



FRIENDS *of* RICHMOND PARK

*Protecting Richmond Park's peace and
natural beauty for future generations*

AUTUMN 2014



Autumn and winter wildlife

Isabella Plantation project

Ponds and streams update

Pembroke Lodge news

Friends 2015 calendar...

Welcome

...to this issue, looking back over summer in the Park and forward to winter and Christmas. Thank you once more to all our contributors and to our proof-reader, Sally Wood. We would still welcome more help or someone to take over, particularly from anyone with experience of editing or Quark DTP software on a Mac.

Marilyn Mason, editor@frp.org.uk



Richmond Park Calendar 2015

The Friends of Richmond Park have produced a full colour calendar for 2015 offering some amazing images of Richmond Park. It is now available at the Visitor Centre.



Copies can also be purchased from Holly Lodge reception Monday to Friday 9am-4pm. It is priced at £5.99 (cash only). The Visitor Centre also has Christmas cards on sale at only £3.00 for a pack of 5, or 80p each.



Our thanks go to all the photographers who kindly donated their work to the cards and calendar.

All profit from calendar and card sales will go to help conservation projects in the Park

Cover pictures

Front cover: A Hobby in the Park by John Few

Back cover: Autumn Whinchat, a painting by Jan Wilczur

Holly Lodge Centre Christmas Concert

Tuesday 2 December, 7.30pm

The concert will be at St Mary Magdalene Church (Richmond Parish Church) in the centre of Richmond behind the shops of George Street. The concert features the Richmond Rock Choir and the choirs of Clarendon School and Sheen Mount School, and is hosted by TV presenter Adrian Mills, with Claire Tomalin and other celebrities reading their favourite poems and other pieces. Tickets are £20 (children under 16, £5), including wine and mince pies. Last year the surprise guest was the Queen (or at least it looked like her) reading her favourite Christmas story. It should be great fun!

Tickets are available from the Centre on 07964 213 635 or 020 8940 8730 or event@thehollylodgecentre.org.uk.

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Please pass it on to a friend or recycle it when you have finished with it.

Cycling and cars

Until now, I have avoided writing about cycling and cars in the Park. It's partly because the role of the Friends is protecting the Park, not arbitrating between Park users, and partly (I confess) out of cowardice in the face of such a contentious issue. However, the recent death of a cyclist (see page 6), the almost daily incidents, and the rising level of complaints have changed my mind.

The rapid growth in road cycling started five years ago, accelerated with the Olympics, and is still growing. A recent count by Friends' volunteers showed over 1,000 cyclists an hour passing Sheen Cross at the Saturday morning peak. With it has come increasing friction between cyclists and car drivers. Car drivers complain about cyclists exceeding the speed limit down hills and overtaking them dangerously, sometimes on both sides. They feel that if anything happens it's the driver who will be blamed. They also complain about cyclists riding two abreast, which makes overtaking difficult.

Cyclists complain that drivers regularly speed and that they overtake with little room and then cut in, forcing cyclists to take avoiding action.

Spend ten minutes by one of the Park's roads on a Saturday morning and you will see that all these complaints are justified. I drive, cycle and walk in the Park and I know the irritation and intimidation I feel as a driver with cyclists crowding me on all sides; if I make a mistake I might kill someone. I also know the mix of adrenalin and fear I feel as a cyclist with drivers close; if they make a mistake it's me who will be hurt. But in spite of these complaints, there are few collisions between cars and bikes; the vast majority of incidents are cyclists coming off their bikes with no one else involved.

In all of this, the most vulnerable users – pedestrians, horses and wildlife – suffer. Ten years ago, cars and cyclists stopped for pedestrians and deer. Today they hardly ever do, and if a car does stop, cyclists will carry on. Incidents of pedestrians, horses and deer being hit are mercifully rare but they are increasingly intimidated and need more protection.



