

Old Chiswick Protection Society

Summer 2013 Newsletter

Summer Party on Thursday 20th June

The Society and Fuller's Brewery have joined together to hold a **summer evening social gathering on Thursday 20th June from 6.30pm-8pm** to celebrate everything that is special about our Conservation Area.

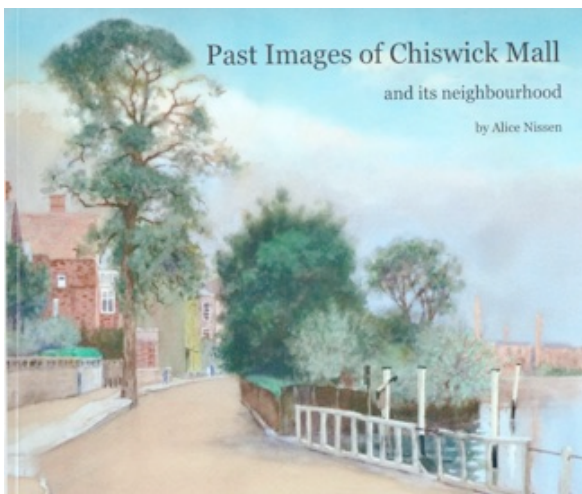
This will take place in **Bellevue House riverside garden, along Chiswick Mall** – or, in the event of rain, in Fuller's Hock Cellar. It will be an opportunity to meet members and neighbours, join our Society if you wish, and learn more about the new OCPS website. Dress is casual and please bear in mind that the grass may be wet underfoot.

Fuller's Brewery, as a committed part of our community, is very generously providing the venue as well as food and drink on the evening. They would very much like to know how many people to cater for, so we'd be grateful if you would **let us know by Monday 10th June**, if possible, if you plan to attend. Please send us an email on oldchiswick@googlemail.com.

As a result, the Annual General Meeting this year will move to November.

A pre-launch version of the website can be viewed at www.ocps.btkc.co.uk.

Past Images of Chiswick Mall and its neighbourhood by Alice Nissen



Alice Nissen, several generations of whose family have lived in Chiswick Mall, has just put together a fascinating book of photographs and paintings as well as her own recollections of Chiswick Mall, its residents and development in the C20th.

The book includes works by painters who worked on the Mall such as Eric Ravilious, Julian Trevelyan and Victor Pasmore, and previously unseen photographs discovered in her parents' cellar.

Alice has a limited number of her book which can be bought by contacting her at an@cloudworld.co.uk. Her book will also be on sale at the party on Thursday 20th July (£25).

Work on Chiswick Eyot

The project of building up the banks of the Eyot to defend it against the destructive work of the burrowing Chinese Mitten Crab and erosion by the tides is a long-term one. It is being undertaken by local residents and volunteers together with the charity Thames21.

Pollarding and bundling

The willows on the Eyot were professionally pollarded in November. Then in January a group of local residents, including a number of enthusiastic youngsters, bundled up all the withies (cut branches of willow) to store them in the purpose-built corral on the island.

Bank stabilisation

Since then, Thames21 has organised monthly conservation days when volunteers, some local and some from other parts of London, have worked on the banks, driving stakes into the mud on the north side of the Eyot, weaving withies through the stakes to make fences and piling bundles of withies behind these fences to trap mud.



There is much more of this work to do, so if you would like to get involved, please look at the Thames21 website for details (www.thames21.org.uk) or get in touch with OCPS Committee Member Thérèse Bennett (bundling in the photo above) on t.tobin@talktalk.net and we will let you know about planned conservation days. There's no need to worry about not having appropriate gear – T21 supply wellies and waders, gloves and goggles.

Himalayan balsam and OCPS Action Evening

The Chinese Mitten crab is not the only invader threatening the Eyot. Himalayan balsam, pretty as it is, also poses a threat. It is a very vigorous annual that smothers native plants. Unlike native perennials, it has roots that die completely in winter, leaving nothing to bind the soil and prevent it being washed away by the tides. Many hours were devoted to eradicating balsam last summer – but it will be back. Seeds from plants upriver will have found their way onto the Eyot and will soon be sprouting, so the job of controlling it will continue.

To fight the balsam, in addition to the usual day of withy work we do in the winter, OCPS is organising a summer's evening of work on the Eyot to pull up as much Himalayan balsam as possible. This is not hard work – it is shallow-rooted so comes out quite easily. It would be lovely to have a good turnout of volunteers for this event. Children are welcome too – once the hollow stem of a plant has been pulled up, it has to be trodden on to destroy it, which is fun and makes a very satisfying noise! No tools are needed – just wear long sleeves and trousers, wellies and gloves.

Date and time: **Thursday 4 July 6.30pm – 8pm.** **Do come and help!**

Thames Tideway Tunnel

Whilst construction of the first stage of the tunnel has been moving westwards from the Lee Valley during the past year, Thames Water's application for consent to build the remainder of the tunnel is now under consideration by the Planning Inspectorate (the Government body responsible for making the Development Consent Order). You may have seen invitation notices appear along the river recently to publicise consultations, two of which will take place in Hammersmith. The Society has registered itself as an interested party in this process and will keep in touch with progress. The closing date for the registration of interested parties is 28th May, with the Inspectorate due to make its final decision by the autumn of 2014. Main tunnelling is intended to commence in 2016 with completion in 2023 when it will pass under our area and join up with the Storm Tanks at Acton.

Wildflower planting on the Hogarth Roundabout

We have been fortunate in continuing to benefit from the passion and expertise of Brita von Shoenaich, the professional wild-flower gardener, who has so generously given her services voluntarily for the last two years.

