



Friends of Pinner Village Gardens

**NEWS
Summer
2024**

FUN FILLED PINNER PICNIC 2024

After the success of the Coronation Picnic Party in May 2023, the Friends of Pinner Village Gardens Committee organised a similar well attended event on 2 June 2024.

Below a short report on the event and gallery of photos on pages 8- 9



Its been a busy Summer so here we review the events of Summer 2024.

In this issue

- Committee Members
- Corporate volunteering
- What is that plant called?

The Autumn 2024 edition will follow on shortly

NEWSLETTER for FoPVG Members

Welcome newsletter for Life and Annual (individual and household) Friends of Pinner Village Gardens.

We aim to bring you news of the park and useful tips.

Question

Which reservoir is mentioned in this issue?

Answer

See page 9

Despite the wet Spring, the grass was cut and a hot sun came out to herald the start of summer.

Music

The great attendance saw adults and children enjoying the music. Children especially enjoyed the pond dipping with Simon Braidman, storytelling, face painting and rides.

Diets were ignored as burgers and other foods were enjoyed from the stands.

Dog show

The afternoon saw dogs lining up to take part in the 2nd FoPVG Dog Show – again very popular with the wagging tailers and their human audience who gathered around the show ring.

Cooperation

We are again grateful to Fauna Vets of Northwood for judging and prizes and the Friends of Harrow Recreation

Ground who for the second time leant FoPVG their show ring kit to join with ours. This also shows how park Friends groups across Harrow cooperate to help each other.

FoPVG were also supported by a UKSPF Government grant to assist with the costs of publicity posters.

WHO'S WHO

The Friends of Pinner Village Gardens Annual General Meeting was held in July. Part of the meeting is the election of committee members.

On pages 2 - 5 we introduce the current committee members.

Who's Who on the Friends of Pinner Village Gardens Committee

Chair - Sarah Brook

I have been passionate about the park having been a regular visitor for over 20 years.

In the early days I was pushing a pram and getting to know the local area having worked in the city and known nothing more than the journey to the tube station.

Suddenly the park was an easy and pleasant walk to calm a crying baby. Later with two small boys I became a daily visitor to the playground. They referred to it as the 'round the corner park' rather than the duck park or the 'far away park'.

I was asked by a playground buddy-mother and previous Chair to get involved with the park committee, when we were trying to raise funds to improve the playground, although this was many years after my own children had grown out of playing there. Since then I have organised events, attended fundraisers and managed the Facebook page which has been successful in connecting with the community.

I am delighted to take on the Chair role after Dodie who has done a fantastic job of overseeing lots of horticultural developments and ensured the maintenance of the park is first rate.



Secretary - Brett Logan

I moved to a house a stones' throw from PVG in 1999 and discovered the park almost immediately. I had lived in central Harrow for five years prior to that and had become familiar with Pinner, but had no idea the park existed as its almost hidden. The old saying "if you didn't know about it you wouldn't know it was there" is appropriate with 3 of its 5 entrances hidden away from view. I love its irregular shape, meandering paths, the abundance of specimen trees, shrubs and copses.

In those days I felt it was a little neglected, with no care or maintenance evident. I was only an occasional visitor back then and it wasn't until my 3 children became toddlers that I ventured in more frequently to use the almost deserted children's play area. This would have been from around 2005 to 2014.

In 2018 after 30 plus years of commuting into London early each morning, redundancy meant I switched to walking my dog in the park instead. I began to appreciate the park again, largely due to the huge difference being made by the few volunteers. On occasion I found myself returning home from my dog walk, grabbing a pair of wellies, gardening gloves and spade to return to see if I could help out. That was the start of my involvement with the Friends and for the next few years I continued to turn out for volunteer work parties whenever possible.

Now a self-employed mortgage advisor my daily timetable has changed again. My volunteering with FoPVG has switched to a daily litter pick around the park while walking my dog and that of becoming FoPVG Secretary in 2023.

