

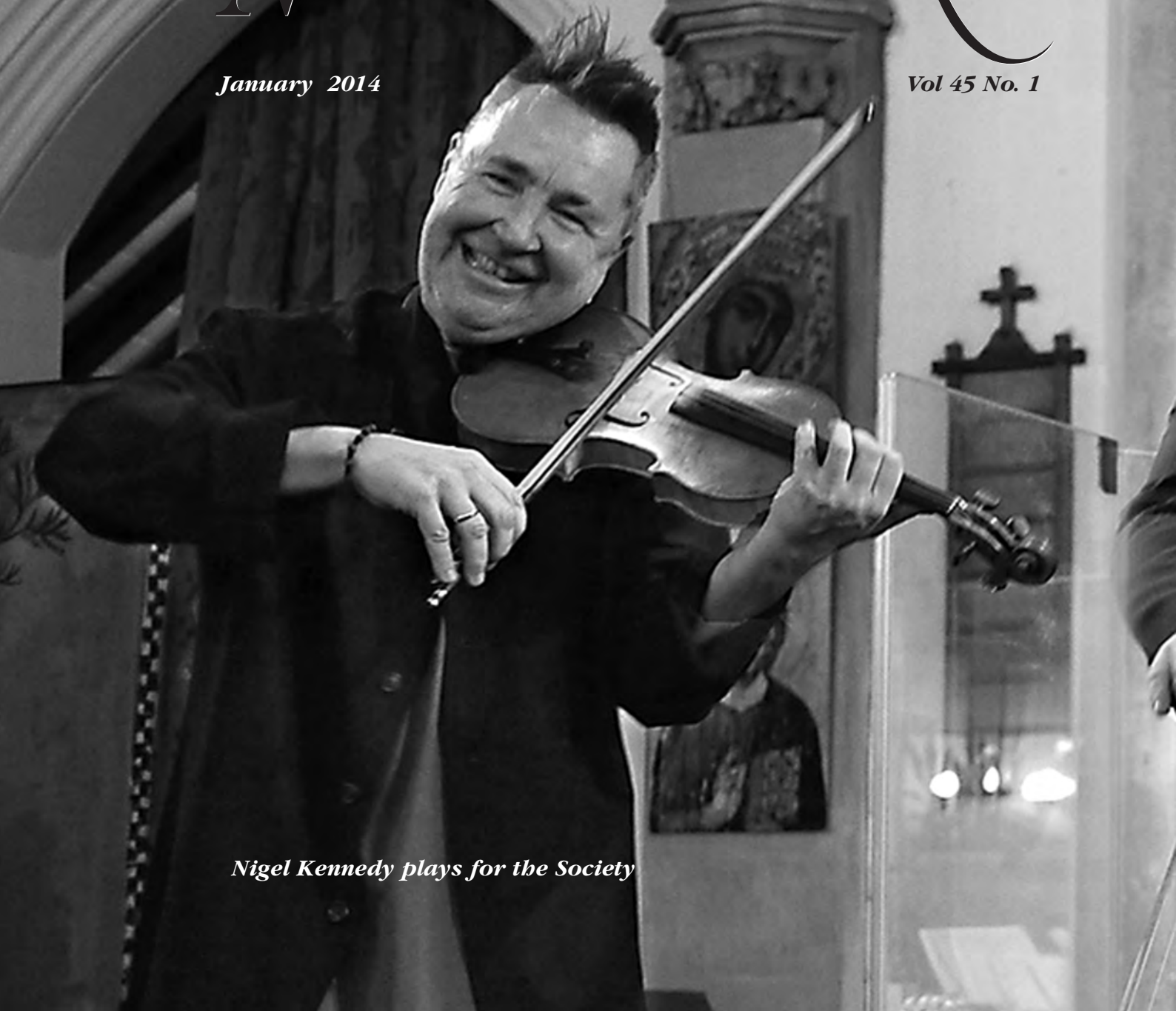


The Heath & Hampstead Society

NEWSLETTER

January 2014

Vol 45 No. 1



Nigel Kennedy plays for the Society

The Heath and Hampstead Society

address: PO BOX 38214, London NW3 1XD Tel: 020 8343 0381
info@heathandhampstead.org.uk website: www.heathandhampstead.org.uk

Committees and Officers

President Lord Hoffmann

Vice President Martin Humphery
32 Willoughby Rd NW3 1UR 7435 5386
martinhumphery@btinternet.com

Vice President Helen Marcus
121 Anson Road NW2 4AH 8450 8864
helen@helenlawrence.co.uk

Chair Tony Hillier
1 Bloomfield Road, N6 4ET 7435 6136
tony@hilliers.net

Vice-Chair Tony Ghilchik
6 Morland Close NW11 7JG8458 3039
tony@ghilchik.demon.co.uk

Vice-Chair Frank Harding
11 Pilgrims Lane, NW3 1SL 7435 3728
frankaharding@btinternet.com

Vice-Chair David Castle 7794 7647
19 South Hill Park Gdns NW3 2TD

Secretary Marc Hutchinson
72 South Hill Park NW3 2SN 7090 3063
marc.hutchinson@slaughterandmay.com

Treasurer Maureen Clark-Darby
22 Maryon Mews NW3 2PU 7435 5841
maureen_clarkdarby@hotmail.com

Membership Promotion Robert Linger
24 Ranulf Road NW2 2DG 7435 3237
r.linger@heathandhampstead.org.uk

Frankie de Freitas 32 Maresfield Gdns
NW3 5SX ffran32@dircon.co.uk 7435 0502

Janine Griffis 14 Denning Road NW3 1SU
grifkohl@aol.com 7435 2962

Jessica Learmond-Criqui 14 Redington Road
NW3 7RG 7794 5992

Gordon Maclean 12b Daleham Gardens
NW3 5DA 7431 2975
gordon@gmaclean.wanadoo.co.uk

Douglas Maxwell 14 Frogna Way NW3
6XE 7435 2162
d.maxwell@heathandhampstead.org.uk

Nigel Steward The White House,
Keats Grove NW3 2RT 7435 8748

Peter Tausig 11 Downshire Hill NW3 1NR
peter_tausig@hotmail.com 7435 7099

Stephen Taylor 81 South Hill Park NW3 2SS
s.taylor@heathandhampstead.org.uk 7813 3786

John Weston 92 Fitzjohn's Avenue NW3 6NP
johnweston@benzo8.org

Jeremy Wright 17 Croftdown Rd NW5 1EL
jeremy.wright@walkern.org.uk 7485 7903

Heath Sub-Committee

Chairman Tony Ghilchik
John Beyer 07935 087 732
Simon Briscoe 8348 1992
Lynda Cook 8731 9039
Michael Hammerson 8341 1437
Janis Hardiman 7435 2472
John Hunt 01604 846 705
Marc Hutchinson 7090 3063
Thomas Radice 8455 1025
Rupert Sheldrake 7794 9841
Peter Tausig 7435 7099
Sash Tusa 07836 793 234
Jeremy Wright 7485 7903

Planning Sub-Committee

Chairman David Castle
Jenny Alderman 07785 363 195
David Evans 7431 6455
Vicki Harding 7794 7279
Martin Humphery 7435 5386
Gesine Junker 07850 985 755
Gordon Maclean 7431 2975
Douglas Maxwell 7435 2162
Margaret Rodgers 7435 8460
Stephen Stark 07791 223 538

Town Sub-Committee

Chairman Frank Harding
Janine Griffis 7435 2962
Malcolm Holmes 01923 461 343
Avril Kleeman 7794 3366
Jessica Learmond-Criqui 7794 6022
Robert Linger 7435 3237
Richard Price 7831 9731
Juliette Sonabend 7794 9415

Plaque restoration

Frank Harding
Malcolm Holmes
Christine Pullen
Carol Siegel
Juliette Sonabend
Christopher Wade

Website management

info@heathandhampstead.org.uk
Helen Marcus
Andrew Morley
Stephen Taylor
John Weston

Founded in 1897

Patrons

Lady Hopkins
Gerald Isaaman OBE
Sir Simon Jenkins
Bill Oddie
Tom Oliver
Sir John Tusa
Christopher Wade

Representatives on outside bodies

City of London Heath Management Committee, Kenwood Landscape Forum:

