

The Friends of Bishops Park Members' Newsletter



Summer 2015

Readers will have noticed that the statues in the garden area adjacent to Pryors Bank have been repaired. Last November a lone vandal damaged all of them by trying to knock off pieces and / or knock them off their pedestals. Similar damage was done to the figure on the island in the lake in the park and also to monuments in the All Saints Church yard, plus Margravine and Fulham cemeteries.



The repairs were not easy. The figures are heavy and well weathered. It needed the skills and expertise of specialist contractors. But we are pleased to report that repair work was completed in March to a high standard.

A date for your diary – Saturday 11th July

We're holding a **volunteering day** on Saturday 11th July 10am - 2pm to sand and re-oil damaged benches in the pond area of the park. The Council will be supplying the materials and we are hoping that you and your friends will be able assist in maintaining this area of the park.

If you are able to join us please let us know by [e-mail](#) so we can let the Council know the numbers to expect.



Excerpts from “The History of Bishops Park – A People’s Park”

Alex Laird

The story of how Bishops Park developed, its design, the people who worked in it and those who used it was an eye-opener to me, who had lived in Fulham for more than 30 years. This book specially commissioned by the Friends of Bishops Park is a fascinating read and full of revealing photographs and illustrations. Sally Miller brings the past to life detailing the voices of Fulham people and Park highlights such as the Kings Dinner in 1902 which fed no fewer than 14,000 residents! (more of this story in further newsletters). The Park was made from land given by the Bishop of London. It was part of the great Victorian parks movement to address the urban effects of industrialisation, largely poverty and overcrowding, by promoting health, welfare and access to nature.

After a slow start from its proposal in 1883, the Park opened ten years later with the Bishops Walk along the newly constructed river wall. The granite for its piers came up the Thames from Penryn in Cornwall aboard the ship *The Ivy*, then to Fulham by barge.



Image Courtesy of John W. Rogers

Delayed by counter winds, construction company Joseph Mears was under pressure: ‘We hope the barge *Mary* will be down with the tide sometime today and we will esteem it a favour if you will unload her with all despatch’.

Today's much larger park evolved from this small strip. It transformed marshland with dumped soil and rubbish and a shoreline fouled by the use of the river as an open sewer. By 1903 the rest of the park had been created, with summer concerts held in a bandstand from 1894. ‘The remainder of the Meadow was used from the start as it is now: for games and sport. In the spring of 1896, remaining hayricks were removed, it was grazed off by sheep, rolled, and opened to the public. Local football teams were allocated slots for matches from the autumn of that year’.

“The History of Bishops Park – A People's Park” by Sally Miller (£14.95) can be ordered by emailing bishopsparkinfo@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

Date	Event
Sunday 7 th June	CANCELLED ABC Picnic CANCELLED
Saturday 11 th July 10am – 2pm	Volunteering day - sand and re-oil damaged benches in pond area of the park. If you are able to join us please let us know by e-mail

Your committee:

Chair	Amanda Lloyd-Harris	General Member	Howard Palmer QC
Deputy-Chair	Roger Weston	General Member	Victor Ho
Treasurer	Keith Mallinson	General Member	Christopher Round
Membership	Rowena Vaughan	General Member	Alex Laird

See also www.friendsofbishopspark.com or www.fulhampalace.org.uk

This Friends Members’ Newsletter is published three times a year and is circulated to members electronically. Please make sure we have your up-to-date email address. Hard copies are available to members without email.

Editor: Roger Weston, June 2015

Feedback

We’re interested in your views on any of the above or anything we’ve not included. Please contact us through the website www.friendsofbishopspark.com / email: bishopsparkinfo@gmail.com or Amanda 020 7385 5965 or Roger 020 7385 5444