 **The Friends of Osterley Park**  
*A Supporters Group for the National Trust*

# **NEWSLETTER**

Issue 74 Sept. 2004

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Garden Lake Osterley Park  
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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

September 21st.	LONDON CITY CHURCHES WALK - Great St Helens - see page 9
October 12th	LONDON CITY CHURCHES WALK - St Olave's & All Hallows -by-the- Tower
October 20th	"FRIENDS" RECEPTION, 7.00 PM Old Brewhouse - see page 8
December 5th & 12th	CAROLS IN THE STABLEYARD 2.30 - 3.30 pm - see page 10
February 2nd, 16th, March 2nd, 16th.	WINTER LECTURES, St Mary's Hall, 8 pm Details of Speakers in December issue.

## AUTUMN OPENING

OSTERLEY HOUSE - open until 31st October, Wednesdays to Sundays, 1 pm to 4.30 pm. TEA ROOM - open on the same days from 11.30 am to 5 pm, and the TRUST SHOP from 1 pm to 5.30 pm.

TEA ROOM & SHOP - 3rd November - 19th December - open Wednesdays - Sundays, - 12 noon to 4 pm.

JERSEY GALLERY - 13th to 31st October - Free Exhibition "The Lights of Asia - DIVERSITY", Hours as House. Car Park charge.

JERSEY GALLERY - 3rd November - 19th December - photographs taken at Osterley by ED CLARK in 2003 - Saturdays & Sundays, 1 pm to 3 pm. Admission free - usual Car Park charges.

CHRISTMAS LUNCHES - ring Melanie on 8232 5057 for bookings.

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

IAN CONACHER

This has been a turbulent summer; since I wrote my notes in May, we have had spells of hot dry weather alternating with periods of torrential rain, with the garden either baked hard or too wet to dig.

The water level in the Garden Lake at Osterley fell by five or six inches at one time, although it seems now to have recovered. A pair of swans have taken up residence - whether this is the same pair that left in the spring is hard to tell!

The unsettled weather contributed to a poor turnout of visitors on Osterley Day in July, with reduced takings. As I write, we are preparing to set up our stalls again on Sunday 12th September; we are hoping for good weather for this.

Our programme for the next few months includes the Autumn Reception on 20th October, and Carols in the Stableyard on 5th and 12th December.

The indefatigable Doris Sherwood has offered to lead further walks, visiting City churches in London in September and October - details on another page.

We have with regret to report further personnel changes among the Trust's staff. The Head Gardener, Linda Mills, with her husband Kevin will be leaving at the end of this month. A further major change is that the Property Manager, Barry Williams, will be retiring at Christmas. Further information on a later page.

Challenging times therefore lie ahead, as we say farewell to long-serving colleagues and welcome new faces. We hope that the support given by the "Friends" will continue to be valued by the new Management.

## IT'S ALL CHANGE AT OSTERLEY PARK THIS AUTUMN!

After more than 20 years at Osterley, Head Gardener Linda Mills and her husband, Assistant Head Gardener Kevin will be leaving the National Trust at the end of September, to work on a small private estate near Daventry in Northamptonshire.

Their Menagerie, including horses, dogs, cats, pigs, goats, chickens, ducks, geese - and the peacocks! - will be travelling with them!

Linda and Kevin joined the Trust to work in the grounds at Osterley following the departure of the Royal Parks staff some time in the Eighties, when negotiations with the V. and A. on the handover of the House were still continuing. Their decision to leave after so long a stay comes as a surprise, as they have made many friends among volunteers and staff.

Their roots go deep; since their early days they have sheltered and cared for a veritable menagerie of rescue animals. Most famously, they were seen on the Television show "Pet Rescue", with an abandoned pony, "Munchie", who had her head tied to a lamp-post. Their daughter, Fern, was born 12 years ago, while they were at Osterley. We wish them every success in their new location.

In early November, Christine Williams, will retire after 5 years as Jersey Gallery Programme Manager.

Finally, in mid November, Barry Williams will be leaving Osterley on retirement after 14 years as Property Manager.

We wish them both every happiness in their retirement, with time to enjoy their first grandchild and their home in Worthing.

## WORKING WITH BARRY

IAN CONACHER

I first met Barry on a snowy morning in February 1991, at a meeting of prospective volunteer room stewards. Barry had recently returned from service in the Diplomatic Corps in Malawi and the post of what was then known as "Administrator" for the National Trust at Osterley was new territory for him.