Tony Ghilchik

City of London Heath Consultative Committee., City of London's Ponds Project Stakeholder Group:

Jeremy Wright

Keats House Consultative Committee Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee:

Martin Humphery

Heath Hands Executive Committee:

Peter Tausig

Legal adviser to the Society

David Altaras

Adviser on hydrology

Michael de Freitas BSc DSIR PhD
FGS FRGS MIWEM

Archivist: Malcolm Holmes

Auditors: Fisher Phillips and Co
Chartered Accountants

Newsletter

Editor: Helen Marcus *Editorial Team:* John Smithard, Frankie de Freitas *Original Design:* Sydney King

Printed by Hillary Press, Hendon

Reg. Charity No. 261782

Contents

	Page
Chair's Report	1
<i>Tony Hillier</i>	
Lord Hoffmann's address	4
<i>Helen Marcus</i>	
From our Archives - protecting the ponds	8
<i>Helen Marcus</i>	
Nigel Kennedy backs the Society	12
<i>Helen Marcus</i>	
Heath Report	13
<i>Tony Gbilchik</i>	
Notice of AGM 2014 - Elections to General Committee	15
Planning Report	16
<i>David Castle</i>	
Town Report	18
<i>Frank Harding</i>	
Neighbourhood Forum for Hampstead	19
<i>Janine Griffis</i>	
Hampstead Shops Campaign	20
<i>Jessica Learmond-Criqui</i>	
Peter Gorb - an appreciation	21
<i>Helen Marcus</i>	
A Victorian reminiscence of the Heath	22
<i>The Diary of Sarah Gould 1841 - 1926</i>	
Bulletin Board: & Heath Walks	24

Chair's Report

By Tony Hillier

I should like to start by wishing all members a happy and prosperous New Year. It is likely to be a very lively one for the Society and for me personally, one of change.

The Saga of the Ponds - the Dam Nonsense Campaign

As many of you who attended already know, our President Lord Hoffmann made a strong and convincing case to our Members' meeting and Public meeting on 25 November 2013 in St. Stephen's on Haverstock Hill, urging the City to reconsider the advice they have received from their engineers for new designs for the pond embankments. His address is printed in full following this report.

The Members' resolution: "The Members of the Society urge the City to now work with the Heath and Hampstead Society and revise their plans for the Dams project so as to make the ponds safe without damaging the Heath" was then overwhelmingly endorsed by the very well attended public meeting.

Further to that resolution we launched a campaign under the title Dam Nonsense. We enclose with this Newsletter

- a card summarising our objections and countering the misleading information the City has distributed to many local residents and businesses.
- a more detailed information sheet which we hope will help members in responding to the City's questionnaire. The questionnaire together with the City's lengthy briefing document, is available in hard copy from information booths near the East Heath car park and in the Staff Yard on the Parliament Hill Fields side of the Heath.

It is also available on line.

Chair's Report (cont)

by Tony Hillier

The City's information is unbalanced because

- The City's consultation exercise offers only a narrow choice between predetermined engineering options and fails to take into account wider and more rational considerations of how to protect public safety.
- The City Questionnaire does not invite comment on many of the most objectionable features of the proposals which will disfigure the landscape.
- It does not state that this Society, the Highgate Society and the swimmers' and anglers' representative organisations, all of whom have been closely engaged in the City's technical consultations over the past two or so years, have rejected all the City's proposals. Many endorse our campaign.
- The City's photographs and mock-ups are misleadingly "cosy" looking. They do not give a true impression of the real "municipal reservoir" look that will result from these works and would lead you to believe that the ponds won't look much different after the works are completed. We include several photographs in this newsletter that we have commissioned to give a more realistic impression, based on the City's own calculations, of how these dams will look.

Our briefing documents will be available on our campaign website, DamNonsense, on our newly restored Notice Board in Flask Passage and by email circulation to Members.

Please reply to the city's questionnaire well before the closing date, 17 February 2014.

Our enclosed leaflet gives all the different addresses: post or web.

It also gives more information about what the City's Options really involve which we hope will help you to fill in the questionnaire .

If you agree with us that the City must be asked to go back to the drawing board it is vital that you reply to their so-called consultation and tell them so. You are given the option to state that you are "not satisfied".

The City are surely bound to consider the results in future disputes that may arise further to our campaign.

The Saga of the Ponds: our legal position

As Lord Hoffmann points out, we have received clear advice from leading Counsel specialising in reservoir safety, which constitutes an arguable case for the City to reconsider its legal advice and require their engineers to go back to the drawing board, while remaining fully compliant with the law, saving significant capital sums and without being responsible for the permanent disfigurement of the Heath.

To this end we have formally requested the City to seek clarification jointly with us in the courts on the disputed interpretation of the Reservoir safety statute. We sincerely hope that our representations for legal clarity will not be ignored and that it will not be necessary to undertake a judicial review of any future planning application by the City, which simply persists with their current legally untested interpretation of this law. We will, of course, not embark on any judicial review proceedings without formal endorsement by Members.

We are pleased to report that we have already successfully challenged the City's application to Camden ahead of a future planning application to waive the need to present an Environment Impact Assessment: nice try!

Other Campaigns

Your General Committee and Heath Sub-Committee members have inevitably devoted a huge amount of time and expertise in fighting to save the wild and natural look of the ponds. This has not stopped strong campaigns being mounted on other matters.

Athlone House

The campaign to save Athlone House (a new and unacceptable planning application has been submitted), in conjunction with the Highgate Society, continues. We have received magnificent support from English Heritage as a statutory consultee.

Nurses' home at New End

The planning application for damaging re-development of the former nurses' home at 29 New End has been turned down by Camden. Local residents mounted a strong campaign which included marshalling a powerful block of prep school children to listen, politely but noisily when needed, to the hearing held before Camden's Development Committee.

Finally I am delighted to report that, in contrast to some of our campaigns a few years ago to stop some pubs operating noisily late at night, we fully support the local residents' campaign to stop a change of use application to convert the Olde White Bear to a large house.

Christmas party

The party was once again a warm - in every sense - happy and well-attended occasion, which we celebrated in St Stephen's church. Our thanks go again to Helen Marcus, Janine Griffis and the army of Committee members who worked so hard to make the evening enjoyable.

Changing the Pilot

You will see from the formal notice on page 15 of this Newsletter that I will not be offering myself for re-election as Chairman at the AGM in 2014. I will by then have held this locally responsible and very demanding position for 11 years and it is certainly time to hand over to new blood.

The Society is very fortunate that our Honorary Secretary, Marc Hutchinson, is putting his name forward for election. All of us on the General Committee have been hugely impressed by Marc's fitness for the role of Chairman and I personally fully endorse his candidature. He will without doubt prove, if elected, a worthy successor to Peggy Jay, Helen Marcus and Martin Humphery, my immediate predecessors.

How the Heath was saved

One of the first great environmental battles of modern times.

Helen Marcus

tells this remarkable story, bringing to life the extraordinary cast of characters battling it out through Parliament, the Courts and the Press, with readings, songs, poetry and pictures.

Thursday May 15

St Stephen's Pond Street, 7.30pm

The campaign to save Hampstead Heath started in 1829. 40 years later when the people of Hampstead finally got their Act of Parliament preserving the Heath in its 'natural aspect', a national movement had been established whose early history is intertwined with the saving of Hampstead Heath.

If you sometimes wonder why it is so important to oppose the building of the proposed new dams,

Come and hear how it all happened and why it still matters

£5 donation at the door to cover expenses

All welcome

Lord Hoffmann's address

At the public meeting called by the Heath & Hampstead Society in connection with the Hampstead Heath Dams project on November 25th 2013, the Society's President gave the following address

Most people here tonight will know the story of how the Heath and Hampstead Society came into existence. In the 1860s there had been proposals by the freeholders of the Heath and other open spaces in London like Wimbledon Common to enclose and build upon them.

There was a great deal of protest by Londoners who regarded these spaces as common land where they could take air and exercise. As a result, Acts of Parliament were passed to protect them. One of these was the Hampstead Heath Act 1871, which began with a recital that "it would be of great advantage to the inhabitants of the Metropolis if the Heath were always kept unenclosed and unbuilt on its natural aspect and state being as far as may be preserved."