For the last five years, I have been involved, through the Friends and on the Richmond Park Police Panel, in trying to find a solution to these conflicts. There isn't one, or at least we have not found it. More or higher speed-bumps risk more cyclists coming off their bikes and ending up in hospital. A one-way system could just allow both cars and cyclists to go faster. Two hours on a Saturday morning for cyclists alone and they would go faster – and the Park become a velodrome. More education? 95% of drivers and cyclists are regulars and know the rules and risks.

Some smaller things have been done: new signs, an "On the Road" leaflet, speed bumps – and so on. But these are nibbling at the problem. The ultimate solution is just more consideration for other users, and especially for the vulnerable. At one time, I thought that as cars and cyclists got accustomed to each other, they would become more tolerant. That hasn't happened. Let's have another go, please.

*Ron Crompton
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Schoolboy's stunning shots chosen for Friends' calendar

Mary Pollard



17-year-old Jack Barton (pictured above) is the latest young photographer to earn a place in the Richmond Park calendar with his stunning images.

Based in Wallington, Jack is a self-taught photographer whose interest in wildlife photography was triggered when viewing the spectacular stag rut in Richmond Park. He has already won awards for his work, and is hoping to pursue a career in wildlife photo-journalism.

He tells us: "As someone leading a hectic life in such a large city, I feel it important to have somewhere to escape to. Richmond Park is somewhere I can go to enjoy myself and relax. The Park is such a beautiful, natural and bio-diverse place, rare to find in a city like London. It's home to many hundreds of important and threatened species such as the stag beetle and skylark, which is why it is so important we conserve it for future generations. Personally, through my photography, I hope to expose the wonder of the nature that calls Richmond Park its home, and inspire others to appreciate it as much as I do."

The Friends are keen to support young wildlife photographers, and have

featured several of them in our calendars, greetings cards and on our Facebook page. They are the future generation who will benefit from the conservation of Richmond Park, so it is fabulous that they are engaged with us in our work.

You can read more about Jack and see his impressive portfolio at <http://jackbartonphotography.zenfolio.com/about.html>. The *Richmond and Twickenham Times* featured Jack and the Friends' calendar in October.

The calendar is now on sale at the Park Visitor Centre by Pembroke Lodge, which is open from 11.00am to 3.00pm daily (subject to volunteer availability), and also from Holly Lodge Reception, from 9.00am to 4.00pm on weekdays. At only £5.99 it is a perfect Christmas gift!

John Cloake

Max Lankester

We were sorry to learn of the death in July of FRP member and local historian John Cloake at the age of 89. John was born in Wimbledon, but from 1962 he and his American wife, Molli, lived in Richmond, first in Ormond Road and then at 4 The Terrace, Richmond Hill. He was able to pursue his interest in local history virtually full-time after retiring from the Diplomatic Service in 1980. (John had been Ambassador to Bulgaria from 1976.)

John contributed enormously to the life of Richmond; he was the first chairman of the Richmond Local History Society, which he had initially formed as a sub-committee of the Richmond Society. He was also the founder of the Museum of Richmond and first Chair of its Board of Trustees.

John's meticulously researched books on local history topics are an invaluable resource; they include "Richmond in

Old Photographs" (1990), "Richmond Past: A Visual History of Richmond, Kew, Petersham and Ham" (1991), and the two-volume "Palaces and Parks of Richmond and Kew" (1995 and 1996). The latter contains some highly detailed material about Richmond Park, including the initial land assembly in the 1630s and lists of the occupants of the various Park lodges over the years.

When the Friends' "Guide to Richmond Park" was being written, John was generous with his time, supplying background notes and checking our draft text.

John Cecil Cloake: CMG 1997; Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London 1978; Honorary D.Litt. Kingston University 2004.



Teresa Grafton

In July, two of the Discoverers' team attended an assembly at Heathmere Primary School, Roehampton, and talked to staff and children. This marks the start of a long-term objective to take Discoverers and the "Tread Lightly" message into schools and the community.