She has once again sowed the 'triangle' in the A4 and we are hoping for another magnificent show. Inclement weather and difficulties in communication with Transport for London delayed the work, and the hoped-for funding to expand onto the Hogarth Roundabout itself has not been forthcoming, but nevertheless we are confident that the result this year on the triangle will match last year's beautiful display (praised by Prince Charles in the run-up to the Olympics).

Neighbourhood Watch news

Our area continues to be a crime 'hotspot' for theft from vehicles, and there has been an increase in attempted burglaries, so please keep vigilant. Secure your windows and doors and make sure cars have nothing in them visible to thieves. Don't leave car or front doors open for even a moment as several residents' and contractors have recently suffered lightning fast thefts while their backs were turned.

Traffic and Roads

Homefield Park South

Readers may remember that the Society objected to one of two large unsightly park notice boards which suddenly appeared last year courtesy of the London Borough of Hounslow, obstructing the views across the park from Netheravon Rd South.

After the second part of the three-stage complaints procedure, the Borough finally removed it (see pictures).



Chiswick Lane subway

We reported in our last newsletter on the makeover of this underpass, which had been given "long-lasting treatment with new hard panels painted to be graffiti resistant." Members will have noticed that sadly the treatment was not as permanent as we had hoped. Transport for London (TfL) tell us they are "aware of the defects and have asked their supply chain to investigate and rectify." We will be following this up, along with the Hogarth Roundabout subway, which languishes in a state of semi-repair.

Hogarth Roundabout rubbish

The Roads Sub-committee has also been working closely with Cllr John Todd to get either TfL or Hounslow to remove the unsightly rubbish left littering the Hogarth Roundabout when the squatters' camp was removed from there some three months ago. After much bureaucratic wrangling, it has finally been agreed that the job falls to Hounslow's highways contractor, but problems have now arisen over the safety of the workforce crossing the road to the central area. Hugh Padgham is referring the matter to Hounslow's formal complaints procedure (which we used to good effect over the removal of the redundant signs on Homefields South).

Finally the sub-committee has supported Cllr Todd in his objection to a planned wheelie-bin trial in another part of the Borough, and, although the pavement and street furniture replacement programme planned for Chiswick does not affect our Conservation area directly, he continues to monitor this situation too.

Planning Issues

Once again there have been few changes on the planning front over the last couple of months. The owners of Heron House on Chiswick Lane have appealed against Hounslow's decision to enforce the removal of the solar panels that were installed on the facade facing Fuller's Brewery last summer. No date has yet been set for the hearing.

There has been no further information on plans to build a small toilet block onto St Nicholas' Church. Some remedial re-surfacing of Fuller's brewery yard has started. A timber fence has been replaced along the length of

the wall between Dartmouth House and the cemetery. The planning department has been made aware of this; however to date there has been no formal response. The Society has also responded to an application from one of its members for a riverside garden pontoon.

Please note that as always, whether or not the OCPS comments on any application, individuals are welcome to comment on any planning applications directly via the London Borough of Hounslow website planning portal.

Chiswick Hospital Foundation Stone

When Dan Mason, the founder of Cherry Blossom Boot Polish with its factory by the Hogarth Roundabout, built a hospital on Chiswick Mall he gave it to the people of Chiswick in perpetuity. The foundation stone was laid in 1936. The hospital went from being a general hospital to a maternity hospital, to a psycho-geriatric hospital, and then - in spite of a prolonged local campaign to retain it - it was sold for housing development. The developers of Chiswick Lodge had intended to honour the history of the hospital by retaining the foundation stone and relaying it; unfortunately though, it was lost in the building works. But on Thursday 28 February a fine replica stone was unveiled. It was commissioned by the developers, Jones Lang Lasalle, and elegantly engraved by John Das Gupta.

Sir Alan Munro, President of the Old Chiswick Protection Society, paid tribute to Dan Mason, who did so much for the people of Chiswick, and to Dorothy Bartram, who led an indefatigable fight to keep the hospital open and was the prime mover behind getting the replica stone made and installed. It now graces the wall along Chiswick Mall where the hospital used to be for passers-by to see and admire, and to keep the name of Dan Mason alive.

Dorothy Bartram has written a history of the hospital, published by the History Society and available for £5 from Chiswick Library. She has also written *Memories of Chiswick Hospital* which is to be published shortly.

OCPS Books on Old Chiswick

The books on the history of Old Chiswick and the Thornycroft Works continue to make a steady sale for the benefit of the Society. Copies are on sale at Chiswick Library, Chiswick House, Waterstones, Bookcase and other locations or can be obtained from Rosemarie Clifton at Brampton House, Church Street.

Committee Members' News

The Committee would like to thank its long-term member and staunch supporter Alice Nissen for all her contributions. Alice, who is leaving the area after many years, held a pivotal role in the Society which has striven to protect the character of a place very special to her and her family.

Names and Addresses of OCPS officers

Sir Alan Munro, President, Eynham House, Chiswick Mall
Russell Harris, Chairman, Morton House, Chiswick Mall
James Stitt, Treasurer, 8 Eyot Green
Patricia Langley, Secretary, Riverside House, Chiswick Mall

Planning Sub-committee Chairman: Robbie Gill
River Sub-committee chairman: Jane Nissen
Traffic and Roads Sub-committee chairman: Sir Alan Munro
Thames Tideway Tunnel Sub-committee chairman: Tony Taylor

The OCPS can be reached at oldchiswick@googlemail.com

More information on the OCPS can be found at www.ocps.btck.co.uk