

The Friends of Osterley Park

In support of the
National Trust



NEWSLETTER

Issue 121 Summer 2021 £1 (free to members)



The Grass is Greener (1960), starring Cary Grant, Deborah Kerr, Robert Mitchum and Joan Simmons. The back of Osterley House featured as the main entrance.



Dear Friends

Welcome to our summer newsletter.

We hope you are managing to keep well. As I write this on the 2nd of July, we are looking forward to lockdown ending on the 19th of July. If all goes well, we can start to plan for our first coffee morning at Osterley.

I would like to thank those who have renewed their membership. This financial support allows us to continue vital help to the House and Gardens.

In the National Trust Magazine summer edition, the Editor said “many of you have written in to share the pleasure you've taken in your own outdoor spaces this year, whether that's a walk, a local park, a Trust place or a garden.” That has certainly been true for us – we are so lucky to have Osterley Park. The Director-General Hilary McGrady talked of visiting Trust gardens providing a wonderful sense of escape, “...one such source of joy is the garden. Throughout the lockdowns, many people have begun to garden or have rekindled an interest in gardening, even those with just a small space, a few pots or a window box. I am delighted that our new book ‘The National Trust School of Gardening’ will help people to create and improve their own green space, whether they want to design a garden from scratch or learn how to compost or garden more sustainably.”

Thanks to Douglas, bookings for our Newcastle holiday have been successful and, as he said, subject to Boris, it will take place. Also thanks to Douglas for providing the “Friday Fun”.

Enjoy the summer and the opportunities it brings us.

With my best wishes.

John James

We are so pleased that people have continued their support of the Friends and enable us to continue to support Osterley House.

Regrettably, some 20 or so people are not renewing, partially as mobility is an issue in getting to Osterley.

We have had very few joining the Friends this year, so perhaps you could encourage your friends to join us. After all, the House and Gardens are now open, with booking, and I am sure everyone who comes will enjoy it.

This year has been a particularly trying one regarding membership renewal. We send out the renewal in January as this is the last newsletter in the membership year.

Perhaps you could consider using a Standing Order for next year's renewal? If you would like more information about this, please let me know. Many find it an easier way to renew their membership.



I have been contacting people directly who have forgotten and am glad to say a goodly number are renewing.

However, this is the last newsletter you will receive if you have not renewed.

Keep safe and well.

Keith

Finance update

Douglas Craik

Obviously our income has been severely restricted with no coach trips, London visits or coffee mornings, but we'll still be able to meet our regular donations to the Flower Growers, dress makers and Buggy maintenance.

A normal source of income has been donations on the Buggy, but this is suspended and as fewer and fewer people use cash, we're looking at a stand-alone credit card reader (no wires, no need for a mobile phone). The make being considered is the 'SumUp Solo'. If anyone has any experience of this, please let me know.



Newcastle holiday

Douglas Craik

Despite the delay of full lockdown release to 19th July, it still looks OK for our holiday. In the last couple of weeks, I've had three additional bookings as Friends realise a staycation may be the best we can get until late summer.

From the footpath at the back of the Travelodge (Hadrian's Wall Path), you can see all seven Newcastle bridges, so good for architects, civil engineers and railway spotters.



Queen Elizabeth II Metro Bridge
King Edward VII Bridge
Redheugh Bridge

High Level Bridge (rail & road)
Swing Bridge
Tyne Bridge
Gateshead Millennium Bridge

The topic for this newsletter reviews films made for cinema or television and Netflix at Osterley Park House. Judith O'Flynn provided me with a list of productions from her time and earlier. One of the first famous pictures was *The Grass is Greener* in 1960. It starred Cary Grant, Deborah Kerr, Robert Mitchum and Joan Simmons. Noël Coward composed the music. The back of the House featured as the main entrance with a car driving along the wisteria side of the house allowing Cary and Deborah to ascend the curved peron to enter the house via the Long Gallery. The advertising poster for the film shows the actors and the car next to the steps. Syon was also used to make the film. If you know both Adam houses it is interesting to note the movement between rooms on screen as players walk through a door at Osterley into a room at Syon and then return to an Osterley room in just one scene.