The Autumn Bat Watch took place at the beginning of October. This year's bat event was members-only to encourage families to join FRP. It was well-attended and the evening turned out to be clear with plenty of bats around. As usual, this activity was led by Philip Briggs of the London Bat Group (pictured on the right with the group). This is a popular event and we may run two next year. Other activities to be repeated in 2015 include the Summer Isabella Trail and Picnic and a workshop featuring Susanna Ramsey's Nature Collection.

At least part of the attraction of the Bat Watch is the thrill of being in the Park after dark. Last March we ran "Star Count" in conjunction with National Astronomy Week and the annual Campaign for Dark Skies Light Pollution Survey, and we would like to trial some other after-dark events. This could include looking at the Park's moths and other nocturnal wild life. After Ron Crompton's piece about the Park night sky in the last newsletter, it seems that there is some enthusiasm for more stargazing events. The problem is, of course, the pervasive light pollution. With the return of longer nights it may be possible to find places in the Park where this is less of an issue. After all, there is an astronomy group which meets regularly in Regent's Park, which claims to have the darkest skies in London!

Finally, we want to look at ways of improving Discoverers' publicity and reach, and this will feature strongly in future planning. As always, any FRP members who would like to offer ideas or support are very welcome.



There will be one more activity this year. For details of this and our events programme, see www.discoverers.frp.org.uk or www.facebook.com/thefriendsofrichmondpark or email us at discoverers@frp.org.uk.

New Poet's Corner

Poet's Corner, at the north end of Pembroke Lodge gardens, has been looking sad for the last few years, with the Thomson board deteriorating and its gold lettering fading. A new Poet's Corner has now been created on the other side of the main path, funded by the Friends and the Visitor Centre and a generous donation from the Vachell family in memory of Wendy Vachell.



The new Poet's Corner has a regilded board, with the ode to James Thomson and his masterpiece "The Seasons" now installed in a completely new oak frame, and three curved benches (pictured above) made from reclaimed teak, used because the oak used in the first versions kept splitting when curved. The benches are inscribed with the words "A poor life this, if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare".

James Thomson was a nationally famous poet and writer who wrote the words for "Rule Britannia" as part of a masque performed in 1740. Born and educated in Scotland, he moved to London aged 25 and in later years lived in Richmond, where he is buried.

Tragic death of cyclist

On Sunday 24th August a 40-year-old cyclist came off his bike while descending Broomfield Hill, was airlifted to hospital and died there. It appears that no one else was involved. We will not know what happened until the

inquest, which may take a few months. Our thoughts go out to his family and all who knew him.

Over the summer, there were two to three ambulance call-outs a week to cycling incidents in the Park, usually to cyclists coming off their bikes at speed. Two of the incidents could have been fatal, involving a cyclist coming off their bike and a collision between a cyclist and a pedestrian. There was also an incident where a cyclist had to wait with a broken collarbone and neck injuries for two hours until an ambulance arrived. Please help by bringing to the attention of all cyclists the dangers of riding in the Park, especially at speed.

Tenors Un Limited Park performance



Tenors Un Limited, the "Rat Pack of Opera" and patrons of the Holly Lodge Centre, gave free 20-minute previews of their new show by the gates of Pembroke Lodge on two days in early September. The impromptu audience, including groups of disabled people, was spellbound. Later that month they appeared at Richmond Theatre, with songs from Puccini to "West Side Story" to Bob Dylan; part of the show's takings went to the Centre.

Winter work

Work was due this winter to improve Sheen Gate car park and further improve Pembroke Lodge and Robin Hood Gate car parks. Sheen Gate will

be resurfaced and be better screened from the Park. Pembroke Lodge will have some more resurfacing at the south end, and better screening; it may also be extended southward, offset by closing part of the north end where parking is badly compacting a veteran oak; at present there are not enough funds for a complete resurfacing. Robin Hood Gate will have the water run-off directed into a nearby stream and thence to Beverley Brook.

