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Volume 2 Issue 1

Harrow Heritage Trust



Caring for the environment

Message from the Trustees

Special points of interest:

- * PWA—Full List
- * WWYP—new committee members
- * PGJWC-Project report
- * New Brown Plaques

Our recent executive committee meeting was an indication that we are moving into more normal times. Our executive meeting was still virtual rather than face-to-face but we have new committee members, new projects and renewed activity in sub-committees. Our executive meeting was attended by our new President (ex officio) Mayor of Harrow Ghulfazar Ali who took office in April. Granted, even during lockdown the plaques sub-committee didn't stop and you will find news of two more heritage plaques for Harrow in this issue. It is fantastic to be active again even while we remain vigilant at practicing our social distancing and keeping hand sanitiser at the ready! As lockdown eased and we were officially given the go-ahead for small socially distanced outdoor activities, the Harrow Nature Conservation Forum (HNCF) resumed conservation action days and are now running three or four weekly events. Find the full list of events and guided walks online at www.harrowncf.org. HNCF sub-committee also added a nature reserve during lockdown, The Old Redding Complex. We hope to bring you a full report on the new team of volunteer wardens who have taken up the challenge of monitoring and improving this lovely and historic area in our next issue. During the pandemic people found out how lucky Harrow is to have wonderful green spaces and we get many enquiries for volunteers. We hope this will continue in the future.

And finally, please read our special section as we say Goodbye and Thank You to a wonderful individual of Harrow Heritage Trust.

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Heritage Grants—John Orchard, Chair

The Grants committee did not disperse a payment since the last newsletter but has been active in advising on restoration and repair projects and in sending out applications for grants.

Window replacement is a popular enquiry for the Heritage Grant application committee. At our recent executive committee meeting this was discussed. In principal window replacement is supported however, there is not capacity in HHT to help all window replacements even those in conservation areas. There are no criteria to deny one homeowner over another, therefore, requests of grants for window replacement will be turned down in the future. This is a change but will protect the grant funding and reserve it for projects on heritage architecture enjoyed by all rather than a homeowner.

Public Works of Art

The Harrow Heritage Trust Sculpture Trail

- 1) Katie –Harrow Town Centre—James Butler RA
- 2) Roxborough Park Murals –Roxborough Bridge Underpass—Shanti Patel
- 3) The Leaf—Grove Field—Diane Maclean
- 4) Vessels—Sainsburys Stanmore—Diane Maclean
- 5) Sunshine and Shadow—Harrow Arts Centre—Ernest Bottomley
- 6) Merlin and his Wife—Headstone Manor—Andrew Weston Smith
- 7) Meeting Tree—Newton Farm Ecology Park—Claire McDermott
- 8) Butterfly—Pinner Memorial Gardens—Tom Harvey
- 9) Inner View—Alexandra Park—Lorraine Benton
- 10) The Seed—Stanmore Place—Andy Hazell
- 11) On Our Way—Pinner Memorial Gardens—Tom Harvey

At our last executive committee meeting, the trustees approved costs for repair of one of Harrow's public works of art and refurbishment of another.

In 2018, the Sculpture in Newton Farm Ecology Park, The Meeting Tree, was damaged by an oversized mower being used on the site. The sculpture, by local artist Claire McDermott, is a concrete representation of a large tree stump made with a strong concrete core and realistic concrete bark panel and is a popular seat and play area. It stands in the centre of the dry meadow. The mowing accident damaged a substantial area on the "stump". Claire McDermott, the sculptor, will recast the damaged bark panels and affix onto the exposed concrete core. Hopefully, this will be finished before the event in The Ecology Park in September. Then we can unveil the repaired sculpture.



Meeting Tree damage:

Concrete panels depicting the bark of the outer tree were scraped off exposing the strong concrete core.

The other art work due for refurbishment is the "The Leaf". The Leaf was initiated by The Trust during the first Arts Festival and installed in place in 1994 in Grove Open Space. It is showing signs of rust and wear. A proposal to do spot treatment for rust in keeping with the sculpture's original patination was presented. The trustees approved treatment for the rusted areas. These will be lightly sanded, sealed and repainted.

This picture shows the leaf while still at the foundry where it was cast in 1994. It was unveiled by its sculptor, Diane Maclean, and the then Mayor, Cllr John Cowan. Sculptor Maclean is also responsible for another Harrow sculpture namely "Vessels" which was installed outside of the then new Stanmore Sainsbury in 2001.