This and various other films were made in the days before 1991 when the National Trust returned to Osterley. In the days when the V&A were here a picture about Jack the Ripper was made with Michael Caine playing Sir William Gull, royal physician and suspect. Michael Caine was interviewed by police whilst sitting at the desk in a Robert Adam chair in the library. This old (partly based on how young Michael Caine looked) but in-colour film was shown on television last year. I have not found it in any list of films made at Osterley but only Osterley has what has been called the best library furniture in the world!

Mrs Brown with Judi Dench and Scottish comedian Billy Connolly was filmed at Osterley in 1997. Judi Dench strolled down the gallery and glanced out the window to view the gardens at Osborne. At the time, Osborne was being refurbished and the film crew needed somewhere grand enough to look like Osborne.

From that time, Osterley comes on screen much more often.

2001 saw the release of the Bollywood romantic film *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham* with scenes made on the front lawn at Osterley showing the house with columns and grand staircase.

As a consequence, many local Indian weddings took place in Osterley House. Relatives in India had seen the house in the movie! *I am still Alan Partridge* begins in 2002 and the following year the two Ronnies were seen scrubbing the front steps.

In 2006, *Miss Potter*, played by Renée Zellweger, featuring the life of Beatrix Potter with storybooks and illustrations of Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny, was filmed at Osterley along with *Amazing Grace*, the life of William Wilberforce played by Ioan Gruffudd, standing against the slave trade along with Albert Finney, Michael Gambon and Romola Garai. Mrs Bunce's room was used to portray Wilberforce's house. The television programme also made in 2006 was *The Real Dad's Army* which was shown again this June.

A plethora of filming took place in 2008 including *The Duchess* starring Keira Knightley, and *The Young Victoria* with Emily Blunt and Rachael Stirling, seen below in the Long Gallery. *Little Dorrit*, a Charles Dickens tale made for TV plus a *New Tricks* sequence was filmed here. *New Tricks* has a story attached. During filming, Amanda Redman strolled into the Entrance Hall and draped her mink coat on one of the Adam scroll-end stools along the wall. Liz Rideout, wife of house manager Alan, removed the coat and put it on the floor. Original Robert Adam furniture is more valuable than a modern mink!



During 2010, the film *Burke & Hare* about the notorious body snatchers, was made here along with *Waking the Dead* and the stable yard stood in as the medieval setting of *Filthy Cities*. Around this time, the servants' hall was used as the setting for Leonardo da Vinci's work-room in a television series.

The next year 2011 saw two big screen films made at Osterley and two television plays. They were *Great Expectations* and *Parade's End* for TV, and *Effie*, the life of Effie Gray who first married John Ruskin but was able to divorce him for non-consummation and later married John Everett Millais who often included Effie and their children in his pre-Raphaelite paintings.

One of the films the house is probably best known for is *Batman: The Dark Knight Rises*. Our picture shows some of the actors assembled in the entrance hall. In the film, the entrance to the bat cave is actually the secret door in the library. After the film was issued, the door was opened and masks were issued to children who wished to be pictured in the bat cave. Many came to the house just to be photographed in front of the secret door. Unfortunately I could find no pictures of the secret door but Christian Bale and Michael Caine look splendid in the entrance hall.



In 2012, the major film made was *Belle*, the story of Chief Justice Sir James Mansfield's niece and adopted daughter Dido Elizabeth Belle who was brought up at Kenwood. Our picture shows Belle and her cousin Elizabeth as children with Lady Mary in the Long Gallery. Her portrait with her cousin by Zoffany, used to hang at Kenwood but has now gone with Lord Mansfield's family to Scotland. Belle was filmed at Osterley because Kenwood was being re-furbished at the time and another Adam house was needed. Osterley was perfect as it still has the original Adam staircase once also at Kenwood. Kenwood's was remodelled in 1795 and all of the stucco plaques removed.



The portrait of Belle was featured in *Fake or Fortune?* on BBC4 earlier this year. Chief Justice Sir James Mansfield radically influenced the laws on slavery in England exhibiting his feelings by bringing up his brother's mixed race daughter as his own.



Gugu Mbatha-Raw as Belle in the library at Osterley.

Also made that year for TV were *Restless* and some editions of *Horrible Histories*.

The house held an exhibition called *Real to Reel* from July to November 2012, which featured many of the movies made at the house until that time. Judith gave the Friends a talk about it in February 2013.

