

FRIENDS OF DUNORLAN PARK

THE FRIENDS' SUMMER PICNIC



Picnic
in the
Park

DO JOIN US FOR OUR PICNIC ON SUNDAY JULY 21st
FROM 12.30pm to 3pm

Meet opposite Pembury Road car park
(remember parking charges will apply)

Bring your picnic and something to sit on, and the Friends will provide the wine
and soft drinks. Family and friends are most welcome.

SUMMER 2024 NEWSLETTER



Our beautiful summerhouse



A FEW WORDS FROM OUR NEW CHAIR

The Friends of Dunorlan Park's committee, Friends' Members and supporters welcome Siobhan O'Connell as our new Chair. She is settling in well and says: "It's a privilege to be appointed Chair of Dunorlan Friends and I am very excited to take on the role. However, as I said at the AGM, Peter Russell is a very hard act to follow! He has achieved so much over the last seven years, alongside a great Committee and, of course, with your support as members of the Friends - thank you. I look forward to meeting many of you at our events. When I made my home in Tunbridge Wells 10 years ago, one of the attractions was our beautiful parks and the Commons in the

centre, plus other smaller parks and recreation grounds, each with its own character. At a time when local councils are facing many challenges, the contribution of Friends' groups, both in terms of time and money, is increasingly important. One of my priorities will be to increase our membership, so I will be discussing idea on how to achieve this with the Committee.

Peter has been very generous with his time since the AGM and we have had some walks around the park, including looking at the site for the new Sensory Garden. Thank you so much to the RTW Round Table for their generous donation of £1,000 for the garden - more news to come as plans develop.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with any ideas or comments.

My contact details are shown on the last page of this issue."

Siobhan

PETER'S NOTES FROM BEHIND THE CHAIR!

As you probably know, I stood down as Chairman of the Friends at the recent AGM. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to carry out this work over a period of seven years. I am delighted that Siobhan O'Connell agreed to take on the role and that she was duly elected at the AGM. I am pleased to see that support of our award-winning and beautiful park remains in good hands with the undoubted experience and ability of our new Chair and Committee.

My wife Jenny has also left the Committee after seven years as Membership Secretary. However, we have said that we will continue to manage the membership database from outside the Committee so you haven't heard the last of us yet, especially if you don't pay your membership fees on time! As we live almost in the park, you are still quite likely to see us there muttering 'we didn't do it like that in our day'! I would like to thank the people who have worked with me over the last seven years, notably Peter Every and Kasia Olszewska from TWBC and the entire Committee who work so hard on park-related matters. I named you all individually when I spoke at the AGM and don't need to do that again now - you know who you are and many thanks for your support. There are also a few new faces on the Committee which is a healthy situation, as it should be, and I wish you well.

Also at the AGM, we formally identified a band of people who help the Friends on a regular basis from outside the Committee. Again, I won't name them all individually but their help covers, for example, volunteer gardening, tree labelling, litter picking, notice board maintenance, liaison with Folly and parkrun, VC Grove events, bird seed collection and bag filling, event assistance, bird surveys, greeting card sales and newsletter deliveries. You are all stars and the Friends could not operate without you.

Thanks again to everyone for your support and friendship - we couldn't have done it without you. Best wishes in all your future endeavours.

Peter and Jenny

UPCOMING EVENTS IN OUR PARK – SO FAR.....



**TREE WALK TO BE
CONFIRMED**
Saturday ?
Meet by the café
At 10.30am



**MOTH
IDENTIFICATION**
Meet at the café at
10.30am
Saturday in
September?



BAT WALK
Thursday August 1st
Meet at Halls Hole
Road jetty at 8pm



**FUNGAL FORAY
TO BE
CONFIRMED**
Saturday in
October?



THE TALK OF THE PARK

One of the loveliest shrubs in flower in the Spring and, since our Camellia Garden was planted, it has been the talk of the park. Camellias have been prized in Japan for thousands of years. There are records of their seeds being used to make oil in the Jomon period 2,300 years ago. Camellia oil is used to this day to clean garden tools.