The Act vested the land in the Metropolitan Board of Works and said that the Board was to "protect the Heath and preserve it as an open space". In 1890 the Heath was transferred to the newly-created London County Council, which had plans to turn it into a municipal park. It was to resist the introduction of bandstands and beds of salvias that this Society was formed in 1897. As you can see, it has been remarkably successful in ensuring that the Heath is kept "in its natural aspect and state." In 1989 the City of London took over the management of the Heath and has so far proved an excellent custodian: indeed, lovers of the Heath owe a great deal to the City and its excellent Superintendent of the Heath, Simon Lee, for the work they have done over the last 25 years.

The problem which has arisen over the ponds is not of the City's making. Most people who walk over the Heath and see the ponds probably think that they are natural ponds, especially since they have featured in paintings of the Heath by Constable and others for centuries.

However, they are not. They were originally dug in the 17th century as reservoirs filled from the springs which fed the Fleet River and for a long time supplied water for parts of London. You might well ask, what is the significance of this curious bit of history? Why does this matter today? The answer is that, because the ponds were artificially created, even if it was more than 300 years ago, the three largest ones count as reservoirs for the purposes of the safety provisions of the Reservoirs Act 1975. On the other hand, no safety provisions would apply to them if they were natural ponds. However, there is no doubt they are reservoirs for the purposes of the Act. So, to understand the problem, we need to look at what the Act says about them. It has safety provisions which date back to the second half of the nineteenth century, when two or three industrial reservoirs in Yorkshire had collapsed and caused considerable loss of life. The scheme of the Act is that a reservoir must be inspected at least once every ten years by a specialist engineer, who may recommend "measures that should be taken in the interests of safety". Those are the key words: "measures that should be taken in the interests of safety." If the engineer makes such a recommendation, the owner of the reservoir, in our case the City, is obliged to carry them out.

The City has been advised by its engineer that the dams need to be strengthened by very considerable works, raising the walls of one of them by nearly 3 meters, building large spillways and changing the levels. The cost is estimated at £15 million pounds. No doubt it would all be landscaped and grassed over, but the general effect will be to change the atmosphere of the ponds from the rural scene which Constable would have recognised to something like a nice grassed and landscaped

municipal water works. And the City has been advised by a very eminent QC that it is obliged as a matter of law to carry out these works: indeed, that there is a risk of a criminal prosecution if they do not. So you can see that the City is in a very difficult position.

We have also taken legal advice and we have been told that there is a reasonable chance of persuading a court that the engineer's recommendations are not in accordance with the requirements of the Act. There are two prongs to this argument. The first is that the risk assumed by the engineers is grossly exaggerated. You might feel intuitively that there is something odd about reaching the conclusion that ponds which have been there for over 300 years and never done anyone the slightest harm, actually pose a serious risk which requires £15 million of expenditure and works which disfigure the Heath. And we think that this intuitive feeling is right. The engineers say they have approached the matter according to various guidelines which have been laid down by their professional body and, however counterintuitive, that is the conclusion they have reached. The guidelines are extremely technical, and I am not competent to explain the details to you, but in rough summary what the engineers say is this. There are people who live downstream of the ponds and there is a risk that, if large quantities of water flowed downhill out of the ponds, some people would be drowned. Therefore it is necessary to take steps which altogether eliminate the possibility of that happening. For this purpose, they have calculated what would happen if there was a cloudburst over the Heath of such ferocity that it would be expected to happen only once in 400,000 years. We know of course that the climate changes, indeed, is changing. But the extreme case assumed by the

engineers is unlikely by any standard. The purpose of the recommendation is to ensure that even in such circumstances, the dams would not cause a risk to anyone.

We think that this kind of approach involves a number of illogicalities and anomalies. For example, the risk is calculated without any regard to the fact that there might be warning of a spectacular storm, as there was a few weeks ago, or even that people living in basements in Gospel Oak might notice that it was raining and move to an upper floor. Boroughs like Camden are obliged by law to have a flood warning system in operation but that has not been taken into account. Likewise, it is agreed that long before any dam is likely to collapse, floods of water will have poured off the Heath and down the streets, creating an earlier and greater risk than any collapse of the dams. The engineers say that does not matter. If there is a flood such as they assume, warnings may reduce the risk of people being drowned by the dams; people may be drowned for reasons that have nothing to do with the dams, but there is still a risk that the dams may cause someone to drown and that risk must be eliminated.

We think that is not a rational approach and we don't believe that is what Parliament meant to happen when it passed the Reservoirs Act. But there is a second, and in my opinion, more important prong to the argument and that is that the engineers have misunderstood what it means to say that something should be done in the interests of safety. The engineers have treated it as a purely professional question. They say: "let's assume the worst possible scenario and then work out what works are needed to eliminate any risk of someone being drowned. That is something within our professional expertise and with which we feel comfortable."

Lord Hoffmann's address (cont)

This may be the right approach for industrial reservoirs, which serve no purpose except for the profit of the owners. In such a case it may be right that risk should be eliminated altogether. It is quite irrational to apply it in cases in which the reservoir serves other purposes in the public interest, like forming part of a historic environment. That is quite at odds with how we normally deal with risk. Usually we try to strike a balance between the seriousness of the risk and the cost to the community of reducing or eliminating it. For example, in July 2005 bombers killed 52 people and injured about 700 on London transport. TfL could have considerably reduced the risk of it happening again by having security inspections at Underground stations like they have at airports, or prohibiting people from taking luggage on the buses or underground. But they didn't do so because, in terms of inconvenience to the public, the cost would have been too high. It would have been quite irrational to consider only what was needed to eliminate the risk and disregard the cost, even though the risk was a very clear risk to human life, much greater than the risk of a storm which might happen once every 400,000 years. Likewise when you are dealing with the risk of flooding on Hampstead Heath. The engineers say they have taken no account whatever of the environmental damage which their works would cause to the Heath, made no attempt to balance it against the elimination of an extremely remote chance of the flood on which they have based their calculations. Nor have they taken any account of the City's statutory obligation to keep the Heath "in its natural aspect." We think, and we have been advised by counsel, that this is wrong: that to say that in such circumstances the works are measures which should be taken

in the interests of safety is irrational. The Act does not say that all risk must be eliminated. It asks the engineers to recommend what measures should be taken, and the word "should" implies a standard by which you decide what should be done. The Act does not spell out what that standard is, but it must mean a standard of rationality: what measures should reasonably be taken. And that requires all the circumstances to be taken into account. When the Act asks the engineers to consider what measures should be taken, we therefore think that they should take everything into account and not make a lopsided calculation which ignores the environmental importance of the ponds, particularly when it has statutory backing in the 1871 Act.

Now the City, as I have told you, have been advised by their counsel that the engineers are right and that our interpretation of the Act is wrong. And that may be true: sometimes the law produces very perverse results. But we think, and we have been advised, that our case is clearly arguable. What we cannot understand is why the City will not join with us in trying to get a ruling from the Court that we are right. It would be very much in the interests of the City to do so. It would save them £15 million pounds and the unpopularity of having been the authority which disfigured Hampstead Heath. If we and the City are unsuccessful in getting such a ruling, they will be in no worse position than they are now and everyone will feel that they have at least done their best. But they don't seem able to see where their best interests lie.

So the reason why we have called this meeting is to ask you to make it clear to the City that they will be extremely unpopular with everyone who loves Hampstead Heath if they do not

make every effort, including joining forces with the Heath and Hampstead Society, to find a way of lawfully avoiding or reducing damage to the Heath. We do not ask the City to break the law. And we greatly regret that we seem now to be at loggerheads. We have greatly admired what the City has done for the Heath in the past. But

the primary duty of this Society is to protect the Heath, and if the City will not help us, we shall try to do so alone. And for that we require the support of our members and the public at large. That is what I ask you to demonstrate tonight and in the months ahead.

Municipal waterworks or wild and natural?

We publish on the next few pages pictures of the ponds as they presently appear, with 'mock-ups' of the photos that we commissioned to

show how they might appear (or disappear!) if the engineers' designs are carried out in their present form

Mixed Bathing Pond - as it is now



Mixed Bathing Pond - showing how radically the new dam would alter the view



From our Archives – protecting the beauty of the ponds

by Helen Marcus

The Society archives contain a fascinating collection of letters, articles and editorials in the press leading up to the formation of the Hampstead Heath Protection Society in 1897. The Times reported the meeting in April at which those “who were mainly instrumental in the acquisition of Hampstead Heath more than thirty years ago.... called a public meeting at the Drill Hall, Hampstead, for the purpose of forming a society for the protection of Hampstead Heath and the preservation of its natural beauties.”

