

The Friends of Osterley Park



NEWSLETTER

Issue 128 Spring 2023 £1 (free to members)



**Douglas Craik
1948 - 2023**

Douglas Craik

Douglas was born and educated in Glasgow; he studied Mechanical Engineering at Strathclyde University. In his words “I had an enjoyable year and joined the SNP, Labour, Conservative and Liberal societies (all had a good social life) but failed every exam”. He subsequently achieved a good HNC in Mechanical Engineering, returning to Strathclyde to complete his BSc and later studied a Master of Business Administration at Glasgow University and an International Strategic Diploma at Henley Business College. In between times, he joined the army rising to Lance-Corporal and had a variety of short jobs including as a grave digger.

In 1968 Douglas joined the Post Office as an engineering management trainee in Edinburgh which he thought would be another short job – it lasted 37 years. This took him from engineering to running all the post offices in the North and subsequently the West of Scotland. In 1996 he moved to London in senior management roles, taking early retirement in 2004. The Post Office was the source of many of the ‘Friday Funnies’ emails he sent to the Friends during the Covid lockdown which we so much enjoyed.

Whilst still working, he was an officer in the Territorial Army and joined the Rotary Club. He spent time accompanying his wife Christine (who he married in 1970), a distinguished occupational therapist, to various international events across the globe. Once retired, Douglas started volunteering – firstly with SAFFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association) for South-West London, the Kingston Voluntary Association, then becoming a minibus driver for a local charity.

Very luckily for us, Ham House only had weekend volunteering opportunities so Douglas starting buggy driving during the week at Osterley in 2005 which he continued until summer 2022 – a familiar sight in his blue anorak. In 2007, Douglas was asked by Ian Conacher (then Chairman of the Friends) to attend a committee meeting; he left the meeting as Treasurer! Over the following years, as Committee members left, he became Newsletter Editor, Coach Trip Organiser, Holiday Organiser, 100 Club Organiser and Vice-Chairman. He accomplished all this with great patience and good humour. For many of us joining Douglas’ holidays to different parts of the UK was a highlight of our year

Dear Friends

Our front cover is a portrait of Douglas Craik. As you will know he passed away recently, and the first article inside is in memory of his life. Our deepest sympathy goes to his wife, Christine.

I hope that your winter has not been too difficult. We in Osterley can be thankful that our weather is not so severe as in other parts of the country. In my Chairman's Report for the AGM (which will be sent separately), I have paid tribute to Douglas, our Vice-Chairman and Treasurer. Our coffee morning on 23 February acknowledged all Douglas had done for the Friends and stood for a minute's silence in his memory. Those present signed a card of condolence.

Your Friends' Committee took steps to cancel the annual holiday Douglas had planned for Glasgow. It also paused for the time being the coach trips, but agreed to continue the two London visits planned for Boston Manor House and Leighton House. Peter Bush has already booked a number of speakers for coffee mornings.

Our AGM will be on 25 May when a new Committee will be elected. I have served on the Committee for 28 years, including 12 years as Chairman, and I intend retiring at the AGM when a new committee will be elected. My wife Patricia is also retiring as Hon Secretary. New members will be required to cover Douglas's responsibilities: Treasurer, the 100 Club and holiday.

My thanks go to Susan Parsons and Keith Rookledge for picking up on much of Douglas's work with the great co-operation of Christine Craik.

Cancellation of Holiday, pause of coach trips

The Glasgow holiday scheduled for July 2023 being organised and led by Douglas has been cancelled. The coach trips have been paused for the

time being; it is hoped to resume them later in the year. All participants who had booked have been contacted.

Use of Emails

We do send emails to friends between newsletters with recent events having shown it can be necessary to communicate quickly. Would you consider giving us an email address so that you can read items between meetings. Your email address would only be used for The Friends of Osterley Park business.

Printing and posting the newsletter in its paper form costs about £7.50 per annum per addressee. If any Friend would be prepared to receive their newsletter by email instead of in paper, please advise our Membership Secretary, Keith Rookledge - keith.rookledge@icloud.com

Please note Keith's email address so that his emails don't end up in your Junk/Spam box.

Membership Update

Keith Rookledge

A big thanks for your continuing support of the Friends of Osterley Park. With just under 200 members, we can continue our support of Osterley for the next year.

