



Newsletter 118 - June 2017

NEW OBELISKS FOR THE BREW HOUSE GARDEN

A project entirely funded by the Friends of Kenwood



The installed obelisks

In 1999, award-winning English garden designer Lady Arabella Lennox Boyd kindly donated her expertise to English Heritage to create the beautiful Brew House Garden which we see today. It was completed in 2000, by which time tons of soil had been excavated, new beds created, flagstones re-laid, and - to finish off the design - large obelisks installed to support newly-planted roses. Since then, it has regularly featured in tourist guides and

newspaper articles as one of the most captivating outdoor places in north London to have coffee, lunch or tea.

The Garden is considered to be an important feature of the Kenwood Estate and is included in the Kenwood Landscape Management Plan. It has become part of the modern landscape which draws visitors to Kenwood.

But the exquisitely designed obelisks were made of softwood, and rotted away. They were removed and hazel stakes supported the roses as best they could. Kenwood's recently retired Head Gardener, Paul Jackson, had been concerned for several years about 'design creep': with the disappearance of the obelisks, the designed nature of the Brew House Garden became less distinct and, while all gardens develop and change, it seemed a shame to lose a unique concept.

We are therefore delighted that we have been able to commission and fund the replacement of the obelisks. The design is exactly that of the original obelisks, English Heritage had all the original drawings and supporting documents in the archive. But to start with a wish and a technical drawing is only the beginning of the story. These are not off-the-peg items from your local garden centre. English Heritage's brief to us was clear: they had to be 'like for like', and this time, they must be built to last.

After considerable research, we discovered accoya - a stable, sustainable wood from managed forests, virtually maintenance-free and guaranteed for 50 years out of the ground and 25 years in the ground/freshwater (it is the wood commonly is used in piers). It is treated by a process called acetillation, developed by the University of London, and carries the important FSC licence, the body which runs a global forest certification system. Unlike oak, it does not twist and can be crafted into less bulky supports.

The next part of the story is a nice one: on Lady Arabella Lennox Boyd's recommendation, we contacted the master cabinet maker and craftsman who has his workshop on her estate, Luke Ham of Lancaster Woodcraft. To be able to use someone who works so closely with the original designer was very reassuring. Luke put many hours of skilled but often repetitive work into the re-creation of the obelisks, as you will see from the photos.

Every joint is a mortice and tenon, much stronger than screws.

The metal baskets which are on the new obelisks are the original baskets, they had not deteriorated at all; to complete the design, rope swags hang between some to allow replanted clematis to find a foothold. To take advantage of the occasion, a certain amount of replanting has been done in the Brew House Garden, including the refreshed central lavender bed.

The final pleasing twist in the story is still to come. You will read later in this Newsletter that Kenwood now has a new Head Gardener, Dave Gibbons - the installation of the obelisks is one of Dave's first completed projects as Head Gardener. On 6 April 2017 Luke Ham and his assistant, Peter, came to Kenwood to install the obelisks. It was a dry sunny day, and they went in perfectly, thanks to the measurements Luke had taken on an earlier site visit. We only discovered later that the stars were all in our favour: on 6 April 1998, a young gardener called Dave Gibbons started on his first day's work at Kenwood.



The team L-R: Peter Ham (Lancaster Woodcraft), Helen Payne (Friends of Kenwood), Luke Ham (Lancaster Woodcraft), Dave Gibbons (Kenwood Head Gardener)

CURATORIAL NEWS

Structural Conservation Project 1st Floor Kenwood House

Robert Adam's approach to architectural design was, of course, characterised by his harmonious use of the '...true taste of the antique...' as he would have it. The interiors of Kenwood with their furnishings, as well as the south and north external fronts of the house, were considered such prime examples of what Robert (and his younger brother James), wished to achieve in terms of style that Robert devoted a chapter of his 1778 publication "The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam" to Kenwood.

