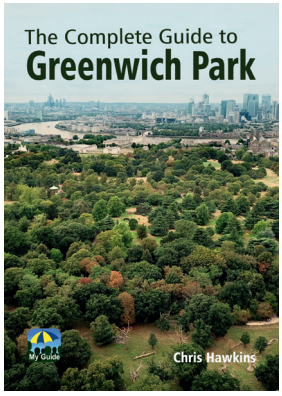
The committee confirms the appointments of Christine Bevan as Secretary, Julie Punter as Treasurer and Fran Tyler as Membership Secretary.

After the AGM Andrew Mayfield, Greenwich Park Revealed Archaeologist, will give a short talk on his work in the Park. Graham Dear will be present to answer any queries on Greenwich Park Revealed; Michael Loughnane will answer queries on the Park and Sergeant John Berry will answer queries about policing. Plus we hope to launch the History of Greenwich Park website and explain its purpose.

WHERE ARE YOUR OLD PHOTOGRAPHS?

The Friends History Research Group are looking for photographs of Greenwich Park in the 50s and 60s and before – there must be someone out there with reminders of days out in Greenwich – did the Park look much different from what it looks now? Have a look through your albums – we'd love to see them so get in touch – email: cnbevan@hotmail.com There must be lots of memories and some great stories.

"The Complete Guide to Greenwich Park" by Chris Hawkins



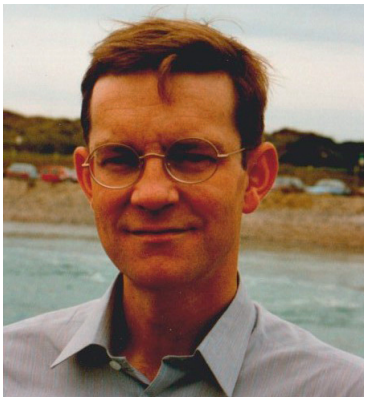
The Newsletter is not known for its book reviews but this new guide by Chris Hawkins has much to recommend it. Just enough accurate information to help you understand the Park, its history, geography, ecology – anything in fact. It is available from the Visitor Centre/Old Royal Naval College shop. And there is a website at www.myguidedwalk.com/greenwichpark which is very worthwhile. Chris is a member of our History Research Group where he is continuing his research.

ANNUAL LECTURE

Thursday, 12 May 2022, 7.30 for 8.00pm

JONATHAN CAUSER

A VIRTUAL WALK IN GREENWICH PARK



We are delighted to welcome Jonathan Causer as the speaker at our Annual Lecture this year. Jonathan is the Chairman of the Arts Society Blackheath and will be looking back through time at the people and events which have shaped the park that we see today.

Jonathan will guide us from the Blackheath Gate towards Queen Caroline's Bath, Ranger's House, The Observatory, Queen Elizabeth's Oak, Vanbrugh Gate and views of the Old Royal Naval College. With chapters from history including a fifteenth century Fredo Corleone, Ignatius Sancho, General Wolfe, Haydn, Henry Moore, balloon disasters, an inefficient anarchist, railways and the Snow Queen, Jonathan will excite and inform us. Join us in the King William Lecture Theatre, room 315, at the Old Royal Naval College. Ticket price £10 to include a glass of wine before the lecture. Booking form enclosed or book online at our website: www.friendsofgreenwichpark.org.uk

STORM EUNICE:

For the first time for a very long time the Park was closed, thanks to Storm Eunice, on Friday 18 February. Thankfully the damage was not extensive though there was damage to half a dozen trees, including the loss of a plane tree by the boating lake and several limbs off the large blue cedar on Crooms Hill. As usual the Flower Garden bore the brunt where several cedars lost limbs, some caught up in branches. This area remained closed for longer while it was made safe.

ROAD CLOSURE:

The road through the Park has been closed now for more than a year. The Friends have always supported the closure of this road and continue to do so. It greatly enhances the peace and tranquillity of the Park to the benefit of all users and it is hoped that the closure will now be in place permanently.

TOILET CHARGES – REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR CREDIT/DEBIT CARDS:

Despite complaints, cashless payment for the loos in Greenwich Park will remain. During the Covid crisis there were health and safety issues about the use of coins but we understand there were also problems with the change machines being vandalised. The decision has therefore been taken to keep the cashless system across all the Royal Parks.

RESERVOIR:

Some of you may have seen the renovation work on the railings and coping stones around the reservoir in the Park. This is possible because of a grant from Thames Water and should be completed by the end of April. The area will be maintained as a place for wildlife to flourish and it is hoped the new railings will deter vandals.

AN EXCITING PROGRAMME OF CONCERTS COMING THIS SUMMER

We are organising and funding a terrific series of concerts in the Park this summer.We kick off earlier than usual, on Sunday 5 June, with a special concert at the bandstand to celebrate both the **Queen's Platinum Jubilee** and our own **30th anniversary** of the establishment of the Friends of Greenwich Park. We are delighted to welcome a band new to the Park, Tequila Brass, who play the upbeat, summery music of Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass, ideally suited to the occasion. This promises to be an outstanding event and we hope that many of you are able to join us in this celebration, bringing your picnics with you. This concert will be from 3pm to 5pm. Note it in your diaries.