Work with Young People, Sarah Butterworth, Chair

Introductions

Simon Braidman and Antonia Savvides have joined Harrow Heritage Trust as part of the Working with Young People Committee alongside Councillor Sarah Butterworth.

Antonia Savvides

I have a background in marketing and project management, then retrained, and am now a self-employed teacher. I have always had a passion for nature and I bring my skills and experience to my voluntary work. I joined the Friends group of my local park in 2016 and have now been the Chair for over 2 years. I was a member of the Harrow Parks Forum committee and set up Harrow Biodiversity and Environment with Simon Braidman and Simon Joshua and we work together to create, launch and promote the Harrow go Green competition. I am working on several environmental and community projects across the borough and am campaigning the council to change their approach to mowing regimes to benefit biodiversity. I look forward to working with Harrow Heritage and especially WWYP in order to teach and support young people in Harrow to respect and care for this beautiful borough.

Simon Braidman

I have been interested in nature and wildlife since a very young age and have extensive experience as an environmental educator. Now I am Head Warden at Stanmore Common Local Nature Reserve and I co-run Harrow Nature Heroes, which runs nature activities for families. I sit on the committees for the Friends of Stanmore Marsh and Pinner Village Gardens and work very closely with Antonia on a range of projects and I am really pleased to join Harrow Heritage Trust and the WWYP subcommittee.

We have begun by outlining WWYP Vision & Aims and some projects and this has been approved by the Chair, Councillor Keith Ferry

WWYP Vision is to train/ educate young people to care for and take an active interest in their heritage and local environment and drive forward schemes to enhance the London Borough of Harrow.

WWYP aim is to encourage the next generation to actively engage and lead with positive initiatives to appreciate their heritage and improve their local environment using imagination, creativity and practical skills.

Young people are key to this, as Harrow will need project leaders, artists, educators, nature reserve wardens, tree champions, Friends Groups.

At present, the natural environment is in a critical state and that no time should be lost in changing the way we all look after our parks, open spaces and gardens. Education is fundamental to this as is engaging young people with the natural world. We intend to change this by connecting training opportunities, improvement schemes and running competitions with schools, colleges and youth groups, and also working together across different generations.

Educating, campaigning, protecting, enhancing and creating new environments to raise awareness of Harrow's Heritage and work to improve biodiversity across the London Borough of Harrow.

What's ahead in WWYP?

2021/22

Pinner Rec Improvements

Funding from Spacehive will

Enable improvements by WWYP

In conjunction with

Harrow Council and the

Wood Meadow Trust

Street tree care campaign

Launch an adopt a new/ young street tree programme

Promote summer watering and requesting replacement trees

Create a junior tree champion club and certificate/ posters for schools and online social media

Facilitate young people's learning about tree and local biodiversity

Promote HH tree survey sheet

Run tree warden competition

Award "tree star" of the month

Summer 2021

Free children's nature events in parks

Watch out for dates , places and times!

Pinner Green Junior Wildlife Group

WWYP secured a grant from Near Neighbours to fund community gardening on the

Hazeldene Housing estate in Pinner

Karen Pillae

In a few short months we have gone from a typically mowed and managed housing estate to this. Planters full of veggies and strawberries, mini fruit trees, trellises with flowering creepers, two mini ponds, a herb garden and we have more ideas. Native species are popping up in areas that would normally be mowed, interspersed with cottage garden perennials.

We have had 99% of positive feedback from local people and residents and hope more children will get involved.

There has been a marked reduction in people dropping litter and certainly people's mental health has been improved by a little bit of wildness. The unmowed areas also help to damp the sound from nearby road traffic; and the tube trains which have been very loud since TFL cleared the vegetation; and may help to absorb some of the damp from the flats. They also provide a variety of grasses and native species for pollinators and other insects, and the invertebrates that support our ecosystem.

However, two of our Harrow Supports Biodiversity signs were stolen, as well as some pegs and a blue heart. Some people will steal anything.

Whilst we still have more work to do, here are some photos of what we have achieved as a community, especially the children who have engaged with the project and have been working hard to make the estate look better. We are hoping to renew our agreement with the council and continue with this work for another year

We would like to thank Stephen and Leslie Bolsover, Simon Braidman and Simon Joshua for giving their time and expertise and Antonia Savvides for obtaining the grant to get this project started; and the Barrys for their woodwork.

Thank you also to Harrow Council Housing Department and Green Team for their cooperation; and to our MP, David Simmonds, for supporting this project from the start.