Crime in the Park

In August the *Evening Standard* reported a new map, compiled by the Wildlife Crime Unit and the charity World Animal Protection, showing a "series of bizarre and cruel wildlife crimes" in London. Police reported the largest number of offences (26) in the borough of Richmond. Crimes in the Park included a dog chasing a £7,000 breeding stag into the path of a car – the injured deer had to be destroyed and the dog's owner was fined £1,000. And a young boy, thought to be eight or nine, was reported stalking deer in a London park (Richmond again?) armed with a crossbow.

Green Flag for the Park

For the seventh year running, Richmond Park has been awarded a Green Flag in recognition of achieving the national standard for parks and open spaces in England and Wales. It reflects positively on the excellent work carried out by The Royal Parks staff, contractors, concessions and volunteers.

Ride London wedding

The Ride London cycling event passed through the Park on Sunday 10th August. There was torrential rain at times, forcing many riders to stop, and washing grit from the horse tracks, Tamsin Trail and grassland onto the road, causing accidents and burst tyres. One of the organisers said that

conditions started out awful and then became horrendous! In spite of the weather, nearly all 21,000 cyclists completed the 85-mile course (it was to be 100 miles but the section around Box Hill was abandoned). Two participants, Lisa Russell and Gary Watson, stopped off at Pembroke Lodge at 8.00am to get married and have a quick glass of champagne, before resuming the race, all filmed by the BBC.

As last year, Park staff did a magnificent job in preventing the deer from encroaching on the course and keeping the roads open in the thunderstorms. There were very few spectators and the barriers protecting the acid grassland and veteran trees were largely superfluous.

Ham and Gallows Ponds

Friends and Park Management thought that the treatment of invasive weeds and de-silting of the Ham Ponds done over the last year as part of the Ponds and Streams Programme was the end of the matter. However, while the work has eradicated Crassula and Canadian pondweed, and Ham Gate Pond is clear, there are still substantial traces of Nuttall's pondweed in Ham Dip Pond so more work will be done this winter to try to clear it. Gallows Pond (up the slope on the right as you come from Kingston Gate towards Ham Cross) also suffers from invasive aquatic weeds and will be tackled this winter. It is likely to involve digging a new temporary pond to contain the water while the existing one is drained and sprayed; once the existing pond is clear the water will be re-directed to it.

There's more on Park ponds and streams on the following pages.

With thanks to Ron Crompton and Park Management for news items and photos.

A new pond for the Park

Michael Davison

Much-travelled adventurer though he is, when David Attenborough was asked recently by a magazine interviewer to name his favourite spot on the entire globe, he answered unequivocally: "Richmond Park". Sir David's devotion to the Park was never seen to better advantage than when he appeared at Robin Hood Gate on a damp morning in July to inaugurate the latest addition to the Park's myriad attractions: a brand-new pond.

Sir David delighted a waiting crowd by arriving in a horse-drawn carriage. Standing by a newly established information board, he thanked all those who had played a part in planning and

creating the new Pond, which he was honoured to know was to bear his name.

After cutting the celebratory tape Sir David and friends proceeded to a new bench set beside the pond and bearing an

inscription he had chosen himself: "It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see" – a quotation from the American naturalist Henry David Thoreau. Here Sir David sat and posed for photographs with representatives of The Royal Parks, the Richmond Park Charitable Trust, Healthy Planet and the Friends of Richmond Park, all of

whom had helped to fund the Pond. As a Patron of the Friends, Sir David found a particularly welcome companion on the bench in Wendy Macaulay, the sole surviving member of the group who founded the Friends 53 years ago.

Attenborough Pond, elongated in shape, is fed by an open channel from Martin's Pond, a sequestered, tree-shaded spot higher up the hill towards Pen Ponds, and by water from the slopes of Broomfield Hill. It drains, via a new sluice gate and pipe, under the road into Beverley Brook. Perhaps more important than the Pond's visual appeal is the new freshwater habitat it provides for a range of species including invertebrates, amphibians, birds and bats. It will also help to retain water in the Park, counteracting climate change and allowing the water to seep gradually down into the underground aquifers.

