



CHISWICK HOUSE FRIENDS

NEWSLETTER Spring 2017

Charity No 289907

Patron: Lord Burlington



After the very successful Magical Lantern Festival, this will be an exciting year for the Friends of Chiswick House. Just as, ten years ago, we shared in the splendid reinstatement of the Gardens around the House, supervised by the new Trust, so now we are excited by the prospect of taking a new look at the House itself - which has so far been carefully tended by English Heritage. The House, which is of course the key to the whole Garden complex, has we feel often been neglected by the many visitors to the estate as a whole.

We are confident that its attractions can be opened up and made far easier to enjoy. To this end, the management of the House will pass to the Trust which currently runs the Gardens and with whom the Friends work very closely. All this may cost quite a bit, so don't be surprised if we invite contributions! We are also delighted that we have been able this year to play a bigger part in the presentation of the world-famous camellia collection in the 6th Duke's magnificent Conservatory. And we are once again planning the usual Dog Show on 24th September.

George Nissen

Estate Reunited for First Time in 70 Years



April 6th 2017 marks an historic day for the Chiswick House & Gardens Trust as it assumes operational management for both Chiswick gardens and the main house, which has been under the care of English Heritage up until now. The move brings together the estate under one team for the first time in almost 70 years.

CHGT was established by English Heritage and the London Borough of Hounslow, and has managed the 65 acre gardens since 2010. Uniting the house and gardens enables CHGT to tell the story of the house and gardens in full, inspiring visitors with the incredible history of the estate.

CHGT Chairman, Andrew Fane said: "This landmark agreement unites the villa and its gardens for the first time in almost 70 years. Our plan is to enable even more people from our local communities, the UK and internationally, to explore and enjoy the estate. Our team is working to improve visitor facilities so that we can show the historical, horticultural and architectural significance of the villa and gardens together as a complete work of art. Uniting the management of the villa and gardens is true to the original vision of Richard Boyle, 3rd Earl of

Burlington and 4th Earl of Cork, who created this wonderful estate from 1727-32."

Ongoing support

Both the London Borough of Hounslow and English Heritage will continue to support CHGT. English Heritage will remain responsible for the conservation of the Grade I listed house and for the care of the collections on display within it.

Kate Mavor, Chief Executive of English Heritage, said: "English Heritage will continue to support the Trust, in particular in the house with our curatorial expertise. But placing the house and gardens under the care of one single team makes complete sense as it will allow for the site's overall story to be better told and make for a better visit."

Councillor Corinna Smart, from the London Borough of Hounslow commented: "We are delighted at this agreement and look forward to working with CHGT to deliver its exciting vision for Chiswick."

CHGT Director, Clare O'Brien, formerly of the Wallace Collection and the National Theatre said: "This agreement is the first step in fulfilling the

vision that our Trustees, English Heritage and the London Borough of Hounslow had in creating CHGT. Now, we are working on plans to enable more people to enjoy the site and understand its story. Come and enjoy the House this Easter!"

"This summer, we will be applying for funding to restore the house and improve our visitor facilities. We want to work even more closely with schools, universities and the one-million members of the public who visit us each year" Clare added.

Magical Lantern Festival



For the second year, we have welcomed the show of Chinese lantern figures. This year the theme was 'Explore the Silk Road' and celebrated the Chinese New Year of the Rooster.



The lanterns represented scenes from Europe, Central Asia, Arabia, Persia and Ancient China. The Silk Road theme, dating back to the Western Han Dynasty of China in 200 BC, has a current cultural significance as it represents the spread of trade and culture between East and West.

Lantern festivals also date back to this time and as they grow in popularity in the West, there are plans in China for a new Silk Road along the old trade route.

Chiswick House Friends News

Friends Sponsor the Camellia Show



This year, the Friends sponsored the very successful Camellia Show in the Conservatory.

From Tuesday to Sunday every week from 3rd March to 2nd April, just over 12,000 visitors have been thrilled by the vibrant display of this unique collection. The Adopt-a-Bud scheme and the donations which the Friends' volunteers supported showed an increase over last year.



The team of volunteers did sterling work in preparing the Conservatory for the event.



On the eve of the event, Gardens Manager Geraldine addressed a specially invited group on the history and scope of our unique camellia collection and gave us a fascinating tour of these wonderful plants.



Visitors of all ages came in their droves, giving enjoyment to all of this wonderful bequest from a former age.



The camellias were in wonderful condition - above is the delicately coloured *japonica* 'pomponne' - no doubt helped by the warm winter we have just had.

Waterfowl Update (by Richard Sales)

Our lone female swan flew away many times since September, but came back with a new male in February.

They have a habit of flying away from time to time, but they always come back. There is no sign of nest building yet, which is a little late if they are going to breed this year.

The resident Egyptian Goose pair had a brood of seven in October and a further five in late February, of which three are still here after three weeks. We expect another two broods this year. A new pair are trying to be residents as well; expect squabbles over territory!

The Swan Sanctuary in Teddington used a canoe and a net gun to capture and free some plastic netting from the head of a Canada goose. It took them four days to achieve success.

Our winter resident Shovellers and Little Grebe have flown away to breed.

Hérons visit daily from Brentford, whereas cormorants seem to come only when the lake has filled.

E-mail addresses

In between newsletters we communicate with most of our members by e-mail, so if you change your e-mail address, please e-mail your new address to us on membership@chfriends.co.uk.

Likewise, if you are not receiving e-mails from us from time to time but think you should be, let us know so we can check that we have your correct address. We will continue to send information by post to those members who prefer it. However, if you have an e-mail address which you are willing to let us use, please let us know.

2017 Events

Further details and times of CHF events will be emailed nearer the time.

22 April 11 - 4pm; Wedding Showcase

21 May, 25 June; Kitchen Garden Open Days

5 June 7pm, House; CHF AGM

18 June, House, evening; CHF String quartet

13 July, Conservatory; CHF Summer Party

29 Jun - 10 July, Walled Garden; Giffords Circus

24 Sept 11 - 4:15pm; CHF Dog Show

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