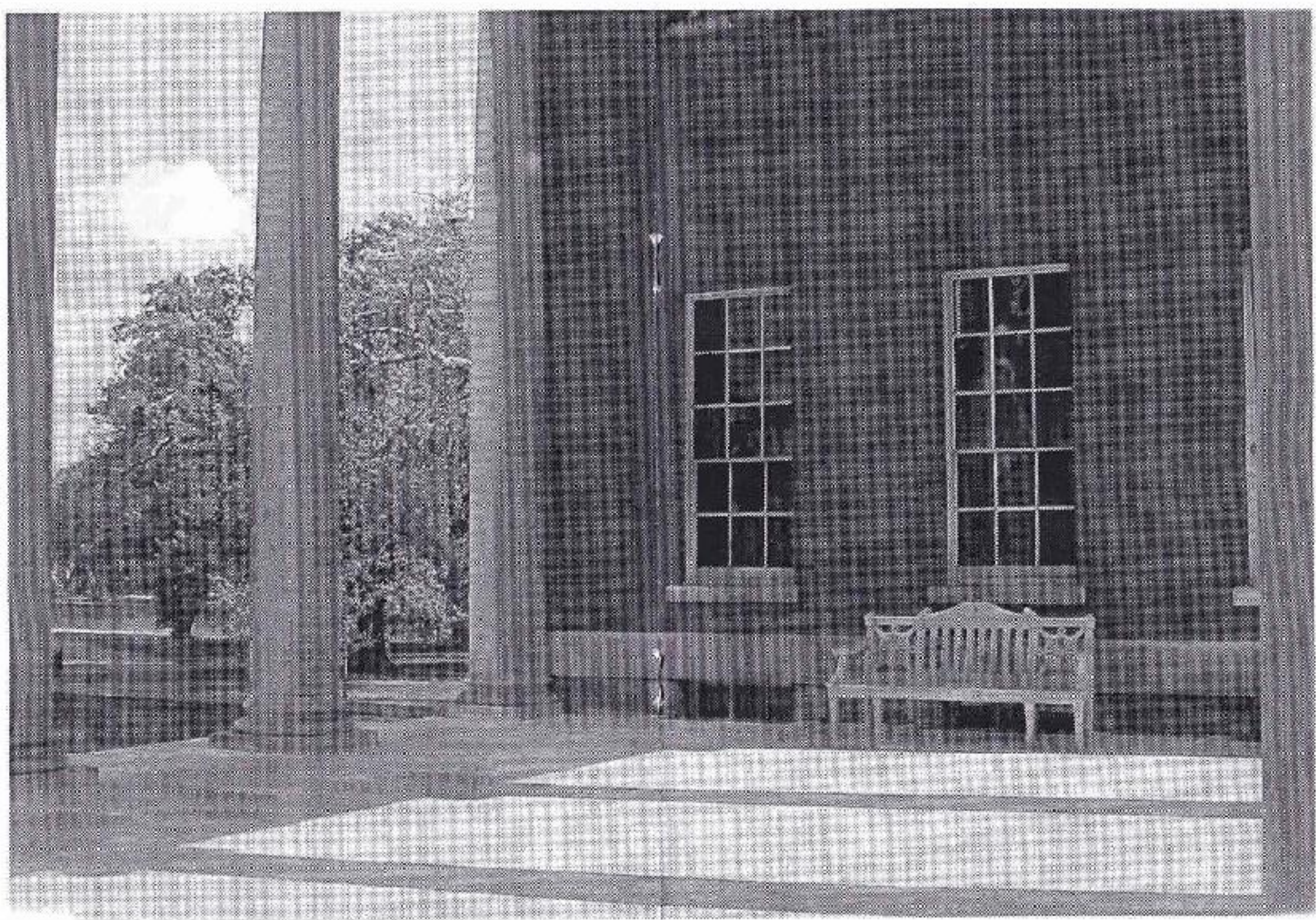
When I succeeded our first Chairman, Sheila Chapman, at the end of 1991, I began a term of 13 years working with him. There was an initial "running in" period, with some problems with the Trust's staff at the Hughenden Regional Office until it was established that the "Friends" were neither Volunteers nor a Local Association, but reported directly to Barry. A good working relationship then developed between us, based on shared objectives and mutual understanding.

During his time at Osterley, Barry has overseen a great many changes at the Property - all for the better! The Park has been opened up, with many of the yew hedges being taken out to give vistas of the lawns, lakes, and trees. The relocation of the drive has improved the approach to the House, while in the House, the restoration and redecoration work have enhanced the "visitor experience".

Apart from the effort needed to manage these changes, Barry has been heavily involved in fund-raising activities - weekend walks and talks for parties of visitors, for example. His energy and enthusiasm have been infectious, inspiring staff and volunteers, and encouraging the "Friends" in their efforts. I shall miss our chats about his plans for the future of Osterley.

## CENTRE SPREAD.

Our last issue featured a "Centre Spread", with an artist's impression of the Tudor House built by Thomas Gresham in the 16th century. We hope to continue this feature, using photographs taken by our Committee Member John Stacey. The current photo should need no introduction. It was taken just after the Courtyard pavement had been cleaned. *(From the shadows, it would seem that John was up very early in the morning!)*



## NEW TO THE COMMITTEE.

As reported briefly in our last issue, following the A.G.M. we were delighted to welcome JOHN AND PATRICIA JAMES, who have taken over the vital functions left vacant by the resignation of Irene and Dilwyn Bowles

JOHN JAMES is now our Membership Secretary, maintaining the Register of Members, and also supplying envelope labels for our Newsletter

John describes his profession as Tennis Administrator. He joined the Council of the Lawn Tennis Association in 1972, as a representative for Wales, and was Tournament Executive Officer for the Wimbledon Championships from 1981 to 2002, in which year he was elected President of Tennis Europe.