What one doesn't necessarily realise, when looking at the wonderful filigrees of neo-classical plaster work and the imposing architectural features devised to augment Kenwood is that, as an architect, Robert was not averse to cutting corners – usually at the expense of structural integrity. This unfortunately was the case at Kenwood. In the 1950s the elegant and celebrated south façade had to be rebuilt as it transpired that it was leaning away from the main body of the house – Robert had simply applied a skin of brick and stucco against the pre-existing south elevation of the earlier 1690s villa that William Murray purchased in 1754.

In 2015, we discovered another structural problem, seemingly dating back to the time when Robert was charged by his patron, William Murray, to remodel Kenwood into a fitting, suburban residence. Robert was asked to undertake certain work in Lady Mansfield's bedchamber, which most likely resulted in a serious weakening of the west interior wall of that room. Over the past 18 months or more a programme of careful conservation work has been undertaken to successfully eliminate the structural problem. This involved a team of building archaeologists, conservation carpenters and bricklayers, as well as English Heritage conservation and curatorial staff. The entire west wall of Lady Mansfield's bedroom, including the interior of the chimney flue, has been partially rebuilt where necessary or consolidated where original building fabric has permitted.

Although there has been disruption to the visitors wishing to see the Suffolk Collection, I am very happy that we were able to undertake this major (and delicate) work without having to close the south-front, ground-floor rooms. Planning for the reinstatement of the interiors of the first floor is underway. However, time is still required to allow re-plastered walls to dry before historic wooden panelling can be put back.

Dr Jerzy Kierkuc-Bielinski

LANDSCAPE MATTERS

We are delighted that Dave Gibbons has been appointed as Head Gardener, following Paul Jackson's retirement. Dave has worked at Kenwood for the last 19 years, latterly as Deputy Head Gardener, and is extremely well-acquainted with the Estate. We congratulate him on his new position and very much look forward to working with him.

This spring we hope you will have enjoyed the many native bluebells and daffodils English Heritage planted in 2016 (with the crucial help of Heath Hands) on the Dairy Bank at the edge of West Meadow; this spring they will plant 5,000 snowdrops along the Service and House drives, so look out for them next year! There will be a grass snake count this summer on the Kenwood Estate; Beech Mount has seen a new patch of gorse succeed and some new beech trees planted.

The magnolia tree on South Terrace in front of the House is a wonderful specimen which needs careful nurturing if it is to last for future generations to enjoy and we understand there are plans to ensure its well-being.

Don't forget planned Dairy opening will be on the first and third Sundays of every month from 11am – 3pm during the summer.

The Viewpoint outside the Stable Block to the East of Kenwood House should soon have a new stone plinth and an etched plaque which features some of London's significant sights, both historical and modern. (If you are interested in finding out more about the Viewpoint, which is a Protected View, go to our website and read the full article.)

KENWOOD ESTATE SPRING WALK

18th May 2017

On a lovely May morning, we were treated to a tour by Kenwood's new Head Gardener, Dave Gibbons. His theme was 'Looking at the Landscape through Fresh Eyes', something of a misnomer, given Dave's already extensive knowledge of the Estate! This has been a particularly good spring: one of Kenwood's most-loved trees, the Magnolia on the South Terrace, was stunning, the Magnolia Stellata on the North Drive was as magnificent as it has ever been, the rhododendrons were still in full bloom, the Handkerchief (or Dove) Tree has shown off splendidly. The bank leading up from the Car Park to the Dairy has been full of daffodils planted last year and one benefit of 'Fresh Eyes' will be the snowdrops up the Service Drive, something to look forward to next year. Have you ever noticed the grand veteran oak on the edge of the Flower Garden? A sight worth searching out.



VISIT TO LINLEY SAMBOURNE HOUSE

8th December
2016

Linley Sambourne House is a time capsule from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The narrow, three-storey terraced house in Kensington where the illustrator and Punch cartoonist, Edward Linley Sambourne lived and worked, has survived virtually intact. The house was decorated in the latest 'aesthetic' style, plenty of William Morris wallpaper and stunning stained glass in doors and windows. The walls are covered with his art collection, examples of his own prolific output, the photographs he collected, and most extraordinarily, those he took himself

with a concealed camera. It is a collection worthy of a museum, but in a private house.

