



CHISWICK HOUSE FRIENDS

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2014

Charity No 289907

Patron: Lord Burlington



Our Grey Heron - tallest resident of the gardens?

In some cultures, the heron is a symbol of balance and the ability to progress and evolve.

We certainly face challenges of eventual reduced funding from English Heritage for the House, and the need to adapt and change. However we are determined to play our part in continuing to support the CHG Trust in as balanced a manner as we can!

George Nissen

Interview with the new Garden Manager



Geraldine King, new Estate Garden Manager

Geraldine King has worked in horticulture for 23 years, having been an apprentice with Luton Council and studied at Cannington College. She has worked for London Boroughs for 15 years, firstly for the Royal Parks and then at The West Ham City of London Park, where her team supplied at one time 250,000 bedding plants a year to other London boroughs.

She has been for 15 years a judge for Green Flag, and for London in Bloom, where she has just won an award for outstanding contribution to the campaign for 2014.

CHF: What are you passionate about?

GK: I took this job because I could imagine nothing more delightful than managing a Grade I Historic Garden. My background has been very much in the development of urban heritage parks, and I saw this role as a natural progression.

CHF: What will your goals be?

GK: My key goal is to preserve Chiswick to high horticultural standards - meaning keeping it clean and neat but also returning the planting to the proportions intended by Burlington and Kent, and removing the plants not intended, especially in the 18th century gardens.

In layout terms, there is an important progression across the Garden from the formal area around the House, to the semi-formal Rosary garden, to the woodlands of the Northern Wilderness.

There is also a need to provide a balance between the historical and horticultural restoration and the needs of a modern society, such as sport, recreation, dog-walking and visiting. For instance, the Kitchen Garden plays a key role in educating and engaging the whole community, especially the young people. This needs to be preserved and developed.

CHF: How will you do this?

GK: I am fortunate in having the support of an amazing array of volunteers and a fantastic team of gardeners. We also have experts in landscape practice in the form of our contractor Gavin Jones.

CHF: How do you see the role of the Friends?

GK: An effective Friends group is vital to any park, and this is certainly true of the Chiswick House Friends, who have provided more than 30 years of support and background funding for the House and Gardens. The Friends' most recent support has been for the Melon House restoration and the new wood chipper (which are mentioned below). But I have also enjoyed the Opera and the Dog Show, two highly entertaining community events led by the Friends.

Chiswick House and Gardens Trust News

Management

The Trust is working closely with English Heritage to finalise a local management agreement to unify the operation of the estate. This will not take place until English Heritage has changed its status and become an independent charity. The timing for this is still being worked out.

Wood Chipper



The Friends have donated £9000 towards this wood chipper, for which we are extremely grateful. It will save us money as we will not need to remove branches from the site, and the chippings will provide a good ground base. It will assist generally with waste management on the estate.

Weddings and Events

This year we have hosted the largest number of weddings to date – eighteen in total. Already nineteen brides and bridegrooms have booked the House and the Burlington Pavilion for 2015. The Trust is keen to promote the House, the Café and the Conservatory for venue hire over the festive season and the camellia show. The Friends can assist by letting their friends, business or workplace know that there are so many lovely spaces in the gardens to host an occasion.

Melon House Progress



Progress with the Melon House

The brickwork has now been completed as part of the restoration of the Melon House. The bespoke glass frame and benching will be completed by Christmas.

Kitchen Garden

The Trust has extended the opening of the Kitchen Garden to enable more visitors to appreciate this special corner (4 acres!) of the estate and also to meet the volunteers and William Rallison, who work so hard cultivating the produce. The garden is now open to the public on Tuesday and Thursdays, when the volunteers are present, as well as on the monthly open days during the summer season. More park visitors are becoming aware that flowers, fruit and vegetables from the garden are sold from the produce cart outside the café on Tuesdays and Thursdays 11.30am-1pm and then in front of the kitchen garden until 3pm. Do please come and buy your vegetables from your local kitchen garden!

The Kitchen Garden season will end in fiery style at the Pumpkin Party on Saturday 25th October at 4pm in the Western Walled Garden. Before this there will be drawing in the Conservatory, part of the national Big Draw Day. Please bring your children and grandchildren.

Late Camellia



The very warm dry weather in September has fooled at least one camellia bud into a second blooming this year - see our picture above from late September!

Kingfisher



The newest Garden resident?

Bird-life continues to thrive around the lake - it now looks as though a kingfisher pair has taken up residence in the southern pond, see above.

Opera 2014

The Trust would like to congratulate and thank the Friends Opera Committee for a very impressive and successful season this summer. Nicki Thomas and Clare O'Brien look forward to joining the committee for the Opera 2015 and working with the committee to ensure another enjoyable year.

Chiswick House and Gardens Trust

Registered Charity no 1109239

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Opera – Barber of Seville and Cosi fan Tutte

Focus Opera treated audiences to two evenings of spectacular opera this summer.



Performing for the second year at Chiswick, Focus Opera staged the ever-popular operas, The Barber of Seville and Cosi fan Tutte. With a young international cast these enchanting dramas were brought to life with their exciting and beautiful melodies.

An audience of 900 gathered each evening on the lawns at the rear of Chiswick House to enjoy the performances and picnic throughout: a fantastic setting with the House and Gardens looking their best. Food stalls added to the festive atmosphere and, as they have done so many times in the past, Fullers provided their welcome drinks stall. We thank them for their continuing support, and also BMW who helped make this a special anniversary. Thanks also to the hard working Opera committee who made it happen and are now beginning to plan for 2015!

Do check our website for more information, and for dates and performances in 2015 – look out for the discount for CH Friends and group bookings!

10th Anniversary Dog Show



Ant McPartlin judging among a sea of happy faces

Blessed with lovely weather and a beautiful location, the 10th Anniversary show was a great success, with over 450 dogs and 3500 humans

enjoying the day: a true community event. From Naughtiest Dog, Benjy (who promptly ate his winner's rosette) to Waggiest Tail, Gonzo, it was a dog lover's paradise.



Perhaps I can just get there...

Best in Show went to Cynthia Brown's Teddy, an exceptionally cute corgi who also won Best Puppy.



Sometimes all the standing can be just too much...

The show was closed by George Nissen, Chairman of the Friends, who thanked everyone concerned for putting on such a wonderful day.

The show was organised by the Friends, with all proceeds going to the House and Gardens. Our thanks to all the judges, sponsors, stallholders and especially to our wonderful volunteers!

2014 Events

Oct 25: 4 - 6.30pm Pumpkin Party, Kitchen Garden
Free tours of Chiswick House Gardens during October; meet in front of the House on:

Oct 8, 15, 22, 29 - Wednesdays, 11.30am start

Oct 12, 26 - Sundays, 3.30pm start.

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