In addition to the much-reported clearance of gorse and laying of roads, the London County Council (LCC) must have done extensive clearance work round the ponds as part of their programme of works to ‘tidy up the Heath’. The destruction of their natural and wild appearance was a major part of the concern that caused such an outcry of protest. The artist Walter Field wrote that “Lovely ponds of which I have sketches, have been filled up”. So far from flooding, the concern was rather of their disappearance.

During 1896 the Daily News reported the “drying up of small ponds by choking them with ashes and mud”. “They want to dry up a pond which, at some seasons of the year, is hardly to be distinguished from a puddle....” “Their [the Council’s] proper place is not in the supreme management of historic nooks of beauty.” There appears never to have been any problem with the dams and they are never mentioned.

Nature Notes called the works a “gross outrage being perpetrated upon all lovers of nature and of beauty. Hampstead Heath is one of London’s most precious possessions and it is nothing less than monstrous that it should thus be at the mercy of a muddling, meddling body....”

The Middlesex Courier cited “As an instance of over-improvement we would mention the change

at the bridge and lily pond in what was formerly the brickfield. Who can remember the beautiful scene, with the rugged slopes on either side of the bridge, and the fine effect of the broken ground full of varied vegetation beyond, and compare that with the present scene without regret? Now all the old ruggedness is smoothed away and there is just the slope left....”

The William Robinson Report 1898

One of the first things the newly formed Society did was to call on the influential gardener William Robinson, famous for championing more natural and less formal ‘wild gardening’. He wrote a short report for the Society in 1898 advising how best to preserve the wild and natural look. His remarks about the ponds are particularly relevant:

“In the fine series of ponds at Hampstead, a mistake has been made in destroying the water plants, and disfiguring the margins by forming them into hard, ugly lines--the result of thoughtless cleaning of the ponds, when not only the native plants were taken up, but the ground lines characteristic of the margin of water destroyed. The result is as ugly and unnatural as anything could be, and a loss not only of the effect of the vegetation natural to the waterside, but also as regards food and cover for the fish and water birds.

“..... there were several miles of bare, ugly margin (in some cases three feet high) hard over the water. All the bolder native water plants should be restored and their growth would help to conceal the false lines of the present margins. In some cases ugly boards are used to form the margins, which might be easily hidden by a belt of water and waterside plants. Even in ponds used for bathing it would be easy to keep a rich belt of vegetation and leave ample space for access to the water; but in large



*Mixed Bathing Pond from the causeway; top: as it looks now
Above: the new dam to be built over 6 feet high (2 metres) going the full length of the existing
causeway on the left and up the slopes at either end*

as far as possible to their natural condition.”

In the third Annual Report the Society called for the Council to appoint an experienced person to superintend “the preservation of the natural beauties of the Heath, its gorse trees shrubs and ponds”. The Committee thanked its many members “who have taken such a vigilant personal interest in the carrying out of the objects of the Society”.

This need for constant appropriate maintenance, and the failure by the various authorities to do it, became another major

theme of the Society’s reports over the century.

In 1900 the Committee were still concerned about “the question of the bare state of the banks of some of the ponds...” However the following year they were able to report that “in accordance with the recommendation made by your Committee last year, the London County

ponds where there is no bathing - such a state of things is deplorable in a place which is supposed to be kept in a natural state.

His advice is reflected in the Society’s second Annual Report of 1898: “The Committee are strongly of the opinion that the margins of the ponds which have been made bare by the Council [the London County Council] should be restored

From our Archives (cont)

Council have planted and temporarily enclosed the north bank of the leg of mutton pond. The plants are already becoming established and the natural aspect is to a great extent restored.

In 1909 another “muddling, meddling body” in the shape of Hampstead Borough Council was at it again. They forwarded a resolution “to the London

County Council, suggesting that the ponds should be made of a uniform depth, and the bottoms cemented” But at the urging of the Society this was resisted “as it would completely destroy the amenities and rural aspects of the ponds”

After the WW1 attention was again turned to maintenance with works to clean out the

Bathing Ponds. Having initially expressed concern about what would be done with the mud from the Pond, the Report for 1921 praises the Council for a job “thoroughly well donelittle or no trace of the operations will remain”.

In 1937 the Society amazed everyone by not objecting to the construction of the Lido. “Had the Society striven to stop the plan it would have incurred at least equal criticism for churlishness in standing in the way of the health and legitimate pleasure of thousands of Londoners.”

And in 1939 “The Committee decided to oppose any attempt by the L.C.C. to terminate bathing facilities in the ponds on the Heath. The use of the Bathing Pond has always been free and should remain so.”



The “catchpit dam” is to be built in the valley between the Viaduct Pond and the Hampstead Mixed Bathing Pond. It is a crescent shaped dam, 18 feet at its highest point, going right round the valley. Because it has to have a wide base many trees will be removed. Above as it is now; below as the valley might look afterwards



After WW2 co-operation with the LCC Parks Department increased with regular joint inspection walks across the Heath. On one of these in 1960 the LCC was persuaded to reduce the width of an “unsightly path to the bathing pond, No. 3” they had built, and resurface it.

1980s reports particularly concentrate on restorative maintenance works to the ponds, which had long been neglected. There was much cleaning and mudding out, but constant anxiety that the natural look should be restored once work was finished, and that proper regular maintenance should continue: “As always, work done on a particular area does not mean that it can be left to look after itself for the next decade.” (1984 AGM Heath Report).

The 1986 report records that “The Thames Water authority should be completing its storm drain”, and also that mudding-out of the mixed bathing pond should start because it was “becoming too shallow for bathing”, and there were “plans to deepen the South Wood lily pond”.

In 1988 there was praise for the London Residuary Body who had partly drained and dredged several of the ponds including the Viaduct, the Ladies and the Sanctuary ponds improving “the quality of the water and the associated wildlife”.

In 1993 The Corporation of London’s Official Guide to Hampstead Heath accepted that “The Corporation’s task is to preserve and enhance the Heath’s natural and cultivated beauty and at the same time maintain its recreational assets – sometimes a careful balancing act.”

It is to be hoped that they will re-assess the current proposed works to the dams in that spirit.



The Model Boating Pond- above as it is now. Below - part of an 8-foot-high crescent dam which will be built inside the pond, covering nearly half of it - trees in the way will be felled.



Nigel Kennedy backs the Society

Helen Marcus reports

The internationally-renowned violinist Nigel Kennedy, a long-time Belsize Park resident, gave a benefit concert at St Peter's Church, Belsize Square, for the Heath and Hampstead Society, and also to raise money towards a £10,000 project to improve the church garden at St Peter's.

It came about after a chance meeting with the church warden of St Peter's, Ken Robbie. Mr Kennedy said: "I've not done any gig in Hampstead ever and I just wanted to do something for some people who might be living locally, just to kind of say a metaphorical thank you for being in such a nice part of the world."

In the programme note he said: "I walk my dogs on the Heath every day when I am in London. It is one of the most beautiful open spaces in any City in the world and we as a community are lucky to have it on our doorstep. I walk past St. Peter's every day and I am only too happy to help with the Garden Project and the marvellous Heath and Hampstead Society in any way I can".

Introducing the concert, Kennedy told the audience: "I love Hampstead Heath and I love the green of this part of the world, and so my friends agreed to come here and play to remind people how beautiful this area is and to try to keep some of the innate characteristics from being spoiled by political organisations, or whoever else might be trying to put some concrete up."

With his ensemble of double bass, drums, violin and guitar, (pictured below) Kennedy treated a packed audience to a scintillating and memorable evening with works ranging from beautifully paced virtuoso playing in solo Bach, charming Stéphane Grappelli numbers, and Kennedy's own compositions. Nigel Kennedy's unique rapport with his audience created an outstandingly special atmosphere.

After the concert the Society thanked Mr. Kennedy most warmly for his wonderfully generous support and offered him Honorary Life Membership as a mark of their immense appreciation.