As we toured the rooms and marvelled at the furnishings, we learnt about the family through their letters, diaries and photos: Marion, Linley Sambourne's wife who stamped her personality on the comfortable elegant morning room where she entertained her friends and instructed the servants; Roy, their son, a man of great charm with a penchant for actresses, but who somehow failed to 'make much of himself'. It is a house whose contents exude a sense of the comfort and conviviality of middle-class London life of the period.

VISIT TO THE COURTAULD GALLERY 'Rodin and Dance: the Essence of Movement'

10th January 2017

This small exhibition of an unknown area of Rodin's oeuvre was a gem. Towards the end of his life, with sufficient wealth and time to devote to projects of personal interest, Rodin explored the depiction of bodies in extreme, contorted poses. Alexandra Gerstein, curator of the exhibition, explained that Rodin was a workaholic: he spent many hours daily, drawing and perfecting his skills at expressing physical movement. We learnt that he had always been interested in dance, especially the exciting work of modern practitioners. He admired Indian sculpture and the exhilarating Cambodian dance troupe who were in Paris in 1906. Rodin drew dancers and acrobats who modelled for him in his studio, achieving astonishing fluidity by often drawing the entire figure without looking at the page.

Some drawings are certainly erotic and intensely private. Rodin reproduced the drawings in small terracotta and plaster figures, achieving extraordinarily dynamic postures. The excellent display enabled us to see the sculptured figure together with its companion drawing.

We were really privileged to have Dr Gerstein's insights into the sculptor's ideas, influences and processes.

VISIT TO THE KENWOOD DAIRY

8th February 2017



A chilly February morning was enlivened for the Friends by a visit to the Dairy led by Dr Jerzy Kierkuc-Bielinski,

Curator, The Iveagh Bequest. The introductory presentation entitled 'The Feminine Realm' covered the significance of dairy farming supervised by the lady of the house – in this case, Lady Louisa Mansfield in the 1790s.

George Saunders (1762-1839), who trained under Sir John Soane, designed the simple buildings we see today. The *ferme ornée* was a fashionable and practical addition to an imposing property. His practical design followed the contemporary awareness of cleanliness. An ideal of femininity in Britain stressed cleanliness linking it with feminine perfection and purity.

We admired the original Wedgwood Hygienic Tiles that line the Creamery and were intrigued by the way skimmed milk and whey were sent to nearby pigs. Under the Creamery is a brick ice house storing ice all the year round from the Thousand Pound Pond. It also helped to lower the temperature of the room.

To the west of the Dairy is the small elegant octagonal Tea Room where Lady Mansfield and friends (perhaps rivals in dairy production) would sip tea from a Spode tea set.

We thank Dr Jerzy Kierkuc-Bielinski for his knowledgeable and fascinating visit.

From April this year, the Dairy will open more frequently - details can be found on our website.

VISIT TO SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM

3rd March 2017



The Friends' visit to the 'Robert Adam's London' exhibition at the Soane was very enjoyable. Dr. Frances Sands, Curator of Drawings and Books, gave us a fascinating tour and explained her approach to curating this display with an emphasis on the London work of the Adam office, rather than the country houses for which Robert Adam is perhaps better known. As a result, Dr. Sands was able to encompass not only the breadth of Adam's architectural skills but also the restrictions, competitiveness and social structure in London in the period in which he was working.

We saw some of the grandiose schemes which came to nothing, such as the castellated curtain wall for The King's Bench Prison in Southwark, and the enormous, window-encrusted design for the façade of Lincoln's Inn, alongside the infinitely more successful designs for London townhouses which turned the interiors of these terraces into works of art, exhibiting the 'Adam style' neo-classicism for which the firm became famous.

A very interesting morning and lovely to see Kenwood's elegant torchère gracing the exhibition.