Your subscription to the Friends is due on 1 April. Many thanks to those of you who have already paid and/or pay by standing order. Our account details with Barclays are:

Sort Code: 20-02-06

Account Number: 70389315

Payment by cheque is also acceptable.

As always, we've got lots of exciting things planned at Osterley this year. We're now into our main season, with the Principal Floor of the House open once again, and the Gardens, Café and Shop open daily. We're delighted to have our new Bookshop open in the Brewhouse space, so pop in for a browse.

Our programme of events has some old favourites and a few new things too. We see the return of the Easter Adventures from 1-16 April, featuring a poetry trail around the Garden, spring themed activities, and a chocolate prize at the end. We have several outdoor theatre performances, including the return of The Lord Chamberlain's Men, Dot Productions, and Heartbreak Productions. We'll have three nights of outdoor cinema on the front lawn, courtesy of Adventure Cinema. The summer season will feature the Summer of Play, so expect some fun ways to play in the Gardens and Parkland. We also have some large-scale events planned, with the return of the West London Eid Festival, and the first in-person Middlesex Pride. Later in the year we'll have the return of Pumpkin Carving and a Halloween trail in October half-term, and the Wreath Workshops in December.

All of this runs alongside our weekly events, which include ParkRun and ParkPlay on Saturday mornings, and Junior ParkRun on Sunday mornings. These are free activities that give everyone a chance to get active, either through running, or play. Cycle hire is also open most weekends and school holidays.

We're working hard to make Osterley more accessible for more people. We've got new ramps for the Shop and Bookshop. Our single and double mobility vehicles are available for people to book, and we are hoping to expand the fleet with a Trampler, thanks to the kind donations of the Friends of Osterley. We now have an outdoor wheelchair, in addition to our Mountain Trike self-propelled chair, and the MT Push. All of these are available for people to book; by phone on 020 232 5050, or via email on osterley@nationaltrust.org.uk

We have a video of the Principal Floor that people can view if they cannot go up the stairs, and are working to provide more information in this area. Our café now has a variety of cutlery and crockery with larger handles. There's

always more we can do, and we welcome any feedback for ways we can make everyone welcome.

Thank you all for your support, in the past and ongoing. The support of our volunteers and the Friends of Osterley is a key element in making sure we can continue to deliver great visitor experiences throughout the year.

Dr Nicholas Barbon

Margaret Friday



Let us explore the life of Nicholas Barbon owner of Osterley from 1684 until his death in 1698. Barbon was the son of Unless- Jesus-Christ-Had-Died-for-Thee-Thou-Hast-Been-Damned or Praise God Barbon, also called Barebone, who was a radical puritan preacher. He was known as a rabble-rouser opposed to the monarchy, the bishops and the prayerbook

In 1653 he was selected by Cromwell to serve in the Nominated Parliament which was named the Barebones Parliament after him. Praise God Barebone was pardoned by Charles II in 1660 but in 1661 spent months in the Tower of London for treason. His wife Sarah got him freed because of his state of health yet he lived another 17 years dying in 1679.

Praise God had married Sarah in 1632. They had many children. Nicholas was born between 1637 and 1640 and was named for his father but preferred to call himself Nicholas Barbon. Nicholas grew up and attended Magdalen College, Oxford until 1759. He then went to Leiden to study medicine in 1661 but graduated from Utrecht. His doctoral thesis was on Malaria, frequently experienced in Europe but not understood (Oliver Cromwell may have died of Malaria in 1658). Nicholas returned to England and in 1664 became an honorary member of the Royal College of Physicians, staying in London during the plague as did Francis Child.

The Great Fire of London destroyed 13,000 houses making 100,000 people homeless in 1666. Following The Great Fire Nicholas Barbon became interested in property development. He bought up large houses, knocking them down and building many smaller properties on the land. These demolitions were often without permission and the replacement buildings did not fulfil the standards for new buildings, but Barbon simply ignored these. Building tall, narrow houses, like those found in Holland became even more profitable. Ground rent was based on the street frontage of the house, so Barbon's houses were cheaper for those who dwelt there. Barbon constructed many properties cheaply and sold them off quickly to pay the mortgages he had taken out to buy the land. William Letwin tells us Barbon "has become the most prominent London builder of his age" in his book *Origins of Scientific Economics; English Economic Thought 1600-1778*. Things began to go wrong when on 11 June 1664 lawyers in Gray's Inn Lane objected to his plans to build Red Lion Square, but Barbon fought back. Another setback occurred when houses built in Mincing Lane collapsed due to inadequate foundations.