The Pond duly inaugurated, Sir David was driven to the nearby Beverley Brook where he spoke with passion in support of the appeal to raise money for restoration work on the Brook.

Even now our Patron's day in the Park was not quite finished. As he was being driven away across the grass he spotted a party of schoolchildren with their teacher walking downhill towards him. He stopped the car, and spent five minutes chatting to the children about the wonders of the Park. He made their day – as he had already made ours.

Beverley Brook appeal raises £10,000

Ron Crompton

The public appeal for the restoration of Beverley Brook has now raised over £10,000 towards its target of £16,000. We expect some work to start this winter, with the completion of the project dependent on the funds available. Beverley Brook runs through Richmond Park for two kilometres, entering by

Robin Hood Gate and exiting near Roehampton Gate. Its name derives from the beavers that lived in it in medieval times. Over the last 150 years, the Brook has been straightened and widened to take away water efficiently from upstream flood plains and sewage works. The original naturally meandering water-course became an ecologically sterile channel. As a result, the Brook lacks marginal vegetation and has few habitats for fish, birds and other wildlife. Some sections are over-shadowed by trees and the banks are heavily trampled and disturbed by deer and dogs.

The restoration work uses in-channel changes to create a more natural flow and a variety of new habitats to support a diverse fauna and flora. These changes include: flow deflectors, pinning logs to the riverbed to imitate a natural channel; fish shelters and spawning grounds, created with branches and gravel; Kingfisher nest tunnels, built into the riverbank; willow faggots, laid in the channel, to protect and stabilise the banks; pollarding of willow trees to reduce the overhang and shade; fencing along some stretches to protect against deer and dogs.

The total cost of the work is £30-35,000, of which half – £16,000 – is being raised through a public appeal. The Friends of Richmond Park, the Visitor Centre and the conservation charity Healthy Planet will provide match-funding for the other half. So far, over

£10,000 has been raised for the appeal, with a combination of a few large donations and many smaller ones. We hope to raise the remaining £6,000 within the next three months, so that the full project can be completed this winter.

"Phantom" pond

Ron Crompton



This year a pond appeared where Beverley Brook crosses the road from Roehampton Gate to Sheen Cross. In this summer's hot weather the deer loved it (*see photo above*). The "pond" has appeared in previous years but never as large or for as long as this year. Old maps show a pond there, but it seemed to have dried or silted up. However, the greater winter rains of the last five years have caused an accumulation of water there. The water has then been held in place by the high banks of Beverley Brook, which have been built up in the past to allow large flows of water to avoid flooding in urban areas further upstream. Maybe a proper pond should be created there!

Please help us to reach our target! You can donate:

- online, by credit/debit card at <https://mydonate.bt.com/events/beverleybrook/186810>. Please remember to tick the Gift Aid box.
- by bank transfer to our "Ponds & Streams" account at Barclays, sort code 20-72-17, account number 43324680.
- by cheque, made payable to "Ponds & Streams" and sent to David McLaughlin, Honorary Treasurer, Friends of Richmond Park, 5 Crescent Rd, Kingston KT2 7RD
- in collection boxes at the Park Visitor Centre and at Holly Lodge.

There is more information on our website at www.frp.org.uk/ponds-and-streams.

Bushy and Home Parks now an SSSI

Bushy Park and Home Park (behind Hampton Court Palace) were recently designated as a combined Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) by Natural England. SSSIs cover about 8% of the country and the designation gives legal protection that ensures that the nationally important wildlife and geology of a site is recognised in its management and future use.

The two parks have been designated an SSSI for their “exceptionally large population of ancient and veteran trees, extensive areas of semi-natural lowland dry acid grassland, and their internationally significant populations of rare invertebrates”, similar reasons to those of Richmond Park’s designation. It also says: “A notable feature is the occurrence of a large number of very old hawthorn trees, many of which are festooned with mistletoe”. The Royal Parks and the Friends of Bushy Park have been lobbying for SSSI status for a few years and we congratulate them on achieving it.