Photo and front cover: David Percy

Heath Report

by Tony Ghilchik

Dams on the Ponds

Heath issues continue to be dominated by the proposed work on the pond dams, as outlined in previous Newsletters and in Tony Hillier's Chairman's Report. The project has been narrowed to what the City calls their Preferred Options of two possibilities for each of the two chains of ponds – the Hampstead chain and the Highgate chain. These will be further refined into a detailed design for the individual dams on each chain which is scheduled to go for planning approval, with its more formal statutory consultation, in June.

After many months of working with the other members of the Pond Project Stakeholder Group we are unable to support any of the current options as we believe the City's engineers have not exercised judgement in the way the law requires in deciding what work 'should be done in the interest of safety'. This, as illustrated on our Dam Nonsense website, has led to far more intrusive work being proposed than the minimum needed to ensure the dams remain safe without disfiguring the Heath which, for the last 116 years, we have fought to keep as a stretch of countryside surviving within one of the largest urban areas of the world, a *rus in urbe*, which provides quiet enjoyment and contact with nature, and which the City is required, under the Hampstead Heath Act 1871 "... to preserve as far as may be the natural aspect and state of the Heath".

Glorious restoration at Kenwood

Over in Kenwood the House has reopened at the beginning of November after a glorious restoration of those internal parts remodelled by Robert Adam. They now look as they did in 1796, when originally created for the 1st Earl of Mansfield. Newly-recruited volunteer guides are working inside the House, and your first visit is

likely to include an enjoyable search to find your favourite painting now many have been repositioned to help tell the full story of the House.

New home for Heath Hands

Also restored is the path from the car-park end of the flower garden which now continues on to the Dairy, above the eastern end of West Meadow. These Dairy buildings are now home to the education centre and to Heath Hands volunteers. The possibility of opening up two of the old views from the Dairy – to the House, and to the Sham Bridge is still under discussion. Restoring either of these views would require removal of some fine trees and, to minimise this, only narrow openings are being canvassed. English Heritage are still preparing artist impressions of these restored views to help local groups give their considered opinion on the painful choice between retaining the threatened trees and the restoration of a remarkable survival of early nineteenth-century landscaping – a very important objective.

The St Jude's storm

Early on Monday 28th October the St Jude's storm, with winds of up to 70mph, uprooted 50 Heath trees, including the King's Beech on the edge of South Meadow which was planted by George V and Queen Mary on 18th July 1925 to mark the opening of Kenwood to the public. The worst damage was in Golders Hill Park, with the loss of a 65ft centuries old beech, and on the Heath Extension where the large fallen trees included one of the ancient hedgerow oaks which was snapped like a matchstick some six feet above the ground. There were another 50 around the Heath with major limbs off, and many with smaller damage. All the fallen trees and limbs have been retained in deadwood piles in

Heath Report (cont)

the wooded parts of the Heath, to help provide new habitats and promote wildlife diversity.

Awards for the City

On a more cheerful note, we are delighted that the City of London has again retained their Green Flag and Green Heritage awards for Hampstead Heath and, indeed, for Highgate Wood and all their other Open Spaces. This was the Heath's 15th annual flag award, whilst Highgate Wood has won an award for all the 17 years of the scheme's existence. In addition the City was a finalist in the Britain in Bloom for 2013, and won gold.

Farewell and thanks to Simon Lee

Simon Lee, the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath for the past 12 years, will be leaving at the end of February to become Chief Executive of Wimbledon and Putney Commons. We are immensely grateful for the way he has managed the Heath during these 12 years. On our regular quarterly walks around different areas to discuss what work has been, and is scheduled to be done, Simon has shown his love of and objectives for the Heath to be in perfect harmony with our own. He leaves with our best wishes for his new role.

The big gap Simon leaves is being filled by Bob Warnock, the Superintendent of City Commons, who is being seconded to take over as Acting Superintendent of Hampstead Heath until March 2015, to give time for more permanent arrangements to be agreed, advertised and filled. We know from Bob's work on City Commons that he will be a worthy successor and will have our full support and help with getting to know the more intricate variety of habitats on the Heath.

Management Work Plans

This variety of habitats is reflected in the different 10-year Management Work Plans being developed

for various areas. The most recently approved plans cover both the Sandy Heath Ride, aiming to provide fringe habitat, with flowering plants and scrub, for invertebrates, birds and mammals by being managed on a 5-year cycle to provide a mosaic of heights and age structures, and also the Heath's Hedgerows. The hedgerows plan entails laying and 'gapping up' with new plants in stages to bring just over 1km of these true hedges into appropriate management by 2020, and has been developed from a survey in 2012 of the hedges which might be worked on by traditional hedge management techniques, such as coppicing and laying, even where those hedges are more like linear woodland (e.g. Hedges 2 & 3 which run east-west across Parliament Hill Fields) than conventional hedges.

Excellent work done by the City over the past few months include removing the fence around Pitt's Arch on Sandy Heath, and landscaping work to the Bull Path at Parliament Hill Fields which brings the rural feel of the Heath into the Parliament Hill area by removing shrub borders and metal fencing along the paths and replacing it with grass, that is to be left long with a small mown strip at the front, and native hedges along the William Ellis School boundary and around the tennis courts. This work will continue this winter with removal of more hedging along the path to open up the Petanque lawn area, planting a community orchard, moving the tennis hut to open the views up towards the Stone of Free Speech and removal of metal barriers to improve the Highgate Road entrance by the Keepers Lodge.

Nearby, from the top of Parliament Hill, tree growth is once again seriously restricting the views to the City and needs to be removed over the winter months.

Over in the Hill Garden there has been work

on the nearby section of the pergola – re-laying the paviour pathway; temporary repairs to make the oak framework safe, and re-rendering and repainting the false windows beneath the Heath side structure.

New date for Springett Lecture

Finally, we are in the process of re-scheduling last

October's Springett Lecture which had to be cancelled at the last minute due to Edward Milner's illness. He was to talk about 'Native trees of the London area in an era of Climate Change'. He is keen to give the talk when he is fully recovered and we are aiming at a date in late March but have not yet got a firm date, so will be e-mailing details when they have been confirmed.

Annual General Meeting 2014

Elections to General Committee

Officers of the Society

The following existing Officers of the Society who are elected annually - President, Vice-Presidents and Treasurer - propose to stand for re-election.

The current Chair of the Society, Tony Hillier, does not propose to stand for re-election.

The current Secretary of the Society, Marc Hutchinson, proposes to stand for election as Chair.

If Marc Hutchinson is elected as Chair, the office of Secretary will become vacant. Nigel Steward, currently an elected member of the General Committee, proposes to stand for election as Secretary.

Vacancies on the General Committee.

If these Officers are elected or re-elected, there will be four vacancies on the General Committee.

Janine Griffis (Town Sub-Committee & Events) will have completed her first term of three years as an elected member of the General Committee and will stand for re-election for a second term of three years.

Tony Hillier (currently Chair of the Society) will stand for election for a first term of three years.

John Weston (Website management team and communications) who is currently an appointed member of the General Committee under Rule 21(2)(b) will stand for election for a first term of three years.

Frankie de Freitas who will have completed her second consecutive term of three years as an elected member will not be eligible for re-election.

The maximum number of members of the General Committee is 20. If the above persons are elected as described, there will only be one vacancy on the General Committee. There is no constitutional requirement that this be filled.

Nominations for elections

Nominations for elections must be received by the Society in writing before 15 April 2013 in accordance with Rule 21(4).

The Society's constitution can be viewed on the Society's website.

Planning Report

by David Castle

Redevelopment at New End refused

You will probably have heard by now that the massive overdevelopment proposed at 29 New End has been refused by the councillors on Camden's Development Control Subcommittee. The refusal was unanimous, and I have been informed that this is a most unusual event, especially as the development was recommended for approval, unbelievably, by Camden's Planning Department.

The group organising the objectors have to be congratulated on an excellent campaign against the development, and of course the Society also strongly objected to the gargantuan proposal and lobbied both Councillors and Planners.

The Council's Subcommittee meeting in the main Council chamber was a lively event with the galleries packed with objectors and children from a local school who cheered every time a speaker criticised the proposed building.

