



The John Innes Society Newsletter

Issue No 282

July 2020



FOR CONSERVATION IN THE JOHN INNES ESTATE AT MERTON

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johninnessociety.org.uk

OPEN GARDENS & FRONT GARDENS 2020: A CELEBRATION OF OUR WONDERFUL GARDENS & GARDENERS



On June 7th our Open Gardens & Front Gardens day had to be cancelled like so many other events. As it happens the day turned out to be very wet so we were spared rather a wash out.

Because we were not able to visit in person, we asked all of you to send us photos of your gardens so that we could share their beauty. You responded with your usual enthusiasm and some of the photos are reproduced within. More photos will be shown later on our website.

So here is Merton Park in Bloom!

HNJ

ANYONE FOR GOLF?

The Merton Historical Society was contacted by a gentleman in Cardiff who was offering a large (and heavy!!) oval platter with the logo of the Merton Park Golf Club. As the MHS has no access to storage we were given the option of acquiring this item, which we decided to do. It will be eventually displayed in the Coach House.

This was a private club which opened in 1912 and extended southward from what is now Martin Way on land leased from the Merton Park Estate Company. The clubhouse had been designed by J.S. Brocklesby who became a keen member. The fee was 8 guineas a year by 1920 and had 300 members. But this exclusive facility was short-lived as new housing developments started to

spread in the early 1930's and encroach on the course as plots were gradually sold off. Despite moving nearer to Morden Park the club closed by 1945 and the clubhouse itself was converted into flats within one of the new roads.

AC



BOUNDARY COMMISSION VERDICT DELAYED

The eagerly awaited decision from the Boundary Commission as to whether Merton Park can stay as one electoral Ward or be split up between several, has been delayed. The results are now expected to be published in early November. The Commission is reconsulting in the Runnymede area of Colliers Wood, where they felt the opinions received needed clarification.

DC

MERTON DRAFT HERITAGE STRATEGY

The Council has produced a new draft Heritage Strategy for the next 5 years. It contains predictable laudable objectives such as increasing public access to the borough's unique and diverse cultural heritage, particularly using more digital resources, and safeguarding heritage sites and collections. It was also stated that heritage needs to appeal to a more diverse population and more collaboration between heritage groups could achieve this.

However, with the Council intending that the Delivery Plan be community led (following consultation) to increase public engagement, it is difficult to comprehend how this can be achieved without the Merton Heritage Forum, which was disbanded last year.

Our feedback identified our priorities as the safeguarding of buildings and collections,

and keeping our local character by ensuring sympathetic development.

As a Case Study, the Society contributed a Key Action to support the overall aims of the strategy, namely:

To promote and exhibit archival material about the area, including a collection relating to suffragette Rose Lamartine Yates and a plan to stage an exhibition to mark the Society's 50th birthday.

The Society works frequently with Sarah Gould, Merton's outstanding Heritage and Local Studies Service Manager who produces excellent resources and organises brilliant events with support from a team of volunteers at the Heritage Centre. Our aim would be to continue our two-way collaboration to achieve the aims of our constitution.

AC

THEFT OF PLANTS FROM PARKS

The John Innes Society has been proud to be able to raise funds for new planting in local Parks and Open Spaces, but the wonderful efforts made by volunteer Friends Groups are being thwarted by thieves.

Plants have recently been stolen from Kendor Gardens. Even the Memorial Beds planted in memory of the late Police Sgt. Harman have

been targeted. Unlocked parks allow easy access for thieves so local efforts to restore places like Kendor Gardens from a neglected cut through to a pleasant and colourful open space, have been blighted. If you see any unusual activity which might be, or lead to theft, please take photos and report to the local police. Likewise, be wary if you are offered any plants at bargain prices.

BUILD- BUILD- BUILD : NEW ONLINE CONSULTATION ON HOUSING PROVISION IN MERTON

The latest housing target for Merton imposed by the London Plan is 918 new homes for every year from 2019 to 2029. That is an increase from the current target of 411 new homes pa which Merton has been meeting without too much difficulty.

The eight question survey which you can reach on the link below, is user friendly. It asks you to choose what sort of new homes you think Merton should be providing and where they should be situated. Try it now – it is open until August.

<https://www.givemyview.com/housingmerton>

DC

OPEN GARDENS & FRONT GARDENS 2020



The different plant shapes and textures in these borders create a stunning effect.

The Front Gardens Competition was, sadly, not well supported this time. We do, however, have some photos of very good front gardens so these will form a future display in the Coach House window. If you have any photos for possible inclusion in the display, we would be delighted to receive them.



"These at least survived the foxes, the birds got all the cherries!"



Idyllic front garden in Merton Park



A variety of plants in pots make an eye catching display



Unusual cacti grown in a green house

OPEN GARDENS & FRONT GARDENS 2020



"For me it has been great taking the photos. Continually monitoring the weather, the flowers, finding the best angles - a real time consumer. Just what was required. Thanks for the opportunity".