A typical Court built by Nicholas Barbon

Barbon is said to have boasted that he built houses for country bumpkins, people who came from the country with money and wanted a nice-looking house. The exterior looked good, but all might collapse as unsafe construction made it cheaper to build. Barbon never employed an architect, using his own sketches with the same floorboards, staircases, windows, and doors throughout making it quick and easy for the builders.

In 1680 Barbon established the first Insurance Office for Houses in The Royal Exchange. At Barbon's Insurance Office a house could be insured for 5% of its annual rent if built of wood and 2.5% if it was brick built. Between 1681-1684 4,000 homes were insured raising £18,000 but only £7,000 was paid out for fire damage. This plan was profitable but longer-term policies proved not to be as they cost less for the insured but were more likely to require a payment later. Other fire insurance companies were set up and Barbon's attempts to have water pumped from the Thames for his houses also failed.

In January 1670, aged about 28, Barbon had married Margaret Hayes in her parish church, St. Martin's in the Fields. Margaret had a dowry of £1,000. Her father John Hayes of Hadley in Middlesex owned property around the country and the City but died in 1661. Following his marriage Nicholas purchased Crane Court from the Goldsmith's Company and proceeded to build several houses including a stylish premises for himself and his wife in 1674. Designed to impress it had marble fireplaces, elaborate plaster ceilings and at the front a courtyard laid out in black

marble and Purbeck stone with a great staircase leading to the front door. The entrance was marked in Fleet Street with elegant gateposts topped with marble and Crane Court inset in gold.



Barbon managed to get the other residents of Crane Court to pay for this, his own personal grand entrance! Long after Barbon's death his house was used by The Royal Society as their headquarters from 1710-1782 and then by a Scottish firm until 1877 when it burnt down.

Crane Court drawing

Barbon had two children: the first, John, lived five days and the second is not even named. Both were buried in St. Bride's Church as the Barbon's house was in that parish. Barbon attended Church of England services having abandoned his puritanical forebears' beliefs.

Roger North, a lawyer contemporary who observed Barbon's methods and asked him about them said "He was unique in the unscrupulousness and brazenness of his business tactics". He concluded that Barbon was "an exquisite mob master" able to manipulate people to carry out his schemes regardless of their legality. In 1684 there was a riot outside Crane Court with builders, masons, roofers, guildsmen, and dissatisfied customers of all ranks standing against Barbon just as he was acquiring Osterley. In 1685, Barbon published *Apology for the Builder or a discourse shewing the cause and effects of the increase of building* supporting the idea of extending London to make it the largest centre for life and trade in England. It was first published anonymously as Barbon was still being sued by Gray's Inn for building Red Lion Square. A *Discourse on Trade*, published in 1690 extolled the power of fashion and luxury goods to enhance trade with people "Outvying one another on Apparel, Equipage and Furniture for the house". One could not be seen wearing last year's styles, driving an old carriage, or displaying the old-fashioned heavy pre-fire furniture at home. Barbon asserted this led to the constant purchase of goods leading to continuous demand. His view was opposed by the government and the church at the time, but Barbon

was one of the first writers to see the distinction between moral and economic purchasing and is recognised as an economist.

From 1680 Barbon attempted to become an MP because MPs at the time could not be tried or imprisoned for civil cases or be sent to debtor's prison. It took him 10 years to become MP for Bramber in Sussex, one of the infamous Rotten Boroughs where the seat could be purchased. Barbon acquired land in Bramber and when the incumbent finally left Barbon stepped in to buy the seat in parliament. This crafty move kept him out of debtor's prison for the final years of his life.

For all his building only two streets in London bear his name: Barbon Close near Red Lion Square, a modern naming, and the old Barbon Alley near St. Bartholomew's Hospital. There is also Hayes Street – named for his wife. Barbon had hoped to be lauded as Gresham's successor with the Exeter Exchange, great buildings, and numerous tributes around the city, but he lacked Gresham's generous spirit. The Royal Exchange and Gresham College with free Gresham lectures continue in London today. Barbon is known as the first London "speculative property developer" and "insurance salesman" and these still have a disreputable taint. He has been cited as an early supporter of the enlargement of London and the idea of continuous purchase to promote trade. Barbon is said to be responsible for joining the City and Westminster by building along The Strand and Fleet Street with many small dwellings above shops.