In 1983 he became a Member of the British Olympic Association, becoming Chairman of that body in 2001. This resulted in he and Patricia attending the Athens Games last month.

PATRICIA JAMES is now a very efficient Minute Secretary for the "Friends" - hardly surprising with her experience as a secretary and P.A. with the British Red Cross, and later with the Central & Cecil Housing Trust. She is now part-time P.A. to the director of the Welfare Service for Parents and Children. We are very fortunate to have attracted such high-powered support!

## "FRIENDS" RECEPTION, WEDNESDAY, 20TH OCTOBER.

This will as usual be held in the Brewhouse at 7 pm, when wine will be served. We hope that Barry Williams will be present to make his farewells. Please remember that the Park gates will be closed at 7.30 - so please come early!

The second "100 Club" draw of the year will be made during the evening.

## OSTERLEY DAY, JULY 11TH.

After an unsettled week, Sunday morning was dry and bright. Members of the Committee and other helpers assembled just after 9 am in the stableyard, under the shade of the Horse Chestnut trees, and proceeded to set up the gazebos and tables to display our offerings. Audrey Conacher, with daughter Carol and grand-daughter Claire and Margaret Friday had charge of the Bric-a-Brac Stall, while Joan Mound and Pat Fuller staffed the second-hand book tables. Paul Lucas and Michelle Cooper took charge of the Tombola Stall, which proved very popular - so much so that they had just about sold out by the end of the day!

However, due probably to the uncertain weather, trade at other stalls was not so brisk as in previous years; even so, gross takings amounted to £686. We are hoping to clear unsold stock at the "overflow" "Art in the Park" Show on 12th September.

## LONDON WALKS WITH DORIS SHERWOOD.

Doris has again volunteered to lead two further walks in the City of London this autumn.

The first, on Tuesday, 21st September, will visit Great St Helen's. The party will meet at Liverpool Street Mainline Station, outside WH Smith's bookstall, opposite Platforms 12 & 13, at 11 am.

The second, on Tuesday, October 12th, will visit St Olave's and All Hallows-by-the-Tower. Meet outside Tower Hill Underground Station, District Line, at 11 am.

Doris undertakes these walks for the benefit of the "Friends". The fee for each will be £3.00. Advance booking is not required - just turn up on the day!

Note that there will be some small extra charge payable to All Hallows to visit some parts of the building.

## WINTER LECTURES 2005.

St Mary's Parish Hall has been booked for next year's talks, which will be given at 8 pm on Wednesdays, 2nd & 16th February, and the same dates in March. Make a note of these dates - details of speakers and subjects will be given in our December issue.

## THE "FRIENDS" 100 CLUB.

Most Members will know that a "100 Club" is what W.S. Gilbert would call "a scheme of devices" to obtain extra income for the organisers while giving members the incentive of taking part in a Prize Draw.

One half of all subscriptions is used for the benefit of Osterley Park; in past years this has amounted to more than £900. The other half forms the Prize Fund. Four Draws are held in each membership year, in May, October, December, and March. The top prize in each is £100, with further prizes to make a total of one quarter of the Prize Fund.

The Renewal Subscriptions to the Club is £12.00 per share, and members may purchase more than one share. This is paid with the Annual Membership Subscription to the "Friends" on 1 April. Those wishing to join later in the year may pay £3.00 for each remaining draw - £9.00 before October 13th and so on.

The more shares we can sell, the greater the benefit to Osterley Park and the larger the Prize Fund. Members wishing to join in time for the October Draw should write to the Organiser, Ron Piper, at 44, Killowen Avenue, Northolt, UB5 4QT, with a cheque payable to the "Friends" for £9.00 per share. Please quote your name, address, telephone number, and your "Friends" Membership Number and include a S.A.E for your membership card

## CHRISTMAS CAROLS IN THE STABLEYARD.

Once again, weather permitting, Howard Stephens will be leading the St Mary's Singers and the audience in a programme of familiar Carols from 2.30 to 3.30 pm on Sundays 5th and 12th December. Come along and join in the singing! The Trust's Tea Room and Shop will be open from 12 noon to 4 pm on both days

## *Charolais*

*He'd got the bonfire going  
- just burning the dry stuff  
from the Great Meadow  
It was warm work, but  
it kept the grey day at bay*

*He'd not given the cattle any thought  
but slowly they arrived  
drawn to the dance of the flames*

*About twenty stood, shoulder to shoulder  
curious and close, at a distance  
from the fluttering warmth*

*As Druids at a midsummer sunrise,  
they had gathered to an exact semi-circle  
Quietly, patiently, watching the man  
gathering the leaves, fuelling the flames.*

*John Stacey, 2004.*