Skylarks

As part of the attempt to reverse the decline in Skylarks in the Park, signs and entrance gates were put up around Lawn Field (between Pen Ponds and White Lodge) during the breeding season between March and August, asking walkers to stay on the paths and keep dogs on a lead. There was also a new interpretation board telling the public about the importance of the birds.

Many dog-walkers and others obliged and avoided the area for those months; the police also had a blitz on offenders for the first few weeks. However, observations suggest that compliance was poor on some occasions, especially at weekends. On a sunny Sunday in March a crowd of people

watched a herd of deer and walked all over the Field, including in the bracken which is the most important breeding area in the Park for Reed Buntings, a nationally declining bird.

In the end, only one pair of Skylarks was seen on Lawn Field and they did not seem to breed. In contrast, less frequented areas had good numbers. Crown Field (near Beverley Brook) had up to 11 singing males, some of which paired up and bred, and the Flying Field held four pairs. The increase in numbers suggest the decline was not due to climate change but that human and dog disturbance, particularly at critical times, was a major cause.

Oak Processionary Moth update

Management of Oak Processionary Moth has presented the Park team and volunteer surveyors with their most challenging year yet. More than 40 determined volunteers rose diligently to the task of tagging and recording an unprecedented rise in the number of infested trees. A total of 8,000 nests



This photo of an autumn toadstool in the Park by Max Lankester appeared on the FRP Facebook page with the timely reminder that fungi are essential to the Park's ecology and status as a SSSI, and are part of the deer's winter diet. Their removal is against Park regulations.



were successfully removed during July and August, compared to 3,500 last year, and Park resources were fully stretched during the peak period, with five nest removal teams (see photo above) and accompanying staff and logistical support deployed across the Park. More public information signs were also installed as larger numbers of toxic nests were found close to the ground or low on tree trunks. On a more positive note, there were increased eyewitness accounts of Great Tits predated the nests.

As they plan for 2015 The Royal Parks will face the challenge of controlling this pest while balancing the demands of human and animal safety, biodiversity, tree health and available resources.

Rare earthworm

An ordinary-looking ditch in the Park recently turned up a rarely recorded earthworm species, *Helodrilus oculatus*. There have only been a handful of records of this earthworm in England previously and they have been in broadleaf wet woodland.

Jack Birrell recognised the ditch as the one running from Jubilee Pond to Beverley Brook on the south side of the rugby pitches. His further investigations suggest that the reason the worm is rarely recorded may be because

virtually nobody documents worms so there is very little knowledge of what exists. It sounds like a good opportunity for an amateur enthusiast to make a difference – see the Earthworm Society’s website <http://www.earthwormsoc.org.uk>

Winter birds

Never dismiss winter as a dull bird-watching season, as it can be just as exciting as the rest of the year. Quite apart from the large numbers of water-fowl at Pen Ponds, particularly when the weather is poor, there are always good numbers of Redwing and Fieldfare, the winter thrushes, in the Park. Some resident bird numbers can also be boosted by winter visitors – if you see a flock of Skylarks, they will probably have come from Scandinavia to the UK for the winter; individual birds will be resident local birds.

It is also a good time to see the less common local birds – Kingfishers are more likely to be seen fishing at Pen Ponds and the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker is easier to see in the leafless trees. You will also hear the resident Woodpeckers starting their territorial drumming early in January. If you are very lucky, you might catch a rarity: a couple of years ago I was fortunate enough to see a pair of passage winter swans in flight over the park, either Whoopers or Bewicks – I could not decide which at the time. It is not easy to distinguish them from the local mute swans from a distance, apart from the bill colour, but in flight the winter visitors do not make the distinctive whistling sound of the locals.