Carl Linnaeus named the plant after Georg Joseph Kamel, a Jesuit priest and botanist working in the Philippines, who was one of the first to describe it. In Japanese, camellias are known as *Tsubaki*, - 'the tree with shining leaves'.

Camellias were introduced to Europe in the 18th century. The first varieties in England were brought back via the British East India Company.

In 1848, Alexandre Dumas, son of the author of *The Three Musketeers*, wrote *La Dame Aux Camellias*, a novel about a courtesan who wore a white or red camellia, depending on whether she was available to lovers or not, which was turned into the opera *La Traviata*.

Perhaps the best known is *Donation*, raised by Colonel Stephenson Clarke at Borde Hill in West Sussex.

In World War II, the Japanese government ordered all ornamental gardens to be turned over to vegetable production. When the Higo Camellia Society was formed to track down remaining varieties after the war, many were found in cemeteries. Now there are 120 cultivars. Higo camellias were developed in the Higo province of Japan's southernmost island, Kyushu. They were grown by the Lords of the Samurai, who would plant the favourite flower of their deceased relatives in family cemeteries.



EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY! *Thanks to Judy and John*



On a cold, wet day in

February, we were alerted to a Canada goose which appeared to be in distress after getting tied up in some rope. Judy went to assess the situation and realised we would need to go in the lake. Fortunately, the Monday volunteers were working so, after borrowing waders from a volunteer from Kent High

Weald Partnership, our treasurer John braved the water and caught the goose. It was a very wet event as a few of the other Canada geese tried to stop him. After cutting the rope, we took him by car to Folly Wildlife Rescue to ensure there were no major injuries. Fortunately he just had superficial cuts, so it was decided the best thing would be to return him to his family. Two hours later he was happy to be back in the park and on the lake, swimming away without a backward glance!

There are many voluntary organisations which are involved, to ensure the wildlife in our Park are well cared for.



ONE OF OUR INTREPID LITTER COLLECTORS



John Telling has been collecting litter in our park for many years and, when asked about it, John said: "When I started litter-picking, in Dunorlan, I didn't realise what a social activity it would turn out to be - much appreciated are the many 'Thank you' and 'Well done' comments. And it's interesting to chat, and sometimes learn how far people travel to visit the park, like the family who had come up from Dover for a

celebration party. I have run and walked in the park for years. Then, about two years ago, it occurred to me that as I walked around, I could also do something useful: pick up litter. As I picked the obvious stuff, I began to discover the buried away debris in the vast shrubbery areas, particularly by the car parks. So, for the last two winters, I have dived into the laurel and rhododendron (and hawthorn) to retrieve cans, bottles and plastic, and recently a mountain bike!

I look upon litter as a form of pollution. Plastic will, unless removed, disintegrate into the soil and become part of the environment which future generations inherit.

Although I vary my route, I always check the children's play area and the edge of the lake, to try to safeguard the waterfowl. The most frustrating litter, aside from cigarette butts which contain plastic, is shredded aluminium - why do people do that, and drop wipes and those shiny little coloured plastic discs, which I assume are children's craft materials? Do we really want them left in the natural environment for ever?"

We really appreciate what John does to help our park as he's out in most weathers. And, as John himself says, he doesn't have exclusive rights to litter-picking. Anyone wishing to join in would be most welcome! Thank you so much John.

PETER & JENNY'S LAST AGM AND SIOBHAN'S FIRST



Our annual meeting, on Wednesday, April 17th, was well attended with around 40 Friends and supporters arriving at the café on a bright but chilly evening. Hot drinks were waiting, served by a member of café owner Ian's staff, who very kindly stayed until the end of the meeting to keep us supplied with hot drinks after the café was officially closed for the day.

It was quite an emotional event due to Peter stepping down as Chairman after seven years, and his wife Jenny as Membership Secretary. They will, however, maintain the Members' database for the foreseeable future.

