



**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of**  
Via Zoom, 7pm Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2020

**The Friends of Cannizaro Park**

**Present:** Trustees: Catherine Nelson (Chair), Simon Ingall (Treasurer), Pit Rink (Secretary), Chris Mountford, Jeremy Lumbers, Caroline Newsholme, Anne Peacock, Juliet Willis and Alison Young and further Members: Richard Angus, Keith Luck, Jennifer Newman, Stuart Vere, Colin Price, Johnny Rink, Stephen Nelson, Sherril Ingall, Marguerite & Richard Vaughan Payne, Jessica & John Lawrence and Anna Persin. The meeting was declared quorate.

The Chair welcomed all, and explained that the meeting would not spend much time reporting on the Chair's Report or the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements as all had been made aware, in the Notice of the AGM, that these were available on the FoCP website. No questions about these papers had been sent in advance of the meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Wendy Price, Asha Newsum and Lesley Hall.

2. **Minutes of the last AGM**

The minutes of AGM held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2019 were approved.

3. **Chair's Report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

The Chair's Report was accepted; the Chair reported that she would refer to it under item 7.

4. **Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

The Treasurer reported that income was up over the previous year, and thanked all those who had contributed to subscriptions and donations, signed up to Gift Aid and attended the Spring Talks and the Bridge Drive. He noted that expenditure was up by more, and highlighted preparatory work on the front entrance, repairs to the Aviary and new noticeboards which as well as giving information have raised the profile of the Friends. We have a healthy bank balance, ready to start funding our new projects.

5. **Re-election of trustees**

All the current trustees had indicated that they were happy to stand again. Colin Price proposed that Chris Mountford, Simon Ingall, Jeremy Lumbers, Catherine Nelson, Caroline Newsholme, Anne Peacock, Pit (Elizabeth) Rink, Juliet Willis and Alison Young all be elected to serve until the conclusion of the next AGM. This was seconded by John Lawrence and approved by a unanimous show of hands.

The Chair reported on two changes to the trustees during the year.

She thanked Stuart Vere, trustee for many years who had stood down in February. He was passionate about the Park, always thoughtful and generous with his time.

Chris Mountford, Chair for 11 years, stood down from this position in June. Fortunately he is staying on as a trustee, a fountain of knowledge of the horticulture of the park and its history. He was instrumental in introducing volunteers to help with the maintenance, starting the website and has always been supportive and welcoming.

The Secretary reported that, following Chris' resignation, the trustees had met and unanimously voted Catherine Nelson to be Chair. She offered her congratulations.

## **6. Re-appointment of Independent Examiner**

Colin Price was thanked for his work as Independent Examiner of the Financial Statements and is willing to continue. Juliet Willis proposed and Chris Mountford seconded his re-appointment to serve until the conclusion of the next AGM, and this was approved by a unanimous show of hands.

## **7. Cannizaro Park 2020/21: Building Our Future**

One of the prime aims of the Friends is to build visitors appreciation and engagement with the Park. To do this, the Chair spoke of both improvements planned for the fabric of the Park and of the organisation of the Friends.

We are currently carrying out a visitor count and a survey of likes and dislikes.

Initially we want to improve communication with the Friends and other visitors through the use of social media, both Twitter and Instagram, and a new format monthly newsletter to be produced by new volunteers with journalism and copywriting skills.

We wish to expand the “Cannizaro Community” by adding to the Bridge Drive and Spring Talks (for which thanks to Den Anderson, and Anne Peacock and Juliet Willis respectively) with a Wellbeing programme with Pilates and Yoga, and tentative plans for Nature and Arts Festivals. More Guided Walks including History of the Park will be added.

We are in the process of labelling the Top 100 Trees in the Park (considered to be the 3<sup>rd</sup> most significant park for its trees after Syon and Kew). A QR code on the label will allow visitors to access more information. 500 Tree Trail leaflets have been picked up by visitors.

To maintain the fabric of the Park, Anne Peacock reported that we have a growing band of volunteers. 10-15 of the 26 or more volunteers meet every Tuesday morning. Hundreds of snowdrops were planted and work started to clear the overgrown Tennis Court Garden. Covid-19 Lockdown prevented work for a while but, with appropriate distancing, work has restarted on the Rose Garden, Herb Garden, Holly pruning and bramble clearing. Martin, Head Gardener from idverde, has advised on Rhododendron pruning and overgrown woodland area clearing.

We plan to have occasional but regular weekend volunteer sessions to plant bulbs and clear areas.

Birds in the Aviary are breeding, a sure sign that they are happy in their environment. We need more volunteers to help with their daily care.

All the volunteers are thanked for the time and enthusiasm.

The Chair reported that we plan to concentrate on two major restoration projects per year. Covid-19 has delayed us in 2020 but work on the Tennis Court Garden is fully funded, 50% by an anonymous donor, 50% by the Friends and new planting will take place in September. The second project is to renovate and restore the Front Entrance. We are lucky to have help in this low maintenance and dog friendly design from two Chelsea Gold Medal winners Mark Gregory and Catherine MacDonald. We have some funding but when we get more details we will be looking to fundraise for this project.

## **8. Questions/comments**

Chris Mountford asked if the Chair could explain the new FoCP Logo to members. She noted that the redesign was prompted by the need to have a digital media friendly shape. With the help of a new volunteer with graphic design skills a large tree and a flying owl have been incorporated into a circular design along with a different image of the aviary.

Marguerite Vaughan Payne asked about the lack of No Cycling signs on the gate and the increase in number of cyclists in the Park. The Chair reported that we are aware of the loss of these signs. Stuart Vere suggested that LB Merton should be putting up these signs with a copy of their Park Regulations. The trustees already have this on their agenda for their next meeting.

Stuart Vere was thanked for his good suggestion that Wimbledon Union of Residents Associations might be a useful vehicle to inform about the work of the Friends and to encourage new members and volunteers.

Keith Luck had sent in a question re the security of the Park, particularly following the Haile Selassie statue incident last week. The Chair said that responsibility for dealing with this is with LB Merton, and we are passing on any correspondence about it to them.. Damage in the Park is generally minimal, and the cost and practicality of CCTV was probably prohibitive but would be the responsibility of LB Merton.

#### **9. Any other business**

Juliet Willis brought members' attention to the book *The Wynnman and the Black Azalea* which takes place in the Park.

The Chair thanked all for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8pm.