From 2014-16 only one film, *Entebbe*, was made at Osterley but there were many TV programmes including *Countrywise*, *Horrible Histories*, and a *Rugby World Cup* promotion. The three you may remember are *Mr Selfridge*, *The Royals* and *Doctor Thorne*. The wedding scenes in *Doctor Thorne* were filmed in the entrance hall where weddings at Osterley took place for a number of years.



Countrywise, a television programme which granted wishes to celebrities, took place in 2016. One featured Lesley Joseph. Her wish was to visit a country house and appear as both a servant and a fine lady. We see her portrayed at Osterley dressed as a kitchen maid and as Mrs Child.



The costumes are in the collection made by Sue Smith and the costume volunteers for Osterley who helped Lesley dress the part.

The Friends now contribute to this costume fund annually. Lesley is shown by the grand staircase and in the kitchen. My thanks to Sheila Underwood for the photographs she took at the time.

2017 brought us two films and two TV presentations. Both *To Be a King* and *Holmes & Watson* featured Osterley as did *Britain's Got Talent* and *Vanity Fair*, a new rendition for TV.

During 2018, Netflix's *Secret Garden*, a remake of the popular children's story starring Colin Firth, Dixie Egerickx and Julie Walters, used the Osterley Kitchens. The Kitchen also featured in *The Queen* made in 2006. *The Crown* series 3 was filmed at Osterley in the autumn. In August, the BBC recorded a wildlife programme with Andy Eddy and Jeremy Dalton featuring the Tudor Walled Garden, Charolais cattle and the cork oak.

The last year with much filming was 2019. The film *Louis Wain*, with Benedict Cumberbatch playing Wain, is the story about the man who drew cats. Two Netflix films were made, *Alex Rider* part of a TV detective series and *Rebecca*, a remake of the famous Daphne Du Maurier story featuring Manderley which used the Osterley Kitchens.

These films can all be seen online.



Alex Rider

Next time you are at Osterley look around - see if you can spot things in the House and Park that have appeared in the many films and television programmes made here!

News alert: the House is closed for a week in July for filming... so what will we see next?

Due to the extended restrictions on groups, we're delaying our draw until we can get together. This will be a bumper draw with at least 2 x £100 and 2 x £50 prizes.

Friends events and excursions

Please note: due to the pandemic, all of our events and excursions have been cancelled for now, apart from our planned 2021 holiday to Newcastle from 9-14 August.

We're continuing to review government guidelines and hope to advise of rescheduled and new events in our autumn newsletter, if not before.

Osterley House Book Group

Stables Café

The Osterley House Book Group meets every other month.

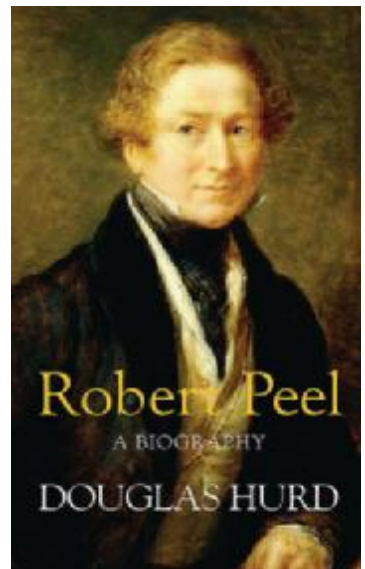
Please contact Wendy Sim if you would like more information:

wendyasim@btinternet.com

020 8979 3834

The next Book Group will be taking place on Tuesday 13th July at 2.15pm, reading *Robert Peel* by Douglas Hurd.

For all volunteers, staff and members of Friends of Osterley Park.



Issue	Published in	Contents
Winter	January	Membership renewal, first three Coach Trips and first three London Visits
Spring	April	AGM papers, membership cards
Summer	July	Next three Coach Trips, next three London Visits
Autumn	October	Next Summer Holiday booking

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The 'Friends' website gives you all of the current news, meetings, events, publications, and membership information relating to the work of the Friends of Osterley Park in supporting Osterley House and Park. www.e-voice.org.uk/friendsofosterleypark

Next Newsletter

To be published in October 2021. Any contributions to the Newsletter Editor (editor.foop@gmail.com) by **12th September 2021**.

The Editor may edit contributions as necessary.