VISIT TO THE NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

'Emma Hamilton: Seduction & Celebrity'

22nd March 2017

The Friends were given an excellent introductory talk by the exhibition's curator, Quintin Colville, who explained his aim of presenting Emma Hamilton as a considerable figure in her own right, rather than as wife of William Hamilton and mistress of Nelson. Although forced to rely on the sponsorship of powerful men to establish herself, Emma learnt from the situations she found herself in. Through her voracious curiosity and innate wit, as Hamilton's wife she was able to support his ambassadorial position and, at a crucial time, play a pivotal role in relation to the royal family of Naples and to Nelson's naval strategy. One enemy she could never tame was the censorious society in which she lived. Her acknowledged affair with Nelson was a genuine love story and her ignominious treatment after his death would have upset him deeply.

The sensitive pulling together of the strands of Emma's extraordinary life resulted in a fascinating and, at times, heartrending story of this courageous and captivating woman: the presence of our own wonderful portrait, 'Emma Hart as The Spinstress' by Romney, was the icing on the cake.

FRIENDS OF KENWOOD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017

The 40th Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Iveagh Bequest took place at Kenwood on Sunday, 23rd April 2017, attended by 60 Friends members and 2 English Heritage representatives.

Our Chairman, Christine Mathez-Davey, commented on the events of the past year, and was pleased to report a slight increase in membership numbers, emphasizing the need to encourage more to join. She was deeply appreciative of the Dinah Abel legacy and two forthcoming legacies, which have enabled conservation work, lectures and events, particularly the Jazz concert held in October 2016. She thanked the Corporate Benefactors and Vermeer and Rembrandt Friends, as well as our regular members for their continued support. She also thanked all the Council members, English Heritage staff and volunteers for their enthusiasm and assistance. The Chairman gave special thanks to the outgoing Council members Gill Hopkins and Christine Morgan for their invaluable support over many years, and welcomed new Council members, Peter Barber, Nick Fielding and Mala Gole, as well as Barbara Solomons who will sit on the Events Committee.

Membership Secretary, Helen Payne and Treasurer Ken Solomons, presented their reports. Ken reported a healthy surplus and that two projects were being currently discussed. He thanked Tony Ghilchik for his services as Independent Examiner of our accounts.

Kenwood's new General Manager, Sam Cooper, reported that, although visitor numbers were lower this year, commercial income had risen, through retail and catering, despite a prolonged period of closure at the Brew House for maintenance. He was pleased to report a big increase in volunteer numbers whom he thanked for playing a critical role in keeping the House and Dairy open. Sam also thanked Curator, Dr Jerzy Keirkuc-Bielinski for his popular guided tours which enhanced visitor experience and generated a handsome income.

The Curator, The Iveagh Bequest, Dr Jerzy Kierkuc-Bielinski gave his report for the year covering loans to and from collections. He was pleased to report that the major structural conservation on the first floor at Kenwood, including Lady Mansfield's bedroom had been completed. He detailed completed conservation and the return of John Constable's "Hampstead Heath with Ponds and Bathers", and on-going and forth-coming conservation work. Jerzy informed the Friends about working with the Google Cultural Institute to scan the Adam Library and a selection of paintings to help preserve and promote artefacts through new technology, as well as starting a series of Facebook Live streams.

Election of Officers and Members of the Council for the period 2017-2019 was completed.

Several issues were raised by members, in response to individual Reports in the Members Forum, covering support for and the likelihood of outdoor concerts in future years, ways to increase membership numbers, and more information about lectures for House Volunteers. These were answered satisfactorily by Council Members and the General Manager.