Volunteer Coordinator – Jonathan Freedman

I became involved in volunteering at PVG through John Bugler, one of the founders of FOPVG although since the early 1980s it was our children's first choice park. I look into the park from my front window, and with no garden of my own, it wasn't long before I was spending a lot of time in PVG. This accelerated during the Covid lockdown, when ironically improving the park became a bye-product playing a major part in the refurbishment of the Rose Circle and the Rayners Lane and Compton Rise entrances.

I now run the weekly work parties, supervise the Community Payback groups for half of their day and am often to be found in PVG at other times digging, weeding, bramble bashing, tree pruning, mowing, and repairing.

When I'm not in PVG I am on the advisory board of a cancer charity, involved in bereavement support work, am an avid hiker, and until a year or so ago was a member of the Independent Monitoring Board for Heathrow Airport.

I work out most days and am still engaged in a range of community, leisure, welfare, and charitable activities. I love all forms of live entertainment. I occasionally find time to put my feet up, but rarely for long!



Nature & Education Adviser - Simon Braidman

Growing up close to the Welsh Harp Reservoir near Hendon, Simon developed a love of wild things at an early age.

Simon went on to study Biology at Paddington College, Chemistry at Kingston Polytechnic started as an analytical chemist working in the fields of tobacco analysis and then pesticide analysis of fruit and vegetables and finally antibiotic residues in meat and dairy products.

After 20 years he changed career using his wildlife knowledge and running of events for families at Fryent Country Park, near Kingsbury, as part of a small team and joined Community Initiative Partnerships (CiP), a commercial off-shoot of Hounslow Council as an Education Officer Countryside Management Department.

Since then he has worked as an Education volunteer at the RSPB and Education Volunteer and then staff at London Wildlife Trust.



In parallel he ran a local group of the Herts and Middx Wildlife Trust before joining the Harrow Nature Conservation Forum a sub-group of the Harrow Heritage Trust,

a charity whose remit is to protect and enhance the natural and built environment of Harrow.

He is Volunteer Head Warden at Stanmore Common Local Nature Reserve, owned by Harrow Council, working with a small team of wardens and volunteers responsible for the management of 120 acres of woodland, grassland and wetland.

Simon regularly leads Pond Dips and Bat Walks in Pinner Village Gardens and other parks.

Even when on holiday Simon will be found looking at wildlife. Simon's other interest is reading and researching into historical periods particularly the Tudor period.



Treasurer - Stephen Spiro OBE

Stephen has been featured in the Newsletter previously having been honoured with an OBE to recognise his services to hospice care. Professor Spiro's clinical background is in respiratory medicine and has worked at a number of major London hospitals. Stephen is regularly in the park walking with members of his family and dog.

Landscape Adviser - Dodie Melville-Riddell

I have been gardening since before I was 4 - and I've never grown out of it. My interests not surprisingly run through my life. I persuaded my dad to dig a garden pond for me and 30 years later I persuaded my husband to do the same.

My uni' studies included soils, plant adaptations and ecology. After graduation I joined the communications department at British Waterways – think of it as an historic 2,000 mile linear pond with many plants and wildlife.

From there I moved into government media relations covering a wide range of national issues, including a famous cat.

Retirement meant I at last had the time to undertake a 3-year

garden design diploma at Capel Manor College. A homework assignment to write instructions for volunteers on 'how to plant a tree' led my tutor to



suggest I volunteer in a park, confirming my decision to join FoPVG's volunteers.

I was chair of FoPVG for two years to summer '24 while also covering the landscape adviser role. I too supervise the Community Payback groups for half of their day, and have seen the difference working with us makes. Additionally I volunteer at the Royal Horticultural Society's Library in central London one day a week.

I am married to Roy. Our relationship has changed little over the decades: I persuaded him to stand in a stream to help with my A-level Geography project. More than 40 years later I had him wading into PVG's pond to help weed it.

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS of which there are three



Glyn Watkins

Glyn Watkins has been a member of the Friends' committee since 2015. He lives opposite the park so always on hand! Married with two children and four grandchildren, all boys, and one dog....Poppy.

Glyn is also a member of Pinner Rotary, so involved in the annual St George's Day celebration, Pinner Village Show and Santa Sleigh tours as well as the Friends of PVG's Coronation & Pinner Picnic.