Photo: Roger Stephens

Next up will be our renowned Midsummer Jazz concert on **Sunday 26 June**. This takes place in the Observatory Garden from 12.30pm to 3pm, and features for the first time the fabulous South London Jazz Orchestra, who many of you will know from their previous performances at the bandstand. This is a ticketed event – tickets purchased in advance are just £5 – and booking details can be found on the booking form and flyer included with this Newsletter. Numbers in the Garden are limited, so book early. And do bring a picnic with you, though there will be a bar and refreshment stalls.

During July and August, we will again be staging our popular Bandstand Concerts. These will run on all Sundays from **3 July until 28 August**, finishing on Bank Holiday **Monday 29 August**, when we welcome another exciting band new to the Park, the Midnight Bluez Band. All Bandstand Concerts start at 3pm and end at 5pm. The full bandstand programme is included on the enclosed flyer.

Dates for Your Diary - Friends Events

Bird Walk: meet inside the Blackheath Gate**
Sunday, 27 March *8.30am*

Guided Tree Walk: meet at the Blackheath Gate (only available to members who book on the FoGP website)
Saturday, 23 April *12.45pm*
Sunday, 24 April *10.30am*

"Drop-In"/Family Wildlife Activity Afternoon outside the Wildlife Hut*
Saturday, 30 April *1 pm – 4pm*

International Dawn Chorus Walk: meet outside the Blackheath Gate (only available to members who book on the FoGP website)
Sunday, 1 May 4am

Annual Lecture: King William Lecture Theatre, room 315, University of Greenwich. £10 including a glass of wine
Thursday, 12 May *7.30 for 8pm*

29th AGM: Howe Lecture Theatre, Queen Anne Building, University of Greenwich
Monday, 16 May *7.30 for 8pm*

"Drop-In"/Family Wildlife Activity afternoon outside the Wildlife Hut*
Saturday, 28 May *1 pm – 4pm*

Bird Walk: meet at the Blackheath Gate**
Sunday, 29 May *8.30 am*

Queen's Platinum Jubilee/Friends 30th Anniversary Bandstand Concert. Around Bandstand
Sunday, 5 June *3pm – 5pm*

"Drop-in"/Family Wildlife Activity afternoon outside the Wildlife Hut*
Saturday, 25 June *1pm – 4pm*

Midsummer Jazz. Music and Picnic in the Observatory Garden
Tickets £5
Sunday, 26 June *12.30 – 3pm*

Bandstand Concerts, around the Bandstand
Every Sunday in July and August and August Bank Holiday.
3pm – 5pm

"Drop-In"/Family Wildlife Activity afternoon outside the Wildlife Hut*
Saturday, 30 July *1pm – 4pm*

Bird Walk: meet inside the Blackheath Gate**
Sunday, 31 July *8.30 am*

* At the Drop-Ins all activities are free and there is no need to book. The Wildlife Hut is near the south end of the lake in the Flower Garden. The Drop-Ins are organised by the Friends Wildlife Group on behalf of the Royal Parks and provide the chance for children and young people to find out about wildlife in Greenwich Park.

** Bird Walks are led by Julia Holland. Meet inside the Blackheath Gate. Binoculars would be very helpful. The Bird Walks are free to everyone and there is no need to book.

Greenwich Park Revealed events

Teddy Bears Picnic **in Playground**
Wednesday, 6 April *12 noon – 4pm*
And lots more events, particularly for children. Go to the Greenwich Park website at www.royalparks.org.uk where there are details of many more events for children in the Park this summer.

And Finally: Don't forget your Discounts: Cafés in the Park, Blackheath Eyecare Opticians, The Boating Lake in the Park, Café Rouge, Greenwich, Davy's Wine Shop, jdm Estate Agents and Waterstones, Greenwich all have special discounts for our members – see details on the website at www.friendsofgreenwichpark.org.uk and remember to show your membership card to benefit from any offer.

Friends of Greenwich Park
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Vice-Chairman and Wildlife Group: Sue Yates, 34 Hyde Vale, London, SE10 8QH Tel: 020 8692 1760
Secretary: Christine Bevan, 52 Greenwich Park Street, SE10 9LT Tel: 020 8853 2150
Membership Secretary: Fran Tyler, 51 Lock Chase, London, SE3 9HB Tel: 020 8852 9540 tylerfrantom@btinternet.com
Annual subscription: UK £5; overseas £10. Cheques to Friends of Greenwich Park with sae please, and sent to the Membership Secretary, or pay online via PayPal at the Friends' website: www.friendsofgreenwichpark.org.uk
All enquiries to: info@friendsofgreenwichpark.org.uk

Greenwich Park (Tel: 0300 061 2380) is one of London's eight Royal Parks. The others are Bushy Park, The Green Park, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, Regent's Park and Primrose Hill, Richmond Park and St James's Park. All have links with former royal palaces or hunting grounds. Between them they cover 2083 ha. (5000 acres) of historic parkland. The Royal Parks also manages Brompton Cemetery. In Greenwich Park there are police phone boxes at St Mary's Gate and at Blackheath Gate. In an emergency dial 999; for other calls Tel: 020 7161 9740.

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