The Chairman's Report, in full, will be available on the Friends' website: www.friendsofkenwood.org.uk

COUNCIL MEMBER CHANGES

We say farewell in this Newsletter to two very long-standing members of our Council, Christine Morgan, Secretary, and Gill Hopkins, Vice-Chair, Newsletter Editor and Website Administrator. Christine Morgan worked for English Heritage before joining the Council in 2008. She was initially in charge of our Visits and Events, and took over as an excellent Secretary in 2010. In 2012, she was responsible for redrafting our Constitution, which had not been changed since 1979 when the Friends of Kenwood began! She also created a functioning Friends' archive with the help of a professional archivist. Gill Hopkins joined the Council in 1999 and became Newsletter Editor in 2003. In 2011, she completely redesigned our fledgling website and brought the Friends of Kenwood into the 21st Century. She has continually improved it ever since, handing over an excellent and easily accessible website. Both Gill and Christine have sat on our Events Committee since its creation in 2009, and the perfect running of our events can in large part be attributed to them both. We are enormously grateful to them both for their many years of hard work for the Friends and the Council will miss them and their considerable depth of knowledge very much.

We are delighted that their successors are in place and their appointments were formalised at the AGM: Nicholas Fielding takes over as Website Administrator and Newsletter Editor and Mala Gole as Secretary and Archive. Both have hit the ground running! In addition, we welcome Peter Barber to the Council, taking up the post of Strategy Advisor. Peter has been a Friend of Kenwood for many years, has given us some excellent lectures, and until recently was Keeper of Maps at the British Library. He has been closely involved with the recent restoration project at Lauderdale House, and is a member of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art. Finally, Barbara Solomons, already a Volunteer at Kenwood House, has joined our Events Committee, providing expertise and support and Pat Hardy, Curator of Paintings, Prints and Drawings at the Museum of London has been co-opted to the Council to provide extra resource for the visits and lectures team. We extend them all a warm welcome.

HELP US KEEP COSTS DOWN!

Just to remind you: we no longer post the Newsletter except to those who do not have email. We will however not send out printed copies from 2018 to keep postal costs down. Please take a moment to consider whether you would like to go 'paperless' altogether by setting up a Standing Order for renewal of your membership.

Please don't lose touch with us though! An enormous amount of work goes into the production of our two Newsletters a year, and although we are all volunteers, we work really hard to try to keep you part of the Friends of Kenwood community.

IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME! DON'T DELAY – RENEW TODAY!

Please continue to support us and our work for Kenwood by **renewing your membership** as soon as you can. You can pay in a number of ways:

PayPal: go to the Membership page on the website, www.friendsofkenwood.org.uk and click on the PayPal button.

Standing Order which, once done, saves you having to remember to renew, and then your membership cards are sent to you automatically every year.

Cheque (made payable to 'The Friends of Kenwood'). **Please complete the renewal form and return it to Helen Payne, Membership Secretary.** YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE RENEWAL FORM WHICH IS INCLUDED WITH THE EMAIL VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER, but you will also receive a posted reminder to renew.

Please include your email address on the renewal. Help us keep in touch with you better!

Please encourage your friends to join too! Membership makes a nice present. If you wish to support us even more generously, you might consider becoming a Rembrandt or a Vermeer Friend, all details are on our website.

Single Annual Membership	£18 p.a.
Joint	£27 p.a.
Single Life Membership	£300
Joint Life Membership	£400
Rembrandt Friend	£300 p.a.
Vermeer Friend	£750 p.a.

SUPPORTING THE FRIENDS OF KENWOOD

We rely on your support to keep our high profile at Kenwood House, and your donations are welcome in increasingly challenging times. Kenwood is under the care of The English Heritage Trust which has to be self-funding by 2023. Our aim at the Friends of Kenwood is to keep Kenwood a top priority.

If you would like to make an additional financial contribution to our work, please contact our Treasurer, Ken Solomons by emailing him at kssco@aol.com or writing to him c/o Kenwood House, NW3 7JR.

You can also support us by remembering the Friends of Kenwood in your will. This can make a significant difference to our fund-raising efforts, helping us protect the future of Kenwood House, its outstanding art collection, and the Kenwood Estate. If you choose to include the Friends in your will, you will need to direct your gift to our registered charity number: 273258. It is simple to do and tax efficient.