If you want to learn more, why not join one of our regular informal birdwatching walks on Friday mornings?

With thanks to Peter Burrows-Smith, Ron Crompton, Gillian Jonasus and Jan Wilczur for updates.

Isabella Plantation *Ron Crompton & Michael Davison*



The Isabella Plantation Access Project work, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, is now complete and the result is looking very attractive, helped by good growing weather this summer. In addition to the new all-weather, wheelchair-accessible pathways, there are new benches (shown in the summer newsletter), new direction signs etched on logs and location signs etched on boarding (*see photos on the left*), and on stone at Thompson's and Still Ponds. The extensive works, prepared by a design team led by Land Use Consultants and previewed in the spring newsletter, also included desilting all three ponds, new waterfalls on the streams, a re-designed disabled users' car park, a new shelter and accessible toilets at Peg's Pond, and a lovely new wooden gazebo at Wilson's Glade (*both pictured below left*).

The improvements to the Isabella Plantation were marked by a tea-time celebration at Peg's Pond on September 3rd. The celebration was attended by representatives of the major funding partners, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Big Lottery Fund, The Royal Parks, and the Friends – who contributed £6,000 as part of their support for the wider Ponds and Streams project. With these major works completed, Richmond Park Manager Simon Richards said, it was now time “to give the Plantation back to the gardeners”.

If you are in the Plantation do make a point of looking out for the new features!

Photos by Ron Crompton and Max Lankester

Pembroke Lodge – and a new heritage centre

Bullets at Pembroke Lodge

Daniel Hearsam

Although my job is never routine, being on the receiving end of two salvos of bullets in one day was a first. Fortunately both were delivered by hand rather than rifle.

First, one of the supervisors in the tearooms, Radek, brought in seven 20th-century bullets, which he had found in the Park near Kingston Gate.

Then I received from John Pledger, a resident of the Park, two mis-shapen metal objects found in trees near White Ash Lodge. During The Royal Park's volunteers' event Simon Richards set a quiz to identify them. The correct answer, from John Lock, was lead musket shot, probably from 18th-century deer hunting. We will never know whether the hunter used a powerful gun or whether he was just a poor shot. Both sets (*pictured above*) are now safely in the Hearsam Collection.

Consultation on new heritage centre

Dr Robert Wood, Hearsam Collection

This summer the Hearsam Collection, in partnership with the Friends, surveyed visitors to the Park to seek their views on proposals to open a new heritage centre in the grounds of Pembroke Lodge. The heritage centre aims to share knowledge and information about the history of the Park and enhance visitor enjoyment and foster community engagement, so the views of the public are vital to its success. In July and August more than 1,000 people were asked their views individually, and a public consultation day attracted more than 250 visitors who were able to find out more about the proposals and express their views.

The consultation found widespread public support (94%) for a heritage



centre, while 91% agreed that the grounds of Pembroke Lodge was the right location for such a building. Most of those surveyed favoured a traditional building design. This is compelling evidence of community support for the project, and the results will form part of the Hearsam Collection's bid for co-funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Hearsam Family in order to design, build and operate the new heritage centre.

Friends' volunteers already staff the Visitor Centre at Pembroke Lodge and are cataloguing and researching material at the Hearsam Collection. These activities will be enhanced by new facilities planned for the heritage centre, and the Friends will have a key role to play in its operation.

World War I exhibition

In the entrance hall of Pembroke Lodge is a small exhibition, “Richmond Park in the First World War”, displaying items from the Hearsam Collection put together by the Collection and the Friends' History Project volunteers. It shows some of the notable things that took place in the Park during the war, including cavalry training, the construction of a large hospital, a top-secret military experiment, and women working on the Home Front. Entry to the exhibition is free and it will be open until December.

