



CHISWICK HOUSE FRIENDS

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2011

Charity No 289907

Patron: Lord Burlington

Spring is Here

Much has been accomplished this winter and the House and Garden are ready for the summer season. You will see on our back page an impressive list of events both inside the House and outside, taking advantage of the splendid look of everything now that the Heritage Lottery Project is virtually complete. Some of the events are taking place in the Walled Garden, and I would like to congratulate the team of volunteers under the leadership of Karen Roberts who have revitalised the gardens there after building works were completed.

The Friends' objective remains to support and encourage those who are managing the House and Gardens, so we are happy once again to invite the Chiswick House and Gardens Trust Director, Sarah Finch-Crisp, to give on the inside page an up-to-date report on developments since our last Newsletter.

We were delighted to contribute to the restoration of the Ishmael statue that you can see below being unveiled at the wonderful Camellia Festival by the Mayor, Cllr Colin Ellar.

George Nissen



News from the Chiswick House and Gardens Trust

Chiswick House Camellia Festival

Springtime came early to Chiswick House Gardens as we launched Britain's first ever Camellia Festival in February, widely reported in the national press. This was also the first opportunity for the public to see the camellias blooming in the splendidly restored 19th Century Conservatory, and the event attracted around 5,000 visitors from all over the country and abroad. The trees kept up their gorgeous display for a full month to the delight of visitors.



Photo: Andrew Crawley; Courtesy of The Sunday Telegraph

Volunteers

The festival was made possible by our team of volunteer Conservatory Stewards who did a magnificent job welcoming and guiding the public, selling tickets and staffing our small shop where camellia plants supplied by Trehane's, the UK's leading Camellia growers, were quickly snapped up. The proceeds from the festival all go to support the upkeep of the gardens and the festival is set to become an annual feature in the national gardening calendar.



Volunteers tending the camellias

Sustainable Future

Providing a sustainable future for the house and gardens is a key aim and reason for the foundation of the Trust; weddings, corporate functions and family celebrations in the House, Burlington Pavilion, Cafe and newly restored Conservatory bring in a much needed income as well as providing an unrivalled setting for people's special event. Happily bookings for 2011 are already strong. Using the gardens for film and selective advertising is another aspect of our activities and many readers may have spotted a recent example featuring the café building and a certain make of shoes!



The Burlington Pavilion

The Burlington Pavilion is erected during the summer months and again during November and December. In 2010 it was used predominately for weddings. The structure itself is barely visible from the courtyard of the House from which it is separated by a yew hedge and double row of pleached limes.

Lisa Bevan manages the Trust's hospitality and events programme and can be contacted on 0208 742 2762.

Achievement Awards

We are delighted to receive two prestigious awards this year. Firstly, Chiswick House Café, designed by architects Caruso St. John, received a Civic Trust Award for its outstanding contribution to the quality and appearance of the environment. Judges said, 'The excellent, robust architecture provides a contemporary reinterpretation of classical principles' and described the building as 'enigmatic and timeless'.



The award-winning cafe

In addition we have been awarded Boris Johnson's Mayors Safer Parks Award in the top Gold Category which recognises the transformation which has taken place at Chiswick House, in particular the success of the Warden Service introduced by the Trust in June 2010.

The Warden Service works very closely with park users and neighbours, our partners in the London Borough of Hounslow and the local police to reduce anti-social behaviour and create a safe and welcoming environment for all our visitors throughout the year. New measures include a neighbourhood mobile phone texting alert system.



Head Warden Adrian being presented with an electric buggy by George Nissen of the Friends



The Ionic Temple with its restored roof

Garden Developments

The gardens are looking increasingly lovely and the completion of works to the Ionic Temple by English Heritage is a cause for celebration. After months shrouded in scaffolding and plastic, the temple has emerged with a new roof, replacing the lead that was stolen, and its masonry repaired.

Further down the river green nets are temporarily protecting water marginal plants to help improve the water quality. The nets prevent the water fowl from grazing and pulling the young plants out. Other areas close to opening are the Western walled garden, which will provide a dog free play area and sports field, and finally the Arcade, once the grass has established and we've been able to protect the new yew hedges from damage.

Elsewhere in the garden April's drifts of daffodils and Lenten roses will soon give way to early summer flowers. The Rosary and Italian Garden will be a picture in June. The walled gardens are being transformed by the Community Kitchen Garden Project, which is attracting large numbers of volunteers and school groups learning to 'grow to eat' vegetables and soft fruits. Their work is showcased at regular open days and events like the Family Pumpkin Party.



Activity in the Walled Garden

CHF, CHGT and Joint Events Diary 2011

This year many of our events are being run jointly by the **Friends** and by the **Chiswick House and Gardens Trust**. Friends will have an exclusive week to obtain tickets before each event prior to it being publicly advertised: we will be in touch with details. Joint events below in b&w; own events in colour.

13 April	6.30 – 8.30pm	Talk by Amanda Foreman: best selling historian on her latest amazing work "The World on Fire" and "Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire"	House
25 April	All day	Easter Monday Family Fun	Gardens
12 May	7.00pm	Janiculum Concert: music associated with Chiswick, always sold out. This year "Patronage and Politics – Handel and his Italian rivals".	House
19 May	7.30pm	Batwalk – book via www.ptes.org.uk	Gardens
9 June	7.00pm	Chiswick House Friends AGM	House
15 June	6.30 – 8.30pm	Talk by Dr Richard Hewlings, Senior Historian at English Heritage, CHGT Trustee and an expert on Chiswick House.	House
22 June	7.30pm	Summer Opera – Candlelit Gala Concert: see enclosed leaflet	Gardens
23 June	7.30pm	Summer Opera – La Boheme: see enclosed leaflet	Gardens
7 July	3–11pm	Soho House Festival	Gardens
14 July	6.30pm	Open Air Theatre – Pride & Prejudice by Heartbreak Productions	West Lawn
22 July	6.30pm	Open Air Theatre – Pinocchio by Heartbreak Productions	Walled Gdn
7&8 Sep	TBC	Open Air Film	Gardens
11 Sept	11–4pm	Harvest Celebration	Walled Gdn
14 Sept	7.00pm	Harp Recital by Serafina Steer: usually sells out very quickly	House
18 Sept	10–4pm	Open London – special openings include Ionic Temple	Gardens
19 Sept	7.00pm	CHF Summer Drinks Party	House
25 Sept	10.30am	Chiswick House and Gardens Dog Show – opens 10.30am	Gardens
29 Sept	4–7pm	Family Pumpkin Party in the Walled Garden	Walled Gdn

A Poem - Sleeping Beauty by Tony Godel

Burlington's vision had grown sleepy foggy and forgotten

Retreating into a mist of municipal mediocracy
Forked by two motorways
Unloved ragged graffitied and unkempt.

All the elements, despite the ravages of time
Have now been lovingly restored
Into a perfect harmonic composition
One man's dream.

Gloriously proportioned
Gentle symmetrical and softly hypnotic
The Palladian Villa stands
A near perfect jewel-like creation.

An embracing lake frames
Temples and hypnotic vistas which
Meet up with gigantic inviting cedar trees
Their branches kissing the ground.

Restorative sleep has revived
This sleeping beauty
Now fully awake
All the elements of this classic creativity
Culminates once again into Chiswick's little
piece of idyllic Italy.



A beautiful Spring show by the A4 gate

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