

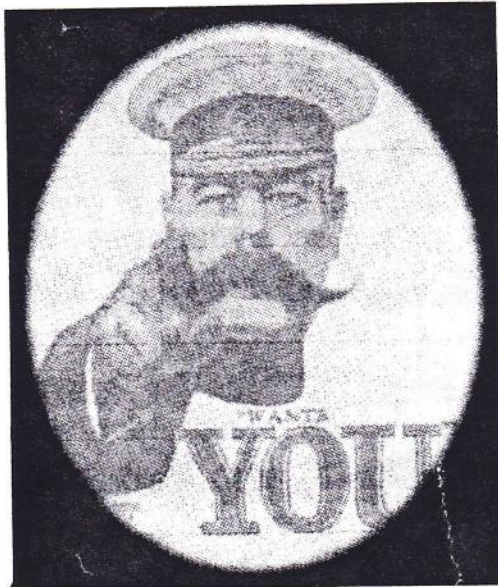


Reminder

that the
Annual General Meeting
of the
Friends of Osterley Park
will take place on
Wednesday 2 May 2001 at 7.00pm for 7.45pm, in the Old
Brewhouse, Osterley Park House.

The outgoing Committee look forward to seeing you there.

Your Committee



As a new Committee Member, and indeed "Friend", during this past year, I have volunteered to make an appeal to each of you to consider standing for election to the Committee for the next 12 months. It need not be an onerous task, the present Committee members will all stand alongside you in any aspect of the work of the Committee that you take on. It is most definitely truth, and not idle scaremongering, that the present Committee cannot effectively take the "Friends" forward for much longer.

The Constitution states that the Committee shall comprise of a total of 10. The present Committee stands at 8, but 2 of those will not be standing for re-election. This means that there are 4 vacancies which need to be filled.

I responded to Ian Conacher's appeal this time last year for a Minute Secretary, as I have experience in this area and knew that I could help. I knew nothing of the organisation - my family had moved into the area in January 1999, my husband had become a "Friend"

in 1999, but we had not taken part in any of the activities during the first year. We had been members of the National Trust for a number of years, however, and therefore wanted to be a part of our local National Trust community. I took a step in the dark and spoke to Ian, and I have to say that I have enjoyed the past year. There have been Committee meetings every 6 weeks or so, which are enjoyable occasions held in the home of one of the Committee members. As well as discussing the business of the organisation, upcoming events, ways to use the funds to good advantage, learning more about what is happening at Osterley, etc, there is a very friendly feel to the evenings, and I have made new friends of the other members, who have been very helpful to me. There is work to do, but if the Committee were to stand at its' constitutional strength numerically, this will not be an excessive burden on any individual member.

As I say, I have enjoyed my year, and am happy to stand for re-election - why not take that step yourself this year, and join me?

Irene Bowles

AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN.

IAN CONACHER.

Irene's appeal on the previous page was composed following our last Committee meeting. Since then, I am sorry to say, there has been a further development, as it is probable that the Committee will lose one more member in the near future due to relocation. There is also the possibility that another member may find it difficult to continue due to family commitments.

A Committee of only five - or, worse, four - members would not be viable. Only a transfusion of fresh blood can prevent the "Friends" going into a terminal decline. I hope, therefore, that some of you will come forward to offer their services to the Committee before the A. G. M. Please contact me on (020)-8560-8523 as soon as possible.

Without the support of an enlarged Committee, I would be forced to consider whether to stand for re-election in May 2002.

LATE NEWS ITEMS.

THE HOUSE, TEA ROOM, AND SHOP opened as planned on 31st March, although part of the Park containing the farmer's cattle is roped off as a precaution against the Foot & Mouth virus. The Great Meadow and woodland behind the House are still open, and the woods should be awash with bluebells by Easter.

RON PIPER has volunteered to take over from John Robertson the running of the "100 Club" from the beginning of next year, although he will not be joining the Committee, as he lives at some distance from Osterley. We are most appreciative of his offer.

JIM TICKLE advises that, although he will no longer be serving on the Committee, he is willing and able to continue running the programme of excursions and tours for 2002. This offer has been accepted with alacrity by the Committee, particularly as Jim has acquired experience and expertise over the years, and by working closely with Barry Pyle, the coach operator, has drawn up programmes which are consistently well supported.

FAREWELL TO NATHALIE MULLER, who has been Head Warden in the Park for some years, and was a familiar figure in the Park, driving the Wardens' buggy - and more recently on a bicycle. She has left Osterley following promotion to the post of Chief Warden with the National Trust at Scotney Castle in Kent, where her range of responsibility will be greatly increased. Her Partner, Gary Bradley, and of course her dog, Ted, have moved with her to this new location. THERESA KEMBER, Shop Manager, has also left Osterley.

THE "TING" HAS GONE! This, we understand, was the Chinese term for the structure floating on a raft in the Garden Lake, which was presented to the property during the "Chinese Osterley" event in the 'eighties. The superstructure required regular maintenance, and the pontoon base was decaying rapidly. As it had no place in the history of Osterley, it was decided that further expense in restoration could not be justified, and it was therefore dismantled in late March.

UGLY DUCKLINGS? We have noticed in the last weeks of March that the pair of swans who raised a brood on the Garden Lake last year are preparing a nest for the new season. The cob has served "notice to quit" on the three surviving cygnets from last year, but so far they have not left the site, and can be seen sitting disconsolately on the lawns. Each time they venture back to the lake, their dad sees them off again - a no-win situation, because they will need a long take-off run on the lake to get airborne!