He loves sport and music, is a member of Metros local running club. A regular parkrunner, Glyn is part of the Pinner Village Gardens junior parkrun core team.

Jane McKeown

I'm originally from New Zealand where I was fortunate to have grown up in a generous sized garden. Both of my parents were very keen self-taught gardeners.

My Dad owned a garden power equipment business so we had a number of gadgets in the garage! As a child I was given my own little patch of garden to nurture and be creative in. I definitely had a gardening background, but my early years were spent showing and eventing horses.

I currently work full time as a senior retail manager in central London where I used to live for many years. The time came when the desire to live in a greener space and have a longed-for garden moved me to Pinner in 2008. After many years of being a carer for a loved one, I was then able to commit some time to volunteering and I jumped at the chance to join the



team I had already seen making such a wonderful difference to the park.

Simon Trott

I suspect my first visits to Pinner Village Gardens were before I was born as my pregnant Mum took a stroll around the park after lunch at my Dad's parents in Hereford Gardens.

My first memories are of excited anticipation; "Auntie, can I go in the park to play on the swings".

Aged nine, as a family, we had just arrived back from our "£10 poms", "new life" in Australia, and with no home the family was scattered amongst relatives. I was posted with my grandparents and aunt in Hereford Gardens and my escape was PVG's children's playground. This was in 1967.

The park keeper with his blue

uniform and peaked cap, kept us unruly kids in check, took the money for the tennis courts and closed the gates at dusk, all with a blow of his whistle.



Coming back to Hereford Gardens having bought the family bungalow nearly a

quarter century ago, I have once again an escape and place of tranquillity albeit when it's very early or late in the day.

I had retired from being an engineer at Kodak in 2015, and with "spare time on my hands" I joined the volunteers organised by John Bugler, and enjoyed doing my bit with trowel and spade when time allowed.

There have been successes and failures, but the investment both in labour and money has transformed the park. Its enabled making good friends and doing something worthwhile for the community. I'm so grateful to be part of it.



Rewarding, make new friends, learn new skills.
Help to keep the park beautiful by
volunteering with the Friends of Pinner Village Gardens,

Its not all gardening.
We need volunteers to gather up leaves, paint doors etc

Please get in contact with us at:
Volunteer@pinnervillagegardens.org.uk

Local companies work with volunteers in the park

Corporate volunteers joined the Friends volunteers on two days this year as part of their companies policy of social responsibility-local community support.



Above: BDO LLB corporate volunteers with FoPVG's Jonathan and Dodie directing the work.

In May we were joined by accountancy firm BDO LLP who provides up to five 'Citizen Days' where staff can support their local community. BDO spent the day weeding the beds near the tennis courts. After a successful day, BDO led by Lena, said they hoped to send another team to join us at a later date – a promise soon to be fulfilled.

Boras Construction Ltd's policy is to give back to communities in the areas in which they are working. That policy was in action in early September when Boras' Special Works Team joined us to clear overgrown brambles and weed the pond path.

PVG was chosen as it close to Boras' Harrow based projects at Sancroft Care Home and Edgware & Hendon Reform Synagogue.

Right: Boras Construction special works team

If your company would be in interested in corporate volunteering days in Pinner Village Gardens please contact us at:

Volunteer@pinnervillagegardens.org.uk



PLANT FOCUS

We are regularly asked about plants in the park – including these:

Golden leaved with scented white flowers

Just outside the Rayners Lane entrance gate to the park is a large shrub - *Philadelphus coronarius* 'Aureus'. Aureus refers to its golden hued leaves. It has been awarded the Royal Horticultural Society's Awards of Garden Merit having been trialled for reliability. More information at <https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants>



Rosebay Willowherb : *Is it a garden plant or is it a weed?*

This tall rich pink perennial plant has many common names. In World War II it showed that it is a successful pioneer species, by rapidly colonising burnt ground and bomb sites, hence common name fireweed or bombweed. It's also known as French or Great or Rosebay Willowherb. Its scientific name is now *Chamaenerion angustifolium*, formerly *Epilobium*.