After Peter's final welcome to everyone, the Friends' new Chair, Siobhan O'Connell, was voted in and took her seat at Peter's side. Three committee members stepped down, two were voted onto the committee, and two were re-elected onto the committee. A new group was established for people willing to help the Friends, without the constraints of committee membership, when needed.

Official business over with, the meeting was opened up to some lively debates on various park-related topics.

Peter and Jenny were then presented with gifts and a card, following a nice speech from Valerie, and a huge round of applause from everyone.

They live next to the park (hop over their garden fence and you're in there!) so will undoubtedly be spending a lot of time in there, but just not getting as involved as they have been for the past seven years!

The Friends' committee, Members and supporters wish them well in their future endeavours.



ROUND TABLE AWARD

Tunbridge Wells Round Table donate money to local charities following their annual Fireworks Displays in Dunorlan Park each November and other events. This year, Peter applied for funding to create a sensory garden and we were awarded £1,000!

Peter and Siobhan attended the Charity Give-Away on April 21st.

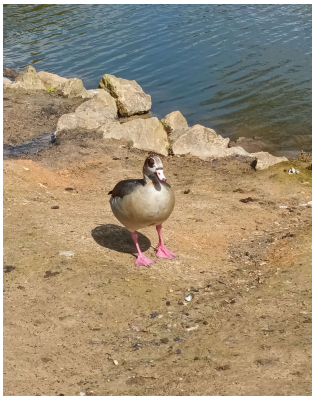
Siobhan and Peter are far left, in case you hadn't spotted them!

Sensory gardens are appreciated by people with various disadvantages such as autism, sight and hearing loss, dementia and other special needs. This is because the plants chosen will be for their smell, feel and visual effects, and also for aural effects such as the wind blowing through long willowy grasses.

It is the Friends' aim to make the garden accessible to all, including wheelchair users.



SOME OF OUR FLIGHTIER RESIDENTS.....



At the time of writing, we are still pleased to have five Egyptian goslings. Egyptian geese normally pair for life, but our female (nicknamed Elizabeth Taylor), is on her third partner.

The original pair arrived in February 2020, but the female changed partners two years later. He was not a good partner, so she traded him in, and has been with the current partner since. The present male is an exceptionally attentive father, spending his day running up and down chasing anything which goes near his family, including pigeons.

When they are old enough, the parents will take the goslings away each day to train them to fly, and then, one day, the goslings will be left behind to fend for themselves.

Normally, in Dunorlan Park, the Egyptian geese have three broods a year, but the survival of the first brood in February is normally the most successful. *Judy Guest*

ANDY'S BIRD SURVEY - some wonderful sightings yet again!

Thank you Andy Appleton

Cormorant	Robin	Blackcap	Greylag Goose	Mistle Thrush
Mallard	Red Kite	Raven	Canada Goose	House Sparrow
Moorhen	Magpie	Blue Tit	Egyptian Goose	Black-headed Gull
Buzzard	Skylark	Redwing	Herring Gull	Lesser black-backed Gull
Coal Tit	Jackdaw	Bullfinch	Common Gull	Green Woodpecker
Great Tit	Kestrel	Starling	Sparrowhawk	Great Spotted Woodpecker
Nuthatch	Blackbird	Goldfinch	Woodpigeon	Long-tailed Tit
Wren	Chaffinch	Greenfinch	Stock Dove	Seen away from the park:
Siskin	Chiffchaff	Tawny Owl	Collared Dove	Red-legged Partridge
Redpoll	Jay	Grey Heron	Carrion Crow	Pheasant
Dunnock	Goldcrest	Song Thrush	Grey Wagtail	Peregrine Falcon



FEATURED BIRD - THE DUNNOCK

The Dunnock is quite a quiet and shy bird, brown and grey in colouring and is often seen on its own, creeping along the edge of a flower bed, or close to a bush. It moves in a shuffling way, sometimes flicking its wings as it goes, and acting quite nervously.

When two rival males come together, they become animated with lots of wing-flicking and loud calling.

Its habitats can be woodland, urban and suburban, grassland and farmland.