A magnificent variety of flowers surrounding the bird bath focal point



OPEN GARDENS & FRONT GARDENS 2020



A perfect potted hosta invites you to follow the winding stone path...



Rambling Rector Rose growing up into a fruit tree rather unusually



“My garden is a tribute to the John Innes Plant Sales. I have so many plants I bought there including a twenty foot acer which Joan Sim grew from seed. My garden is full of plants from the gardens of friends and family and so full of precious memories of them.”

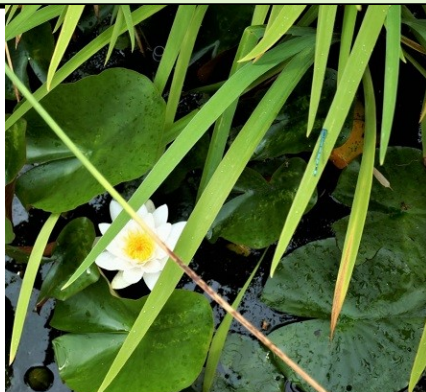


A blissful oasis of calm...

OPEN GARDENS & FRONT GARDENS 2020



Beautiful hydrangeas bask in the sun



Can you spot the damselfly in this photo?



A useful scarecrow among the veg beds



What a comfy bench to relax surrounded by gorgeous flowers!



A rare cactus with flowers and no spines!



"Amazingly the slugs have left the hostas alone this year - too busy eating everything else."

HOW WE LIVED 100 YEARS AGO

An editorial in the Wimbledon Borough News on 2nd July 1920 makes it clear that environmental concerns were discussed in this area a hundred years ago, when it seems that the Wandle was in a very bad state.

“Hereabouts the very name Wandle has become almost a by-word, suggesting a filthy, sluggish stream, poisoned and poisonous, instead of the clear limpid little river which our forefathers knew. It has suffered, as so many beautiful things have suffered, through the stress and strain of an unhappy industrial phase, which has left us slums and other sad legacies, but now that we are slowly beginning to realise that cheapness is not everything, we should surely put the knowledge into practice and insist on other methods of disposal of all that taints and contaminates the element which is the symbol of purity and the source of health and life. We are glad to note that the drainage scheme is getting under way, and we hope it will be of far-reaching influence in preventing pollution of the stream.”

It's good to know that the river looks so much better today, and that the concerns of our forefathers were listened to and acted upon eventually.

Elsewhere in Merton Park, the main celebration of the month was the 50th Jubilee of Merton National School, with a special service at St Mary's Church on 4th July. The service attracted a large crowd, including some of the original pupils from the school opening, and not everyone who attended could get into the church. At the service, Rev Jagger preached from the text on the Foundation Stone “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.” Activities for children were due to take place on the Rutlish Playing Fields the following day. This event was divided into games in the morning and sports in the

afternoon; sadly, neither took place as stormy weather caused a postponement.

Once again, the Wimbledon Borough News commented on this momentous occasion in an Editorial published on 9th July 1920. Merton School, of course, is now the Old School Close complex of flats.

“Merton was quite in the village stage when they were first opened, and one small school sufficed. Now, with the great changes which have come about and the expansion of the little village into an urban



Merton National School, Church Lane

district, some parts of which are very thickly populated, the needs of the people have had to be met by the erection of two other large schools, not to mention the Morden schools, which of course must now be included with Merton. For all this, however, the old Merton schools will always be looked upon with special affection as the old village school, occupying a central position of their own, much as the Central School does here. Possibly one reason for this is the greater length of tradition behind them, always a most valuable thing in a school.”

Chris Abbott

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Some on hold - normal service will be resumed as soon as feasible

All in the Coach House unless otherwise indicated.

Bridge Club and Bridge Classes
 Most Mondays and Thursdays

Coffee Mornings

Second Wednesday of the month. 11am to 1pm

Friends of the John Innes Park Gardening Group
 Second Friday of the month 9am John Innes Park

Provisional dates

AUTUMN PLANT AND PRODUCE SALE

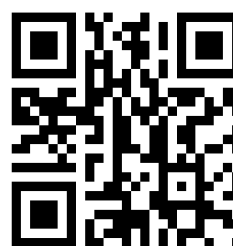
Saturday 3rd October between 10.30am and 12.30pm

POSTPONED ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 21st October, 8pm at Merton Park Primary
 School, Church Lane, SW19 3HQ.

AUTUMN QUIZ NIGHT

Saturday 21st November, 7:30pm at St Mary's Church Hall



HAVE YOUR SAY!

Please send your submissions for the next
 issue of *The JIS Newsletter* to
mail@johninnessociety.org.uk by
Wednesday, 9th September. It will be
 distributed on **Saturday, 26th September**