A further benefit of leaving a gift to Friends of Kenwood, or any other qualifying charity, is that this amount will not be subject to Inheritance Tax. In addition, if total charitable bequests amount to at least 10% of the taxable estate, then the Inheritance Tax chargeable on the balance is reduced from 40% to 36%.

We have recently been advised of two substantial bequests, which we hope to be able to report on later in the year.

NOMINATE THE FRIENDS OF KENWOOD AS YOUR FAVOURITE CHARITY FOR YOUR ONLINE SHOPPING!

Did you know every time you buy something online you can support us? It's no extra effort for you, and over 4,000 of the UK's major retailers, including Amazon, John Lewis, Marks & Spencer, and lastminute.com, belong to this scheme and donate a small percentage of their online sales to charities. Register at <http://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/kenwoodfriends> and a percentage of your purchases can be donated to the Friends of Kenwood. To date, we have received over £200 in these small donations.

LECTURES AND VISITS SEPTEMBER 2017 TO JANUARY 2018

All lectures begin at **11.00 am** in the Lecture Room

Seating is limited in the Lecture Room due to fire regulations. The Lecture Room is open from 10.30am.

Sunday 17th September, **City Moderns: Painterly Impressions of Fin-de-siècle Paris and London**
Dr Simon Sleight

Sunday 15th October, **Charles I, Van Dyck and Titian**
Dr Per Rumberg

Sunday 12th November, **The Refurbishment of Leighton House**
Daniel Robbins

Sunday 10th December, **The Making and Meaning of Plaster Casts in the 19th century: their Future in the 21st century**
Dr Holly Trusted

This lecture is followed by the CHRISTMAS DRINKS PARTY.



Sunday 14th January, **Literary Highgate: Walking with Ghosts**
Isabel Raphael

FOR FULL DETAILS OF LECTURES AND EVENTS SEE THE EVENTS SHEET AND WEBSITE

VISITS

Tuesday 26th September, **Ightham Mote**

Leaving Kenwood at 8.45am and returning about 5pm

The cost is £35 for National Trust Members and £45 if you are not a member.

This includes coach travel, coffee/tea and biscuits on arrival and the guided tour. The café is available for lunch, or you can bring a picnic.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND BOOKING FORMS AND CHEQUES BEFORE 20 JUNE.

AUTUMN ESTATE WALK

Meet in front of Kenwood House.



Tuesday 24th October, 10.30 am, **Autumn Colour, Fruits and Other Interest**

SOCIAL EVENTS

This year's annual Members' Event will take place in mid-October (date to be confirmed shortly) and will have a Russian flavour! This is to commemorate the centenary of the year in which the Grand Duke Michael Michaelovitch and his family left Kenwood House after a tenure of seven years.

More details to follow: watch this space!



ENGLISH HERITAGE EVENTS

Unfortunately, there will be no open-air concerts at Kenwood this summer. However, keep checking our website and emails for smaller recitals in the House, similar to some of the recitals which have taken place over the past year.

There are already confirmed dates for the following, and we hope more will follow:

4th June	Anern Trio
25th June	Saraband
1st October	Anern trio

We very much encourage English Heritage to continue with these: it's clear that people consider music sits perfectly in Kenwood!

CINEMA UNDER THE STARS

On the Flower Lawn of Kenwood House, open air cinema run by Luna Cinema

18th July: **La La Land**
19th July: **Breakfast at Tiffany's**
20th July: **Top Gun**

For all films, doors open 7.30pm, film starts 9pm.

Tickets from £16.50 - £29

For more details and to book, go to
www.thelunacinema.com

VERMEER AND REMBRANDT FRIENDS

The Friends would like to extend grateful thanks to the following for continuing to support us as Vermeer and Rembrandt Friends:

Chris Carter; Elizabeth Meek; David Pears

CORPORATE BENEFACTORS

The Friends would like to extend grateful thanks to the following for supporting us as Corporate Benefactors:

