

# Pembroke Lodge – and a new heritage centre

## Bullets at Pembroke Lodge

*Daniel Hearsom*

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 Hearsom Collection.

## Consultation on new heritage centre

*Dr Robert Wood, Hearsom Collection*

This summer the Hearsom 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 Hearsom Collection's bid for co-funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Hearsom 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 Hearsom 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 Hearsom 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.