DUNORLAN DOGGIES

Jasper arrived in his new home in Tunbridge Wells in June 2023, aged just 12 weeks old. He is an energetic, affectionate and intelligent working cocker spaniel. He absolutely loves being outside and, if he had his way, he would be in the park 12 hours a day!

Jasper couldn't believe his luck when we took him to Dunorlan Park which is a mere five minutes walk from his house. The environment of the park and all it has to offer is heaven for a cocker spaniel. He loves to run, jump and sniff his way through the meadow, and sprint to play with other dogs on the top field.

Although he loves the water and swimming, he knows he has to behave around the stunning lake where he likes to sit and observe the lovely geese and ducks enjoying their habitat. He hasn't yet spotted the terrapins, but I'm sure he will when they are basking in the sun on the boating deck!

Jasper loves training and learning, and he has some of his dog training sessions in the park with one of his favourite humans, Dog Trainer James. What a wonderful place to develop his puppy skills!

Jasper also likes to do his bit for the local community and the planet. If he occasionally spots an empty plastic bottle or drinks can, he retrieves it and we help him to place it in the bin.

He loves his park and, if he could be a Canine Volunteer on a Monday, he would jump at the chance!! *Thank you Jasper and Helen*



SOME MEMORIES FROM OUR LOVELY FRIEND RUTH



When asked about any memories of the park, our long-standing supporter Ruth M said they were mostly what her mother had told her! Ruth says: "She was so fond of the set-up there (*in the park*) - she never went out to work - she longed to travel - to visit the Canadian relations - her father was born in Canada but all the relations i.e. Enos Collins, all made their money in banking in Rhode Island etc and she longed to go out there and learn for herself! But where did all the money go? But she was never allowed to go! She (*mother*) loved

dancing and something called dalcrose, and I am sure that's what she's doing on the ice and loving it! But her mother kept her at home so she missed so many opportunities. She was very attractive with lovely long auburn hair.

She was very happily married to my father - their reception was at Gorsebrook, then the war came and life was different thereafter."

Ruth remembers that her mother never forgot that life and says: "As I have said before, she loved me to drive her round the back lane so she could look across and she had an amazing memory with a wonderful sense of humour! How I wish she was alive now as you would have enjoyed talking to her about the life then. Strangely we as children went round the park, but not often - I don't really know why but maybe a tinge of sadness that it was all gone - I don't know. She loved listening to the stories related by the family of loyal people who worked there ."



PLANNED AND PROPOSED WORKS FOR DUNORLAN PARK IN 2024

The Kent High Weald Partnership (KHWP) were in the park on May 16th finishing replacing the rotten post and rail around the dipping pond.

They were back on May 22nd planting a mix of wild life bug plants on the bank leading from the Terrace to the Grecian Temple. This project was organised by Kasia from TWBC and funded by BNP Paribas in conjunction with the Buglife charity.

KHWP are scheduled to return in late Summer, early Autumn, to clear the reeds by the bridge. Potentially, TWBC will be repairing the Terrace this year. A start date has yet to be confirmed. TWBC will be funding this.

The sensory garden is currently at the planning stage. Sherwood Men's Shed will be constructing the planters, KHWP volunteers will install and plant up. An outside contractor will be putting in the solid surface around the planters and a path leading from the main footpath to ensure wheelchair access. The estimated costs of these works is between £6,000 and £8,000.

There is a proposal to relay the path leading from the steps which run down the side of the cascade, to the stepping stones over the stream by the Summerhouse. The old honeycomb path is badly damaged and in desperate need of replacement. The quote for this project is £5,184.

The Friends' priority is to have the sensory garden completed this year. Whilst it would be nice to be able to fund both of the major projects, our funds currently will not stretch that far unless we receive further donations.

John Davies

SOMETHING FOR OUR YOUNGER READERS

Change the top word into the bottom word in four steps, altering just one letter at a time.
All words have four letters.

Clues are given on the right and answers are on the last page. No peeping!

