



CHISWICK HOUSE FRIENDS

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2015

Charity No 289907

Patron: Lord Burlington



2015 Annual Dog Show

A marvellous time was had by all at our eleventh Dog Show. Inside this newsletter, we write about this, the Opera and our latest Third Runway campaign, with other news and events.

George Nissen

CHF and Heathrow Expansion

Seven years ago, when a third runway for Heathrow was first seriously proposed, the CHF Trustees recognised the potential impact on the House and Gardens and commissioned a full-page advert in the Times, which was published in February 2008. This attracted considerable media and public attention, and shortly after that the Conservative Party pledged to oppose a third runway with David Cameron's famous "no ifs, no buts, no third runway" commitment. On the whole our members were supportive of this action, although a few did question whether it was an appropriate use of our funds.

Today, we seem to be back to square one, with the Davis Commission recommending a third runway as its preferred option and the Government pledged to make a decision this autumn. We again took the view that a quarter of a million more flights per year, on a track that would take most of these even more directly over the site, would adversely affect the peace and tranquillity of the Gardens, increase pollution and spoil the events and the revenue from them which we will increasingly need. Examples are weddings, and the annual opera which has raised most of our income to date, relying entirely on a date when evening landings are directed to the southern runway. With a third runway - or even an extended northern runway - approach flight-paths overhead every 90 seconds without alternation would drown the music and make an outdoor opera impossible to hold.

Accordingly, we notified our members of our intentions in early September. We had twenty replies, with twelve in favour of our proposed action, six against and two wanting alternative action. In the words of one in-favour member with experience of long term aviation issues:

"I thoroughly support the intention to place an ad opposing a 3rd runway at Heathrow.... it will be detrimental to Chiswick House and the surrounding area in many ways. If chosen, it will mean a new runway, further terminals, new road and rail links... illegal levels of air pollution... and at least one more runway within 20 years. Nobody in their right mind would impose such a burden on west London."

Some members wanted us to take a more positive note and actively campaign for an alternative, whether at Gatwick, in the Thames Estuary or even for an extension of the present northern runway. We took the view that it would be wrong for us to propose any solution as we are not experts in the field - all we feel we can talk about legitimately is the likely effect on the House and Gardens.

Six members were strongly opposed to our stance: two so strongly that they resigned. They felt that it was an inappropriate use of our funds, nimbyism or that we had no authority to speak on behalf of all members:

"rubbish"; "no relevance to the debate"; "improper"; "NIMBYS"; "atavists"

We took the view that as our constitution mandates us to work for the preservation of Chiswick House and Grounds, then it is a valid use of our funds to oppose whatever threatens the site: we also have this in writing from the Charity Commission. On the accusation of nimbyism, we plead guilty - we are seeking to protect our own backyard... plus those of the rest of west London.

We also took the 2:1 replies approving our plan as at least some authority to speak on behalf of our members.

However, in view of the strength of some of the opposing views, we did think we should limit what we spent on the advert to what we spent last time: bearing in mind seven years inflation this meant reducing from a full to a half page.

This is the advertisement that finally appeared in the Times last Wednesday the 28th September:

CHISWICK HOUSE FRIENDS SAY **NO** TO HEATHROW EXPANSION



Chiswick House in west London is one of the most glorious examples of 18th century British architecture. The design of the gardens has had a lasting influence on English garden planning ever since.

The site is a local, national and international treasure. It is also a haven of peace and tranquility - a place where individuals and families from far and wide come to walk in the quiet of a heritage garden or enjoy community events. It is a jewel with timeless architecture and vistas, and an atmosphere close to nature. It has recently benefited from a Heritage Lottery Fund grant to ensure that future generations can continue to enjoy this elegant classical villa and its grounds.

If Heathrow is expanded with a third runway, the flight path sound blanket will cover the gardens and night visits and the events on which the income for maintenance depends. Flights will increase from the current 480,000 per year to over 740,000. Aircraft will fly over the gardens at 2,000 feet every 90 seconds and the grounds will no longer be a place where people can come to relax and restore their spirits. If instead the existing northern runway is extended, removing runway alterations, then open air events such as our annual opera will still be funded.

More widely, the noise footprint will affect a million people. Air pollution in West London, already exceeding limits, will rise and the health of its residents and workers will suffer even more. A third runway will increase emissions of carbon dioxide from Heathrow aircraft substantially, at a time when we should be resisting climate change. Traffic will increase on roads already heavily congested.

The Chiswick House Friends, a growing group of people who live in and around west London and support the House and Gardens, strongly object to the expansion of Heathrow by the building of a third runway.

Help us oppose the further expansion of Heathrow and protect international treasures such as Chiswick House and Gardens.

- Write now to: David Cameron, reminding him of his 2009 'no ifs, no buts, no 3rd runway' promise, or to Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP, Secretary of State for Transport, House of Commons, London SW1A
- Join the rally against Heathrow expansion in Central London at 11am on 10th October
- Join HACAN or one of the many online petition groups

To join the Chiswick House Friends, visit www.chfriends.org.uk

Registered Charity no 289907



Opera



Our tenth opera season, spread over two days in July, was a tremendous success. La Traviata and Die Fledermaus both played to packed houses, with almost 2000 people picnicking on the lawn

behind the house as dusk fell with the stage lit up.... a magical atmosphere!