From 1690 Barbon set up, with Tory members of Parliament, a Land Bank to rival the Bank of England. This failed but Francis Child's Bank at the sign of the marigold continued to flourish. Barbon also set up the Exeter Exchange, inspired by Sir Thomas Gresham. This may have been the reason he acquired Osterley in March 1684 with the help of a mortgage from Francis Child for £9,500 which he promptly re-mortgaged for £12,000. Francis Child knew Osterley as when an apprentice he had made the inventory of Osterley on William Waller's death in 1668. Osterley was described as having three floors plus a cellar with 46 rooms including a great chamber, a painted hall and bedrooms hung with velvet and tapestries.

Barbon began calling himself Nicholas Barbon of Osterley. In his usual style he made no payments on the mortgage so in 1689 Francis Child

asked that the house and grounds be reviewed. When the creditors arrived, they observed that Barbon had knocked down so much of the house that it could not be lived in so work should continue to make it suitable as a residence. They also noted that there was a brick works and a tile making factory on site along with gardens and orchards. Barbon's supporter John Asgill reported that Child had taken £2,000 of goods/ furniture from the premises but Francis Child said all he received was hay to the value of £50. Given Barbon's reputation I prefer to accept Francis Child's account. We think that Barbon may have removed the staircases so that it was impossible to get into the house when the creditors came to look – once they had left, he simply replaced the stairs. He made many alterations to the buildings, but we do not know what he did. Some believe he built the two towers on the south front of the house overlooking the great meadow. We assume the interior was very grand in support of Barbon's theory of trade.

There is still a turned banister staircase at Osterley that looks like many installed in other houses built by Barbon. Called the "Tudor staircase" in the south west tower it goes from the top floor to the ground today. It is 17th century along with panels in the steward's room and doors in the Child's suite upstairs. Whether they were put in by Barbon, a predecessor or even the Childs after they moved to the house we do not know. The cherry orchards of Barbon's day were taken over by a farmer who paid rent for them. John Asgill, Barbon's executor, claimed that Barbon had spent £15,000 on Osterley Park and plantations but this claim was not made until 1733 – 35 years after Barbon's death. Asgill did charge Francis Child II £15 unpaid rent on Osterley for the time the Childs were in possession from 1713 until 1733!

Margaret died in May 1698, but Nicholas' death was reported instead. He made a new will naming John Asgill as his executor along with his sister-in-law Sarah Hayes. In Bramber they were expecting him to stand for Parliament again when he died at the end of July 1698 aged between 58 and 61 years old. Both he and his wife are buried in St. Leonard's Heston, the Osterley Church, in unmarked graves; he didn't have any intention of paying for a tombstone and no-one else offered. This was the year Francis Child was elected Lord Mayor of London. Claims that Barbon said in his will that his creditors could not benefit from the sale of his properties is untrue – although by the time he died Crane Court had

been sold off and he rented rooms in Lincolns' Inn when he was in town. Francis Child, unpaid for the Osterley mortgage, did not acquire the house until 1713.



The garden front at Osterley. See the staircase in the 3rd floor window of the south west tower – thought to be built by Nicholas Barbon

When next at Osterley have a look at the staircase leading from the Long Gallery to the tearoom. Are these reflections of Nicholas Barbon's time at Osterley?

Sources of information for this article are : Nicholas Barbon Developing London 1667-1698 by Frank Kelsall and Timothy Walker, London Topographical Society, 2022. Aspects of Osterley, National Trust, 1998. Osterley Park by Eileen Harris, National Trust, 2001. Pictures from The National Trust, Wikipedia and The British Museum prints and drawings collection.

London Visits

Margaret Friday

Tuesday, 18 April - Boston Manor House. Cost £5

Nearest tube station is Boston Manor.

Meet at the house entrance just before 2 pm for a guided tour

Boston Manor has yet to officially re-open but they would like the Friends of Osterley to visit and give their opinions of the new

presentation during this "soft opening period". Each room represents a different period and contains figures in the room which speak as you pass by. The entrance hall and staircase with copies of the original wallpaper of the early 18th century are particularly interesting. The staff will explain how and why they set up the house in this way.