Membership and Subscriptions

As previously advised, the annual subscription rates increase from £6 to £10 for individual members, and from £10 to £15 for household members, for all subscriptions renewing for the membership year starting on 1 January 2015. Members will need to amend their current standing orders. All members are also required to complete a new Gift Aid declaration form, where this is appropriate, to comply with recent changes imposed by HMRC. Details are set out in the letter accompanying this newsletter, together with the necessary forms.
Chris Mason

**VOLUNTEER WANTED
to help with design**

We are looking for a volunteer with graphic design experience to design and produce our posters, leaflets, flyers and occasional presentation materials for our various activities, including: the Visitor Centre, fairs, conservation projects and public information. It does not include our newsletter or electronic media, which are handled separately. Mary Pollard has done our graphics for many years and is now concentrating on our Facebook page and calendars; she will help in a full hand-over. If you are interested please contact Mary to discuss what the role involves at frpfacebook@hotmail.co.uk.

Queries about Friends?

See www.frp.org.uk, or contact secretary@frp.org.uk.

Queries about Park management?

If you have any observations or concerns about the way the Park is being managed please contact Park Manager Simon Richards at The Royal Parks, Holly Lodge, Richmond Park, Richmond, Surrey, TW10 5HS. Tel: 0300 061 2200
Email: richmond@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk
Website: www.royalparcs.gov.uk

Police non-emergency telephone number: 101**Trustees**

Chairman: Ron Crompton

Vice-Chairmen: Peter Burrows-Smith (Conservation & Ecology; Walks; Volunteering, with Sheila Hamilton), Sheila Hamilton (Newsletter Mailing; Volunteering, with Peter Burrows-Smith)

Other Trustees: Nick Coleman (Website, Campaigning), Teresa Grafton (Education), Richard Gray (Marketing), P J Greeves (Events), Rachel Hirschler (History Project), David McLaughlin (Hon. Treasurer), Chris Mason (Membership), John Peake (Visitor Centre), Richard Polson (Hon. Secretary)

Vice-Presidents: Brian Baker, Richard Carter, John Collier, Max Lankester, Douglas Reynolds

President: vacant

Patrons: Sir David Attenborough, Baroness Kramer of Richmond Park, Lord Rix CBE, Dame Jacqueline Wilson

Friends' walks and courses**WALKS**

All welcome. Most, though not all, walks are on Saturdays and start at 10.00am from a car park.

Please phone Peter Burrows-Smith on 020 8392 9888 in advance if you need special support or help with the walk, and please keep dogs under control.

* **COURSES** are typically a 30-minute talk at Pembroke Lodge followed by a two-hour walk. Courses are for members of the Friends only and places must be booked – please contact Sue on 0208 940 9114 or sue.gibbons@npl.co.uk. Coffee/tea provided. There will be no charge.

See also

www.frp.org.uk.

There are also free guided walks in Isabella Plantation led by Park staff throughout the year. These walks last about one and a half hours and are publicised on Park notice boards.

Date	Time	What and where
6 Dec	10.00am	WALK: meet at Kingston Gate car park
26 Dec	10.00am	WALK: Boxing Day , meet at Roehampton Gate car park
3 Jan	10.00am	WALK: meet at Sheen Gate car park
17 Jan	10.00am	COURSE: Introduction to Birdwatching
7 Feb	10.00am	WALK: meet at Pembroke Lodge car park
21 Feb	10.00am	COURSE: Birds of Richmond Park
7 Mar	10.00am	WALK: meet at Robin Hood gate car park
21 Mar	10.00am	COURSE: Spring Birds and Bird Song
4 April	10.00am	WALK: meet at Roehampton Gate car park
+		
2nd & 4th Fridays each month	9.30am	INFORMAL BIRD WALKS: meet at Pen Ponds coffee kiosk

Other dates for your diary

Tues 2 Dec	7.30pm	Holly Lodge Centre Christmas Concert (see page 2)
Sat 18 April		Friends 2015 AGM at the usual venue of King's House School in Richmond – further details with the spring newsletter.



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*Richmond Park is a National Nature Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest
and a Special Area of Conservation*