Editor's note: At the time of writing, plans are being made for the food growing project started here to be continued by My Yard.org.



Remembering: Joanne Verden 1930-2020

Joanne Verden, who died 27th December 2020, once said to me “I think the way you get volunteers to stay and work on any project is to feed them”. It was a light hearted comment but when I think of Joanne I think of someone who had much talent and energy and fed that into all projects she was involved in with the result that they stayed and grew – along with volunteers of course. She was a great communicator and loved chatting with people and therefore became a great connector of people and skills. If you wanted anything such as plants for a gardening project or advice on charity insurance, to mention two disparate topics, she would listen to your problem and recommend who could help drawing on her deep knowledge of the local community. For Joanne, I think, it wasn’t good enough to just live in this lovely community, you had to be involved. She and her family moved to Pinner when she was young, and she early showed talent as both a pianist and dancer. After marriage to Martin (HHT former chair) and a spell in Australia she and family returned to Pinner where she opened a dance school teaching both ballet and keep-fit. Both Verdens were active in HHT since its beginning in 1985.



Our annual reports are filled with mention of Joanne and commemorative trees planted and children’s artwork displayed and celebrated. Joanne served as the representative of the Pinner Association on the board of Trustees as well as a committee member on Public Works of Art and had a hand in many other endeavours. She loved the commissioning process for new sculptures for Harrow, looking at artists submissions (there were many) and being able to choose a design and see it become real. She helped choose and commission most of the public sculptures listed on page 2 of this newsletter which is a wonderful lifetime achievement.. Many spots in Pinner benefit from Joanne’s zeal for outdoor spaces and lovely gardens. The Peace Garden in Pinner Memorial Park is one such place. As a fund-raiser she worked on both the early fundraising efforts for the restoration of Headstone Manor and later was of instrumental help in saving West House for the local community and with the successful development of the Heath Robinson Museum. These she did within the Pinner Association of which she was also a longstanding member. She was also an author publishing two books ; “Ten walks around Pinner” published by the Pinner Association and “The Fives Courts”, which was a lovingly written history of the arts and crafts style house in Pinner where she lived most of her adult life. We are thankful for her participation in in Harrow Heritage Trust and she will be greatly missed.

Membership

We are still counting our membership this year. Those members who have set up direct debits for our annual membership drive are easily collected and if you are a Lifetime Member then you are paid up for life! We have two new members since our last newsletter. Our group memberships now include Harrow Biodiversity and Environment, currently winding up the “Harrow Go Green” competition for 2020. Check out their website here:

<https://www.harrowgogreen.com>

Currently we have an opening for a Membership Secretary. If you would like this non-demanding opportunity to contribute please get in touch.

“Get all 35 years of Harrow Heritage for £35 and receive lifetime membership as well”

Brown Plaques—John Williams, Chair

Thanks to John Williams' hard work, there are two new Brown Plaques since our last newsletter. The first new plaque at Hill House, Stanmore, was emplaced with almost no audience due to COVID-19 restrictions. Hopefully, once restrictions are lifted we can do a re-unveiling and have more of a celebration.

The second new plaque is on a fine Regency house on Stanmore Hill, the unusually named Goodengate. The unveiling had a small, 30 person strong, audience for its unveiling on Saturday, 19th June at 11am. Attendees included residents, Ward Councillors and Harrow Mayor, The Worshipful the Mayor Ghazanfar Ali who unveiled the plaque.

The two new plaques number Brown Plaque 33 and 34.

The first Harrow Heritage Trust Brown Plaque was unveiled on Grimsdyke House, Old Redding in 1988. Plaques are dotted around the borough to celebrate and inform about heritage architecture and structures. A list can be viewed on the Harrow Heritage website:

<https://www.harrowheritagetrust.org.uk/plaques>

As well as identifying new historic plaque locations, John Williams has identified some previously unveiled plaques which need refurbishing and so has removed the plaque from The Cedars, Uxbridge Road, Hatch End. Harrow Council is going to have the railings refurbished, so he has taken on the job of repainting the white lettering, which has almost disappeared. We wish him the best of luck !



Harrow Brown Plaque

Number 34

The unveiling attendees included the Mayor, Cllr Ali in the presence of the Mayoress, Bob Blackman and two of our Ward Councillors, Camilla Bath and Philip Benjamin. The event was hosted by the owners of Goodengate, Jonathan and Laura Dubiner