Diane Treganowan, Chair of the retiring Opera Committee

This is the last opera that we will organise as the Friends - next year the event will be organised by the Chiswick House and Gardens Trust. We owe a real debt of gratitude to our loyal committee who have delivered the goods for the last ten years - no-one more than the chair Diane Treganowan who now looks forward to a well-earned rest!

Chiswick House & Gardens Trust News

Record visitors

We are pleased to announce record attendance for our events, tours and visits: 60,000 visitors to the House and the Gardens throughout the year. The magical Giffords Circus and Luna Cinema both came here for the summer season, boosting visitor numbers by 15,000 and delivering new audiences and income, with both events already rebooked for 2016. We are also proud to have attracted 1,200 school visits and nearly 3,000 visitors to our Kitchen Garden because of the extended opening hours and the



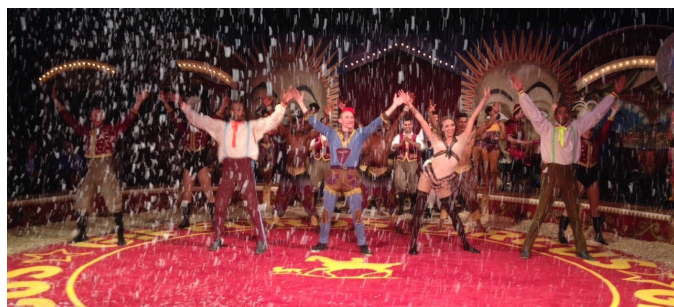
One of the Garden Tour Groups

wonderful work and support of William Rallison and his team of volunteers.

For more information, support or donations for the latter, contact william.rallison@chgt.org.uk.

New Visitor Guide launches

Please pick up one of the new Visitor Guides which will be available from the café. These have been updated to maximise awareness and enjoyment of the heritage site, and will be distributed to local libraries throughout the Borough to attract more visitors. They also launch our new garden trail that will help navigate visitors to the ten most beautiful and interesting objects in the House and Gardens.



The magical Giffords Circus

Fundraising update

The Trust is delighted to report that the Committee of the City Bridge Trust has made an award of £90,000 over the next three years to support the work of the Kitchen Garden. In addition, the Wates Foundation has provided a further grant of £10,000.

For further information about supporting the Trust or funding opportunities please contact jane.booth@chgt.org.uk.

Award successes

The prestigious London-in-Bloom committee has just announced the Chiswick House and Gardens Trust as Silver Award winners for two top categories: Heritage Park & Garden of the Year; and Walled Garden. The judges were particularly impressed by the level of volunteering and the exciting link between the café and Kitchen Garden with seasonal produce use in the menus served.

Congratulations to Geraldine King and her team, who constantly strive to maintain the standards in our Grade 1 listed gardens. To book a garden tour as a group or individual see chgt.org.uk.

Chiswick House and Gardens Trust

The Estate Office, Chiswick House,
London W42QN

Tel 020 8742 3905

www.chgt.org

Other Friends News

2015 Dog Show

This year's Dog Show surpassed even last year's event, with brilliant weather and a record numbers of visitors.



Flyball Action

With six rings in action there was plenty to watch...



Clare Balding and Best Youngster

... and celebrities such as Clare Balding gave up their time to help out.



Best in Show Winner Penny

The Best in Show winner Penny the Irish Setter was presented with her prize by George Nissen, Chairman of the Friends, Euan Rollo of John D

Wood & Co our chief sponsor (along with Bown Design and Dogtown), and our own indefatigable Committee Chair Gill Thomas. There is a great video at www.chiswickhousedogshow.org.uk.

Our thanks to all who came, those who sponsored and supported us, and to our own brilliant committee!

Wildlife Update (by Richard Sales)

Although we had hoped she would be joined by an eligible single male, our lonely widowed swan was roughly kicked out of the lake last October by a new pair. Although they made a good nest on a new site in early April, there were no eggs and we suspect they are still too young. They flew away a month ago after their moult and we await their return.

A very good breeding season for mallards, coots, moorhens, tufted ducks and Canada geese, of which all seven were caught and ringed by the BTO with the help of our new lake volunteer Jacqui Dixon. One, 'Peggy', with a broken leg since May, likes to be fed by hand near the Park Road gate!

The kingfisher pair generally keeps out of sight but one was seen again in mid-September.

Paul Brown took this charming picture of six Egyptian goslings born last week:



One of our early dog walkers has twice seen what seems to be a completely 'black' grey squirrel near the lake by the Temple pond.

Remaining 2015 Events

24 October 3 - 5:30pm; Pumpkin Party

3-6 Dec; Ionic Temple, 'Sculpture in the Gardens'

Published by the Chiswick House Friends

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