It is difficult to understand how such an application, with so many defects, could have been recommended for approval by the Planning Department. For a start, the existing very solidly-built nurses' home could easily have been adapted and retained for much needed low-cost housing, thus also meeting one of Camden's Core Strategies for tackling climate change, (and incidentally eliminating the need to remove an existing building - causing enormous stress on traffic, roads, neighbours, and the local environment).

In addition, it is it strange that the Planners did not attempt to negotiate any reduction in size of basement or car parking, or overall volume, or any improvement in the poor quality of some of the lower units. In fact, the final scheme presented for approval had two more flats than originally proposed!

Unfortunately the system is stacked in favour of developers. They can make application after application and appeal until objectors often run out of money or momentum. In addition, especially after a positive report and recommendation for approval by Camden's Planners, the Developer will almost certainly appeal. In our experience based on previous appeals, the Inspector, who is the sole judge, unfortunately takes considerable notice of a planning department's recommendation for approval.

The Old White Bear Public House

In the middle of December last year an application was made for change of use for this much enjoyed, and very successful public house to a single dwelling. The Society of course immediately sent in a strong objection to Camden's Planning Department. At the same time a very vigorous campaign to stop the change of use was mounted by the "Save the Old White Bear" group.

Due to the very high price of houses and flats in Hampstead and the high profit that can be made by changing any existing community facilities or sources of employment etc. to housing we can expect more of these requests for change of use. It is important that the Society rigorously opposes such attempted changes both in this case and in the future.

Heath House

Many of you will have noticed that this prominent listed building has been allowed to fall into disrepair. We have contacted both English Heritage and Camden Council with some success. Both organisations have agreed to act in order to pressurise the owners to take action.

Trees

A significant reason for Hampstead's popularity is its leafiness. Vicki Harding reports that there are many risks to our tree heritage, which we continue to attempt to reduce.

One focus has been on the arboricultural companies working within the Subsidence Industry. They have again in the past year requested tree-felling in Hampstead - even for 1mm. cracks - without providing evidence that the trees are at fault. For this reason it is necessary for us to provide a strong argument about how other factors could be causing movement, and evidence as to why trees are not implicated, indeed how trees could be helping the situation. Time and again insurance companies' engineers believe Hampstead buildings sit on ground over London clay - which often they do not - and that therefore flowing or diverted groundwater or leaking drains cannot be the actual culprits, when they probably are. It is also very rare that they consider causes within the building itself: differing foundation levels, partial underpinning or wall/joist junction failure.

This year we are gathering plenty of case examples to strengthen our argument when we come to tackle the industry head-on. There is a big discrepancy between their knee-jerk reaction "there are cracks: it must be trees, take them all out" and the facts for those who have some understanding of the interaction between water, geology and trees. There are many non-tree causes of subsidence, some particularly prevalent in Hampstead. We would like insurance companies to rule these out first. Fixing a leaking drain costs less than felling a tree; finding and fixing the cause is cheaper in the long run than felling a tree, or trees, and then discovering that this aggravates the situation. How subsidence occurs is described on the Society web-site: www.heathandhampstead.org.uk/planning/trees/what-s-really-causing-your-subsidence

Improving Camden's Development Policies.

Camden are reviewing their Core Strategies and Development Policies and have requested comments on how they might do so. We have forwarded our observations to them, and will report their response in the next newsletter.

Delivering the Newsletter by email

You can receive your Newsletter by email in the form of a PDF so that you can read it on screen if you prefer.

For those of you who do not keep your Newsletters, it is environmentally more friendly, saving paper and unnecessary waste. The occasional extra flyers could also be sent via email, if wished.

It would also save the Society a great deal of cost. With postage costs increasing enormously this is now becoming a major consideration.

If you would like to try this please let the Editor know at info@heathandhampstead.org.uk You can be sent a PDF to try out, to see if you like it. PDFs of the Newsletter can also be seen on the website.

Town Report

by Frank Harding

May I, on behalf of the members of the Town Sub-Committee of the Society wish all readers a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

Since I last reported to you on our activities, some new issues have come to our attention and others have been progressed, although they frequently take some months to resolve. This report therefore concentrates on those where there has been movement.

Plaque walks in Hampstead

Julia Male led two pairs of walks around the streets of Hampstead to view and to speak about the lives of those to whom plaques have been put up in and close to the village. They were well supported and it is planned to repeat them in the Spring. Those who are interested in joining these walks should contact Janine Griffis (on grifkohl@aol.com) to go on the waiting list.

HS2

The Government recently published its Environment Statement and a Hybrid Bill relating to its projected development of the high speed train connection from London Euston to the Midlands and eventually the North of England. The documentation runs to many, many pages and hidden in it are proposals which have a direct impact on Camden in general and Hampstead in particular.

The first of the key issues which will impact the residents and traders of Hampstead and their visitors is the proposal that one hundred heavy goods vehicles a day will pass over the top of the Heath, proceed down Heath Street and the High Street, thence to Rosslyn Hill and Haverstock Hill to the Chalk Farm and Euston areas; they will be carrying materials to the construction site. The reverse journey, using the same route in the other direction, will mean

that a similar number of vehicles carrying rubble and other spoil from the site will pass through Hampstead.

The environmental impact from fumes etc of this additional heavy traffic will be significant for those living on the route and those shopping in the village. For the foundations of the roads, particularly Heath Street, and for the old buildings along its length, the effect could be horrendous. Further, traffic flows, already problematic in the High Street, will be affected with the lorries competing for space with buses, other HGVs and cars in the narrow confines in that part of Hampstead.

The second issue is the scale of the development and its impact on those wishing to travel into town from the Hampstead area. Over many months, in fact for a few years, streets in Chalk Farm and Euston and the surrounding roads will be closed to allow construction to take place. The effect on traffic flows into and out of North West London will be enormous.

The Society is in touch with Camden's officers who are considering their response to the proposals. We shall be submit our own concerns. Whether this project has a momentum of its own which is unstoppable remains to be seen, but it is clear that Camden would be one of many areas that will be adversely impacted by its development for years to come.

Hampstead Rediscovered IV

The fourth in the series of exhibitions of historic paintings and prints of Hampstead will open in Burgh House in April 2014 and run until the end of June. It will comprise works by Patrick Lewis Forbes, a painter who lived and worked in Hampstead at the end of the nineteenth and in the early twentieth century.

New Neighbourhood Forum for Hampstead

by Janine Griffis

Shaping Hampstead's Future

In response to the 2011 Localism Act which gave local communities the authority to develop their own local plans, a group of local residents and business people are setting out to develop a shared vision that will guide future development in Hampstead for years to come. The group hopes to be designated as a Neighbourhood Forum, and then to produce a Neighbourhood Plan that Camden's planners would follow in their decisions. Participation by as many local residents, businesses and community groups as possible will be essential to the success of this effort.

Camden has already approved five different neighbourhood forums in the borough, including those in West Hampstead, Highgate and Dartmouth Park. We could not pass up this opportunity; it is a chance to shape not only how the village area develops but to protect and enhance those things we love about Hampstead.

A Neighbourhood Plan for Hampstead would sit alongside Camden's other strategic planning documents such as the Local Strategic Framework and the Core Strategy but would carry more weight than the conservation area statement and Camden Planning Guidance.

The H&HS hosted a public meeting for local groups in September from which a steering group emerged, and has since been working to establish the forum. The area's three local councillors are members of the steering group.

A Neighbourhood Plan could create policies aimed at encouraging good design that retains and improves Hampstead's unique character, streetscape and natural environment. It should also ensure that Hampstead offers a welcoming environment to businesses, and that the area's development is sustainable socially and environmentally.

A Plan could address such issues as: adequate protection of local and community facilities, including shops; the addition of basements to residential properties; a definition of what would constitute 'over-development'; protection of trees and garden areas; pedestrian safety; and the amount of through traffic. However, these are just examples. The actual issues to be addressed by the proposed Neighbourhood Forum, and by the subsequent Plan, will be decided by local residents, businesses and community groups. Generation of the Plan will involve extensive consultation and the final draft must meet the approval of an independent examiner, and be voted on in a public referendum.

Though work on the Plan won't begin until after designation of the Forum by Camden, discussions can take place on what a shared vision for Hampstead might look like. Membership will be open to everyone who lives or works in the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum area.

