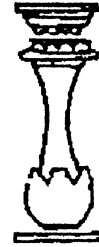


Valentines Park Conservationists



Newsletter No. 1 – January 1999.

Dear Members,

The symposium seems such a long time ago, but I hope you'll see we have been following through some of its ideas in the background since then. Back in the late summer a few who had met up in July decided to set up a group that would actually get its hands dirty and plant bulbs or trees or sometimes meet together for a guided walk through the park with a particular theme. We talked through some of the ideas each of us had and adopted the following three paragraphs as our 'objects' of the new group.

- (i) To bring together those sharing a common interest in Valentines Park. These interests may include the horticultural, arboricultural, ecological, educational and social development of the Park.
- (ii) To enhance the Park's historic landscape as an attractive and healthy environment for people and wild life, its achievement being attained by giving voluntary practical assistance to the Park authorities.
- (iii) To promote the Park as a resource for the multicultural community of Redbridge.

The cost of membership has been decided at £5.00 *per annum*, or £3.00 for concessionary members, and at the moment there are six of us on the committee:-

myself, Stephen Smith, acting	as Chair,
Christine Fairfax	as Secretary,
Paul Coleman	as Treasurer,
Rita Coleman	as Press Officer,
James Edgoose	as Membership Secretary, and
Ujjitha de Zousa	as Newsletter Editor.

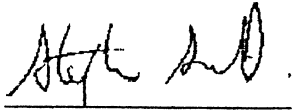
We have set a programme for the first three months:-

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Date (1999)</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Meeting Place</u>
Winter interest walk	30th January	1.30 pm - 3.30 pm	Pavilion
Proposed remedial work in Old English Garden Garden	27th February	10.30 am - 1.30 pm	Old English
Further proposed work in Old English Garden Garden	27th March	10.30 am - 1.30 pm	Old English

..... And now it is over to you! January, we thought, would be a great month in which to test

all that enthusiasm which was around in such abundance back in July. The walk will not take much longer than an hour, and with the promise of a hot cup of tea at the end of it, who could fail to show up ?

We look forward to seeing you there; don't forget to bring James your fiver.



Stephen R A Smith

January Walk.

This issue I'm using this space to drop a few hints as to what we shall see on our January walk. Tree profiles are particularly apparent in winter. Oak, ash, lime, horse-chestnut, beech and hornbeam are all easily identified now and there are numerous mature examples at Valentines.

A number of plants flower mid winter and I hope we shall see examples of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants that provide us with such a welcome show as well as those with ornamental bark, attractive habit, or evergreen leaves that help break up the monotony of winter in the garden.

Early bulbous plants (if the squirrels have left any) should also be making an appearance so we should have plenty to see, as well as gaining ideas as to what we would like to see next year.

The Old English Garden.

The sad state of this garden, near the Mansion, has given the new group something clear to focus on and it is hoped that this year we will be able to concentrate our work here.

The garden was originally laid out shortly after 1912 in what had been one of the Mansion's productive gardens. Its design is an example of the move, in many London parks, away from the Victorian bedding out system to the planting of herbaceous perennials in a style championed by such designers as Gertrude Jekyll and William Robinson. The Metropolitan Public Gardens Association had been involved originally with Valentines Park Extension Council and it is possible that they had a say in the layout at this Garden. Perhaps after our initial tidy up we should look at a more serious restoration of the original planting scheme.

Stephen Smith

Rita Coleman