PARK

____ - Piece

____ - Carry

____ - Nurse

____ - Baked item

CAFÉ

____ - Look after

____ - Challenge

____ - From Denmark

____ - Country Road

BIRD

____ - Poet

____ - Stiff paper

____ - Tend

____ - Unclothed

LAKE

LAND

BARK



KEEPING IN TOUCH

It's always lovely to hear from you with comments on our newsletters, be they good, bad or inbetween! We only know your thoughts if you tell us, so please do keep in touch.

You can email or telephone Joan or Siobhan at the details shown on the last page of this issue. Details are not necessarily included in each edition, so do please keep a note for future use.

DID YOU KNOW that you can also help the park by leaving a gift in your Will? Legacies can help us keep the park looking wonderful for everyone to enjoy. Contact Siobhan for more details if this is something you might like to consider.

PLEASE NOTE THE EMERGENCY FACILITIES NUMBER FOR REPORTING ANY OUT OF HOURS INCIDENTS IN THE PARK IS: 07967 686217

If you are a UK Income Tax payer, the Friends can claim 25% from HMRC on any membership fee or donation you make. This means for every £10 you give, the tax man will pay the Friends another £2.50. If you haven't already completed a Gift Aid form, please contact Jenny, the Friends' Membership Secretary at dunorlanfriends@gmail.com or call 01892 531830

If you would like to become a member of the Friends of Dunorlan Park, please complete the form below and send it, with the appropriate subscription, to the address provided. Thank you and we hope you can join us soon. You will be made very welcome.



The Friends of Dunorlan Park

(Registered Charity No. 1063715/0)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION, GIFT AID DECLARATION and BANKER'S ORDER FORM

2024 Subscriptions : £ 7 Individual £ 12 Family (any number)

Please return the completed form, inserting, amending or deleting as appropriate, to :

Jenny Russell: Mem. Sec. FoDP, Wildings, Pembury Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 3QN

I / We, (Name)
of (Address &
..... Post Code)
Telephone
E-mail

wish to apply for Individual / Family Membership of The Friends of Dunorlan Park.

The first names of persons to be included in a Family Membership are

.....(Please give DoB or ages of any under 18)

- I enclose payment (Cheques to FoDP) of the appropriate subscription (£7 / £12)
- OR**
- I wish to pay the initial and subsequent years' subscriptions by Banker's Order and have completed the necessary form.

I also wish to make a donation of £ and enclose payment of that amount

Gift Aid Declaration (Please speak to Siobhan O'Connell on 07484 890550 if you need further information)

I am a UK Income or Capital Gains Taxpayer and wish FoDP to treat these, and any future payments I may make to the Charity, as donations under the Gift Aid Scheme and to reclaim the relevant tax.

Signed..... Date.....

(**OR** please **cross through** this section if you do not wish or are not able to make the Declaration)

I was scrolling through some of the photos I've been sent over the past few years, and realised we've had some amazing flowers in our park, so here are just a few. The photographers will know who they are! I hope you enjoy these.....



Thank you to everyone who sends in photos either direct to me, Joan, or through our social media pages. Your photos may be used in future newsletters and I will try to remember to give you credit, if you add your name.

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Membership Secretary	Jenny Russell	dunorlanfriends@gmail.com	01892 531830
Treasurer	John Davies		
Publicity, FB & Newsletter	Joan Hamilton-Smith	cjay13@hotmail.co.uk	01892 539551
Committee Member	Ian Beavis (Moth Expert)	ian.Beavis@Tunbridgewells.gov.uk	01892 523007
Marketing & Social Events	Valerie Le Moignan		07768 611492
Committee Member	Carolyn Cohen		
Committee Member	Ian Harman	i.harman984@btinternet.com	01892 356095
KHWP	Steph Dowling		07929 660241
TWBC Parks Team	Peter Every & Kasia Olszewska	parks@tunbridgewells.gov.uk	01892 554031 (switchboard)
TWBC Parks Team	Robert Schembri	robert.schembri@tunbridgewells.gov.	01892 554246 Ext 4113



ANSWERS:

PARK PART CART CARE CAKE LAKE
CAFÉ CARE DARE DANE LANE LAND
BIRD BARD CARD CARE BARE BARK