Invitation

Come to our ideas workshop on Sunday 26 January from 3 to 4.45 p.m. Email grifkohl@aol.com to reserve a place.

Separate efforts are under way to set up forums in the Redington/Frognaal area see: <http://redfroghampsteadneighbourhoodf.weebly.com/>, the Netherhall/Fitzjohns area, and in Church Row/Perrins Walk.

For more information about the Hampstead forum group and the proposed boundaries, see www.hampsteadforum.org

Janine Griffis, a member of the Neighbourhood Forum Steering Group, is an H&HS Committee member, and chair of the Pilgrim's to Willoughby Residents Association.

The Hampstead Shops Campaign

Jessica Learmond-Criqui

There are three certainties in life – death, taxes and change... We can't do much about death and taxes - but we can stand up to the speed of change. One such unpleasant change which has recently wafted in the direction of Hampsteadites is the acquisition of The Old White Bear pub at New End, by an Isle of Man company. This corporate has applied for planning permission to convert the pub into a 6 bedroom house. Locals are aghast at the potential loss of this 300 year old pub forever.

The formidable group of New End residents who saw off the bid for development of 29 New End quickly launched a campaign objecting to the planning application. The campaign has achieved tremendous traction formalising itself into a local association called '**Save The Old White Bear Group**'.

The Heath & Hampstead Society, the Hampstead Shops Campaign, the Neighbourhood Forum, the NW3 Traders Association, residents of Gospel Oak and other local groups and the local press, notably the



This charming picture of the pub comes from the petition web-site set up to save the pub:

www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/save-the-old-white-bear

Ham & High, CNJ and the Evening Standard have swung behind the campaign and rallied locals to make their voices heard. Ricky Gervais, Neil Stuke and Peter Egan, the actors, Glenda Jackson MP and Councillors Simon Marcus and Chris Knight have lent their support to the campaign.

But the pressure must be kept up. If you have not already done so, please write to Camden Planning Department to object to this application. Do email me if you would like details of the planning application and a draft letter of objection - jlc@lawlcs.com.

As you know, at least 70p out of every pound spent on the high street is re-circulated in the local economy. That is why we organise regular shopping crawls involving all the family, to support our independent traders.

Do visit the traders to keep them alive. Hampstead would not be the town we love if our independent traders were not in our midst. Let's give them something to smile about in the New Year.



The Heath & Hampstead Society

Don't forget to use the

Hampstead Card

The current list of businesses taking part in the scheme can be found on the Society's website

www.heathandhampsteadsociety.org.uk

Benefits offered are granted at the traders' discretion. The Society cannot be held responsible for changes in terms or availability of any discounts or offers

Peter Gorb - an appreciation

by Helen Marcus

Peter Gorb, businessman, pioneering design management teacher, and Chairman of the Heath & Hampstead Society in the 1990s, has died aged 87.

Peter was educated at Manchester Grammar School but, told he was not bright enough to take the Matriculation exams to the sixth form, he entered himself for them, passing with four distinctions and subsequently winning an Exhibition to read History at Peterhouse College Cambridge. He was called up before he could take up his place and spent four years in India during the last days of the Raj. After Cambridge, he won a Fulbright scholarship to Harvard Business School.

His career in the textile and retail business, becoming commercial director for the Burton Retail Group, led to him becoming a pioneer in design management, and the first serious advocate of design as a business discipline. This led to the founding of the Design Management Unit at the London Business School in Regent's Park where he was an inspirational teacher and wrote several books on the subject. He was also closely involved with the Royal Society of Arts' manifesto, Education for Capability.

He lived in Hampstead with his family for over 50 years and in retirement became increasingly involved in its conservation. He joined the Committee of the Society in 1988, becoming Honorary Treasurer the next year. He immediately set about raising the membership numbers getting it past the thousand mark, since when it has never looked back.

He instigated a fundraising campaign so that the Society could back up proposals to enhance the street-scape with financial contributions. These included the refurbishing of the worn-out fencing along Spaniards Road, persuading

Camden to replace High Street trees destroyed by the 1987 storm, and a street-by-street renewal programme for the historic street lamps.

It was not long before he was asked to become Chairman: the threat to the open space at Branch Hill was at its height; Camden's ill-thought-out controlled parking zone was rearing its ugly head, the Macdonald's saga was dragging on, as was the campaign to save the New End Hospital buildings.

He used his design expertise to raise standards, both of the Society and of the fabric of Hampstead itself. He introduced the Society's competitions for the best front gardens and shop fronts, in particular to encourage shop fronts that respected the architecture of their buildings. He revived the Hampstead Plaque Fund, arranging for the Society to take over responsibility for it. He persuaded the artist Sydney King, and Rex Winsbury, a professional editor, to redesign the Society's newsletter giving it the admired and distinctive format that we still use today. Another innovation was open Consultative Committee meetings, to encourage members to come and quiz their Committee.

Peter was a dynamic and charismatic personality, but also tremendously warm, jovial and friendly, always drawing people in to any activity he was engaged on. He gave immense service to the Society and leaves a splendid legacy of achievement for the community of which he was such an important part.



Photo Nigel Sutton

A Victorian reminiscence of the Heath

The Diary of Sarah Gould 1841 - 1926



Sarah Gould was the daughter of John Gould, a celebrated ornithologist and publisher of bird books. Gould died in 1881 when Sarah was 44. In 1885 she and her older sister Louisa moved to 3 Steeles Road which they rented for 7 years. She was delighted to move away from central London to be near Hampstead Heath where she could have country walks and sketch the landscape and flowers. After her sister died in 1894 she moved to 61 Rosslyn Hill.

She wrote a diary about her life in Hampstead between 1885 and 1890, extracts of which were kindly sent to us by her great-great niece, Maureen Lambourne. We give them here together with some of the charming drawings she made, reproduced from the original pages.

St Valentines day Feb 14th 1885

St Valentines day, but no Valentines! Lou & I went up to Hampstead to look about us. We wandered into Church Row, & up to the Parish Church. I was delighted with Church Row, with the ivy-clad Church at the end, & with the nice old fashioned churchyard. Indeed all Hampstead & the immediate neighbourhood has a nice old-world look about it, that is most refreshing after the noise, & bustle of London....

April Bank Holiday on the Heath

Weather bright with a little rain. went up to the heath, in the morning, for a little while. Numbers of holiday folk were quietly making their way up, & by the pond by the flagstaff, a livelier scene presented itself, for there rough men & boys, were for once, thoroughly enjoying themselves riding round the pond, on donkeys & poor old unsaddled horses, round & round they went, helter skelter, with as much, or possible a great deal more enjoyment, than any rotten-row lady could experience.

A golden lake

April 20th 1885 Glorious Spring day. .. we went up to Hampstead by omnibus, & walked on to the Heath, it was most delightful there. saw the sun begin to set. The air was delicious. The sun shone upon a piece of water in the distance turning it into a golden lake.

*The
Lady
Lou on
the
Heath
July 4th
1885*



Beautiful day. Went up the hill sketching in the morning had tea at one of the little tea-houses, & walked & sat about the heath. Certainly Hampstead is a most beautiful part.

Exhibition at the Hampstead Library

Oct 15th 1885 Bright beautiful morning. Lou & I took some geological specimens for the Indust[rial] exhibition at the Hampstead Library, & then went for a delightful country walk through green meadows, where there were cattle & goats.

A July afternoon 1887

It was a lovely aft. & the heath, & the country beyond was looking beautiful. After tea we walked up the lovely, lime & chesnut Avenue, across the heath & round by Spaniard road home.

Northern Heights Footpath Association

Nov 1888: Lou & I attended a meeting at the Vestry Hall, in connection with the Northern Heights footpath Association. It was rather dreary but the object is decidedly good. To preserve as far as possible, the rights of the public to the open ways across meadows etc near London. Mr Maurice spoke, also Miss Octavia Hill.

The New Part of Hampstead Heath

Tues 21st May 89 We went round the new part that has been lately added to the Heath, as public property. It is a beautiful addition, & much gratitude is due to Mr F Maurice, for the valliant manner which he has worked, with others, to secure it. The evening was lovely, & I enjoyed the walk very much.

The Viaduct, Hampstead

Wed 5th June 1889. Lovely morning. Lou & I went up to Hampstead, the new part, & made one or two little sketches.