It has been documented for centuries. The Gerard's book 'Herball' published 1597 referred to its '*brave flowers of great beauty*'. But 30 years later its antisocial tendencies were noted with growers describing it as '*licentious and ungovernable*'. However as it spread to many countries it became a popular garden flower.

Documenting a regions flora has been a practice in many countries for many years. Denmark began such a book in 1761 - *Flora Danica* - which took 72 years to complete its 17 volumes. One of the 3,240 botanically accurate pictures is of Rosebay Willowherb.

Dinner service

In 1790 the Crown Prince of Denmark in 1790 decided to commission a dinner service based on the book. However, production stopped and started a number of times, until it resumed as a wedding gift for Denmark's Princess Alexandra on her marriage to the United Kingdom's future King Edward VII.

For some it spreads too well through underground rhizomes and the production of thousands of seeds per plant. For others it usefully fills a gap, especially in wet ground, providing statuesque long lasting pink flowers much liked by pollinators including the caterpillars of the Elephant hawk moth. *Your choice?*

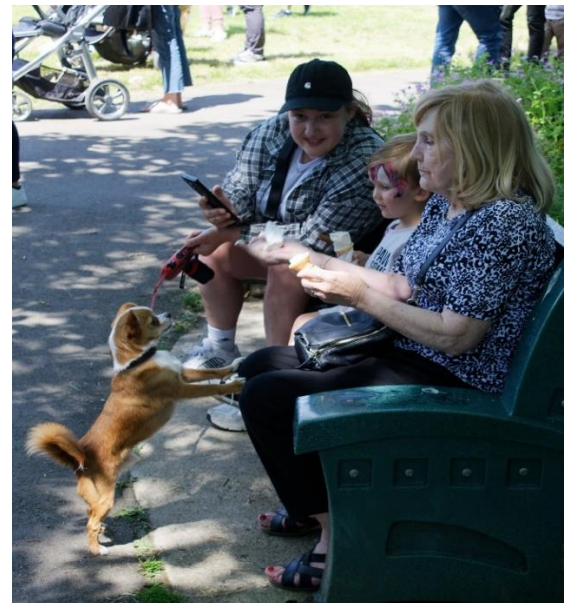
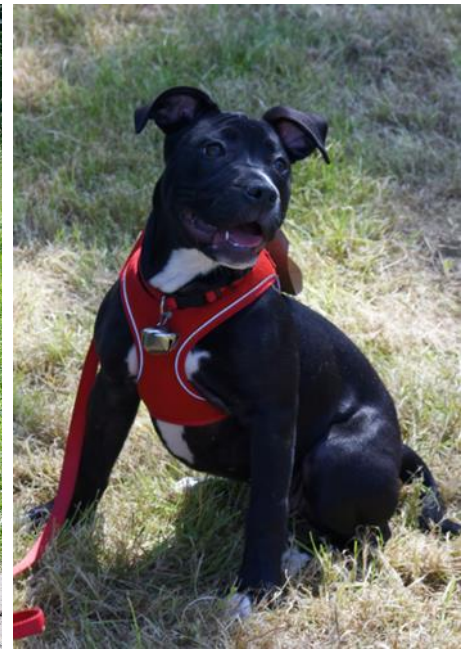
Rosa Flower Carpet Amber 'Noa97400a PBR'

This low growing semi-double rose has flowered this year from May through to the end of November in PVG. Its flowers range from soft apricot-gold ageing to pinkish-peach. PBR stands for Plant Breeders Rights. In summary this means cuttings may not be taken to make more plants without the breeders permission. Thus protecting their long significant investment to develop a successful plant. For more information:

[https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/263830/rosa-flower-carpet-amber-noa97400a-\(pbr\)-\(gc\)/details](https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/263830/rosa-flower-carpet-amber-noa97400a-(pbr)-(gc)/details)



Photo Gallery : FoPVG PINNER PICNIC 2 June 2024





Answer to the question on page 1: **Welsh Harp Reservoir.**
 Please see page 3 item on Friends of PVG committee member Simon Braidman.

We would love to hear from you on topics or questions we might briefly cover in the newsletter.

Email us via the **Contact** page at www.pinnervillagegardens.org.uk or email friendsofpinnervillagegardens@gmail.com
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