

# FRIENDS OF MILL HILL PARK

**Spring 2001**

**Circular No.7**

## TRAVELLERS

We would like to congratulate the Council on their prompt action in getting the travellers removed and the area cleaned up quickly on the two occasions that the park was invaded in the summer. Steel posts have been fitted round the perimeter of the park to prevent vehicle access except at lockable access points

## CAR PARKS

We were delighted to hear that the Council had taken note of the views expressed by local groups and residents regarding their proposal to charge for the car park adjoining Daws Lane. They have decided to leave the matter as it is for now. We lobbied persistently and one of our claims, that charges would reduce the number of families using the park, evidently carried some weight. At our suggestion the small car park off Wise Lane has been extended and gravelled over. The height of the existing boundary hedge has been reduced to 'design out' crime within the park. The hedge has now been extended for appearance and to prevent cars parking on the grass.

## THE CAFÉ

In Mill Hill Park we have a very pleasant café, centrally situated, with a sitting out area. The small beds round this area are to be planted with dwarf shrubs and herbs to add interest to those using the café. Mr & Mrs Danielewicz, the new tenants, made many improvements last year and offered a good service, but, plagued by numerous break-ins, they were greatly discouraged and we understand they are undecided as to whether to continue. The council has steadily improved security and we hope this important asset will still be available.

## SEAT

The Committee would like your views on the donation by the Friends of Mill Hill Park of a seat for the park. It would be of the style of the new seats with a backrest already in the park, made of recycled material, which are as vandal proof as possible. We would have an inscribed brass plate on it. The cost would be £447.20 and up to £130 installation cost depending on location. The brass

plate would be another £54.05. This would stretch our funds beyond a prudent level and donations would be welcome to enable this project to go ahead.

## TENNIS

It was sad news to learn that the Mill Hill Tennis Club is to close in March. Evidently the membership, which was down to 30, has sold their valuable piece of land to a developer and houses are proposed for the site. An approach has been made to continue the club by sharing the park tennis courts. Many tennis club members now seek facilities such as a clubhouse, showers, changing rooms, a bar and a social life, none of which would be available in the park. We feel that the tennis courts in the park should be there for the use of the general public.

## TOILETS

Once again the cost of refurbishing the toilets at the rear of the pavilion is being estimated and is dependant on funds being available. We will continue to press for decent toilet facilities to be provided in the park.

## CLOCK GOLF

The Clock Golf has deteriorated. The council claims that its use is dependant on the café being in operation and is reluctant to consider any improvements until the future of the café is known. A proposal has been made to replace the clock golf with a sensory garden. Your views on this would be welcome.

## AUDIT OF THE PARK

Councillor Wayne Casey takes a keen interest in the park and is strongly supportive. He undertook an audit of the park on 15 December accompanied by your Chairman and Council Officials. Many useful items and improvements were noted and the Councillor will follow them up. He has suggested a further audit before he attends our AGM.

## ROSE BED

A knee-high rail has been fitted around the bed adjacent to the tennis courts, the ground cultivated and over a hundred rose bushes planted. This is a long-sought and welcome improvement.

## WEATHER

Due to the atrocious weather the park has been the worse for wear and soggy in many places. Contractors have gradually been able to resume work. A welcome improvement has been the gravelling of the path from the A41 to the nature reserve, although part of it is still water logged. We have suggested some steps be installed from the path up the bank to the pond.

## JIM REA

We were delighted to learn in December that Jim would be returning to the work in the borough in the Parks and Countryside Division, covering our area. Even when not officially here he put in many hours' work in the park looking after the nature reserve and the tree planting. At the request of the committee he has written the following description of his new job.

"Since taking early retirement in April 1995 after close on 30 years of service in parks and open space management, I've come back! Why? Well, I enjoyed my years as Landscape Manager at the beautiful Highgate Cemetery, but the call of Barnet's green spaces was too much. My new position has the grand title of Parks and Countryside Development Officer and I cover the Hendon and Edgware Constituency with my colleague Rob Wiltshire. Our responsibilities are wide, but the title "Development" gives the game away. We are here to serve you, the public, listen to what you want and not what we, as professionals, think you need. We use our "Best Value" judgement to provide a service to parks, open space and countryside areas. We cover ornamental horticulture, improvements to existing features, playgrounds, allotments, tree planting schemes and use and repair of buildings. Footpaths, fencing, seats and litterbins, various contracts such as ponds, playground, poop-scoop bins etc are also in our care. Liaison with the many "Friends of Parks" organisations is part and parcel of the job. It's a great challenge, and we can't do or achieve all we would like, but we are here to serve you. So, if you have any queries, please contact Rob or me on 8359 4309/4429".

## PARK WALK

Jim Rea will be leading a walk round the park on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, starting from the Bowling Pavilion at 3.00pm. He will point out trees and features of interest along the way. Members, friends and residents are all very welcome.

## MILL HILL MUSIC FESTIVAL

### Saturday 2 – Saturday 9 June 2001

The 4<sup>th</sup> Mill Hill Music Festival looks like being another hit. It includes a stunning production of "Guys & Dolls" by Mill Hill Amateur Operatic Society, a glorious closing concert by the London Pro Arte Choir who will perform Haydn's "Creation" and a wide variety of all types of musical events. Once again, jazz will be a prominent and popular feature and we shall have jazz in Mill Hill Park on both Saturdays and during the week The Campbell Burnap All Stars will return for another of their popular jazz evenings. The Hendon Salvation Army Band, chamber music, a piano recital, Irish Evening and a concert by the United Church Choirs of Mill Hill who will sing Vivaldi's "Gloria" – these and an exciting pub gig list are just some of the treats to look forward to. Programmes will be available during April. For further information ring 020 8959 5013.

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Your committee share out attendance at many meetings: area forums, police, green space strategy etc and feel this is excessive but worth while to maintain contacts and keep the interests of our members to the fore. The larger our membership the more effective our voice and as ever we appeal for more members and also ask you please to keep us informed of your concerns. The AGM will be a good opportunity for the latter.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will be held on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> April at 10.30am in the Bowling Pavilion. Coffee will be available. All members plus friends and neighbours are welcome. A renewal form is attached only for those whose subscription is

due this year.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ted Anderson (Chairman)	8959 2979
Joan Telfer (Treasurer)	8959 1499
Joanne Anderson (Secretary)	8959 2979
David Bailey	8959 2373
Marion Dewing	8959 5013