Wednesday, 17 May - Leighton House. Cost £5

12 Holland Park Road, London, W14 8LZ, nearest tube stations are Kensington (Olympia) and High St Kensington

Meet at the house entrance just before 2 pm for a guided tour.

Leighton House reopened in October last year and has been refurbished and extended with the modern part of the site now sporting an entrance and shop with fine wooden inlaid cases and desks inspired by the Middle Eastern designs introduced into the house by Leighton.

Monday, 12 June – Sailors, Saints and Samuel Pepys Walk. Cost £13

Meet in front of Trinity House (Trinity Square, London EC3N 4DH - nearest tube station is Tower Hill) just before 2pm and our guide will show us the Port of London Authority building, Pepys Garden, St Olave's Church, St Dunstons Gardens, Bakers Hall, All Hallows by the Tower Church and the Merchant Navy Monument. As we went on the Trinity House visit last year they are offering this walk at a reduced price. The walk includes visits to several churches and gardens so there will be places to sit down as we go around.

Monday, 10 July – Secret Gardens in the City Walk. Cost £6

Meet outside St Stephen's Walbrook at 2 pm. Closest tubes are Bank or Cannon Street tube/station. Walbrook is a pedestrian street running between Mansion House and Cannon Street.

Today Phil and Margaret will introduce you to some of the hidden gardens in the City of London. From ground floor to roof top outside and indoors we will have some real surprises for you.

BOOKING AND PAYING FOR VISITS

Please book with Keith Rookledge - keith.rookledge@icloud.com

For payment to the Friends of Osterley Park, we have 3 methods:

1. By cheque payable to “Friends of Osterley” posted to Keith Rookledge (address on back of Newsletter) Do not include “Park”.

2. By Bank Transfer to Friends of Osterley

Sort Code: 20-02-06

Account Number: 70389315

3. By cash at a coffee morning or the event (as long as you have booked)

Coffee Mornings

Peter Bush

The coffee mornings for Spring/Summer 2023 are as follows, all at 10:30 for 11:00 in the Study Base at Osterley Park.

Tuesday, 28 March Michael Peacock – the villages of Heathrow

Wednesday, 26 April Judith O’Flynn - The House

Thursday, 25 May Chris Cleeve - the future + AGM

Tuesday, 27 June Margaret Friday – Nicholas Barbon

Wednesday, 19 July Christine Diwell - Glimpses of Chiswick, Brentford and Isleworth

Thursday, 24 August Jenny-Louise Kirk – Looking after Royal guests

Diary: Friends events and excursions

2023 London Visits	Coach Trips	Coffee Mornings
Tues 28 Mar	Michael Peacock – the villages of Heathrow	
Tues 18 April	Margaret Friday - Boston Manor	
Wed 26 April	Judith O’Flynn - The House	
Wed 17 May	Margaret Friday- Leighton House	
Thurs 25 May	Chris Cleeve - the future + AGM	
Mon 12 June	Sailors, Saints and Samuel Pepys Walk	
Tues 27 Jun	Margaret Friday – Nicholas Barbon	
Mon 10 July	Secret Gardens in the City Walk	
Thurs 24 Aug	Jenny-Louise Kirk – Looking after Royal guests	

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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 July 2023.

Friends of Osterley Park

BOOKING FORM - SPRING 2023

To book send form to Keith Rookledge, 2 West Avenue, Pinner HA5 5BY or
 Email keith.rookledge@icloud.com f
 Phone 07768 596681

To pay

- Cheque to “Friends of Osterley” send to Keith Rookledge. Do not include “Park”. If you want printed confirmation please include S.A.E.
- Bank transfer to Friends of Osterley, sort code 20-02-06, account no 70389315, put your name and trip as the reference.
- By cash at a coffee morning or the event (as long as you have booked)

Non-members of Friends of Osterley Park are welcome but we ask for an additional £1 per visit. Non-members of NT will have to pay entry. Bookings cannot be refunded unless there is a waiting list. Substitutes can be made.

London Visits

Date	Destination	Cost	No. of places	Total Cost
18/4/23	Boston Manor	£5		
17/5/23	Leighton House	£5		
12/6/23	Trinity House walk	£13		
10/7/23	Secret gardens walk	£6		

Not a member of the Friends

Extra for non-Friend event	£1		£
TOTAL			£

Name

Mobile number

email

Name of second person