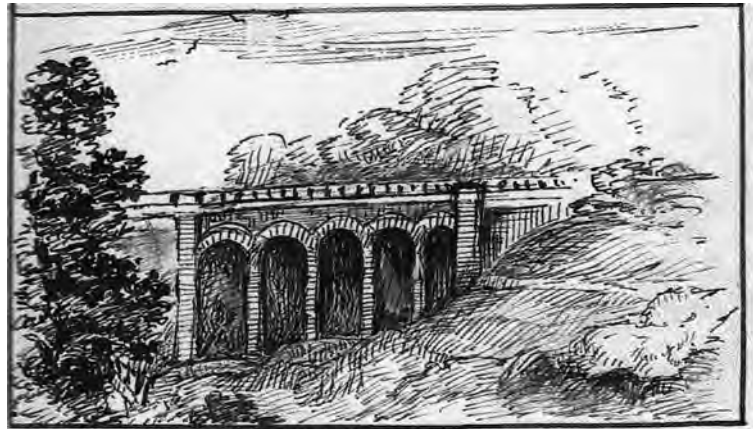
A storm on the Heath

Thurs 6th June 1889. Lovely hot weather. Marion came to lunch & spend the day.



The "new part" of the Heath was the land stretching across to Parliament Hill, secured for the public in 1888, after another public campaign.

The Viaduct



She & I went up to the Heath for a country walk. In the evening there came on such a storm, as we had not seen for many a long day. The lightning was vivid & almost incessant, the electricity running in brilliant threads of light all over the sky, sometimes forked downwards & sometimes across the heavens. The rain was very heavy & the storm so bad altogether, that we persuaded Marion not to attempt to go home, & about ten p.m. we made up the spare bed for her.

Bulletin Board

Members' email addresses

Are you missing out?

Email is invaluable for letting members know of vital issues between Newsletters. It has been particularly important in recent weeks, with campaigns to save Athlone House, the Old White Bear Pub the Pond Landscape on the Heath and other useful information, to keep members informed of the latest news and events. If you did not hear about these it is because we do not have your email address.

The Society is increasingly using email, especially with the spiralling cost of postage. If you have not given us your email address you may be missing out on important local and Society news and initiatives. So, if you have not already done so, please do send your email address to the Society at:

info@heathandhampstead.org.uk

Make sure you include your name and street address so that we can identify you.

This will also enable us to update our Membership Records and simplify our communications with you.

Thank you.

Hampstead Film Society

Hampstead Town Hall,

Tuesday evenings at 7pm

All tickets are now £5.00 on the door

To checkon exact dates contact:

Tel: 020 7692 5800

Email: hfs@wacarts.co.uk

The Belsize Story Volume 2

Greater Belsize

is now complete.

Members will remember the fascinating presentation of David Percy's film "The Belsize Story" at our 2012 AGM.

Now David has completed part 2 of this superb record. This volume explores the origins of the Chalcots/Eton College Estate and Fitzjohn's Avenue including the Lyndhurst area. The film also reveals many of the area's lesser-known facts, such as the Soviet spying activity that took place in Lawn Road, from where the passing of our Atomic Bomb secrets to Soviet Russia was partly masterminded and controlled.

Marcus Ferrar, author and journalist, says of volume 2:

"The film is monumental. Visually extremely beautiful. How lovely that June is eternal in Belsize Park. Except, that is, for the stunning opening sequence of pelting rain. The interviews with interesting people lend distinction to the whole concept. Fiona Bruce carries the narration through very well indeed."

The DVD is available

at Waterstone's
Hampstead, Daunts in
Belsize Park and online
at belsizestory.com



Bulletin Board



Burgh House Museum, Buttery, Bookstall

Exhibitions, talks, concerts and classes
Burgh House, New End Square NW3 1LT
www.burghhouse.org.uk
Tel: 020 7431 0144

*Open Wed - Fri, & Sun, 12 - 5.00pm
(Saturdays by appointment)*

Support the Friends of Burgh House

For more information or to join the Friends,
tel: 020 7431 0144



Keats Community Library

10 Keats Grove

The volunteer-run registered charity,
operated by the community.

The library is open to everyone. It is easy to register for a KCL library card to borrow books. We have over 20,000 items

Forthcoming Attractions, Evenings 7.30

Maureen Lipman - 20th January.

Simon Callow 29th April
'Charles Dickens and the Great Theatre of the World'

John Hegley 25th April
Poetry in his inimitable style!

The Spring Bring and Buy Book Sale

Saturday 20th April : 10-4pm

For more information about the Library, its events, and how to join, see the website:

<http://keatscommunitylibrary.org.uk>

Hampstead Theatre

Hampstead Theatre Foyer Appeal

We need your help to transform the foyer spaces at Hampstead Theatre and dramatically improve the visitor experience.

Support the Hampstead Theatre Foyer Appeal today by sending a cheque (payable to Hampstead Theatre Foundation):

Hampstead Theatre
Eton Avenue
London NW3 3EU

To find out more about our plans and how you can help contact:

ian.vallance@hampsteadtheatre.com

Tel: 020 020 7449 4161

www.hampsteadtheatre.com

Friends Membership

Avoid disappointment by becoming a Friend of the Theatre Amongst the many benefits Friends receive are:

- Priority Booking
- advance notice of forthcoming productions
- Quarterly e-newsletter –
- 10% discount at Hampstead Theatre bar

For details of our membership schemes please visit us at

www.hampsteadtheatre.com/support-us
or contact Sally Wilson, tel: 020 7449 4155.

sallyw@hampsteadtheatre.com

We look forward to welcoming you soon

www.hampsteadtheatre.com

Heath Walks 2014

Walks are normally held on the first Sunday of every month except January. Most start from Burgh House, New End Square. London NW3 1LT – 10 minutes walk from Hampstead Tube Station (for map see www.burghhouse.org.uk)

NB: *parking is extremely difficult locally, especially in spring and summer. West Heath car park (behind Jack Straw's Castle) is more likely to have spaces than the East Heath car park.*

Starting times are either 2.30pm or 10.30 am (9.30 for birds), depending on season and subject matter.

Walks last approximately two hours. They do not necessarily follow made-up paths; you are recommended to wear suitable footwear as conditions may be rough or muddy.

You will be invited to make a minimum donation of £3.00 per adult, to be collected at the beginning of each walk, to help support future development of the walks programme and to promote the Society's activities generally.

Children are always welcome so long as they are suitably shod, can walk reasonable distances and are accompanied by an adult taking full responsibility for them.

Please note starting times and meeting points

Further information from walks organiser, Thomas Radice,
mobile: 07941 528 034 or
email: hhs.walks@gmail.com

2 February 10.30am (meet at Burgh House) Ponds of the Heath led by Marc Hutchinson, Secretary, Hampstead Heath Winter Swimming Club; Secretary of the Heath & Hampstead Society and member of the Heath Sub-Committee

2 March 10.30am (*meet between the old Kitchen Garden and entrance to English Heritage staff yard, east of Kenwood House) The Hidden Heath led by Michael Hammerson, Highgate Society representative on the H&HS Heath Sub-Committee and member of Highgate Society Environment Committee

** This meeting point used to be identified as 'the gazebo' (since demolished), overlooking the City, with orientation table.*

6 April 9.30am (meet at Burgh House) Birds of the Heath in Spring led by members of the H&HS Heath Sub-Committee, John Hunt (former Chairman of the Marylebone Birdwatching Society), and Sash Tusa

4 May 2.30pm (meet at Burgh House) Flood protection: the Society's position on the City of London's dams project led by Thomas Radice and Lynda Cook, members of the H&HS Heath Sub-Committee

1 June 2.30pm (meet at the Flagstaff, by Whitestone Pond) Identifying trees on West Heath led by Bettina Metcalfe, local tree enthusiast and member of the International Dendrology Society, who has been leading tree walks for the Friends of Kenwood

6 July 2.30pm (meet between the Old Kitchen Garden and English Heritage staff yard, east of Kenwood House) The wildlife and management of Hampstead Heath led by City of London Ecologists

3 August 2.30pm (meet at the cattle trough and flower stall, Spaniard's Road, near the Spaniard's Inn) Sandy Heath and the Heath Extension led by Lynda Cook, member of the H&HS Heath Sub-Committee

