

The Formosa Garden



Newsletter – Summer 2023

FORMOSA SUMMER SEASON GETS OFF TO ROYAL START

Well, the weekend of the King's coronation on May 6th was one of much excitement since for most of the population it was the first such event they'd ever witnessed (tho' not for one Formosa resident whose story is overleaf). Things were strikingly different back at the time of Queen Elizabeth's coronation – very few television sets to watch it on for a start, & those that were in use were black & white. But one thing remained the same for the two events 70 years apart – the huge number of street parties held throughout the land in the monarch's honour. Not to be outdone Formosa went one better with an actual garden party, held for the most part in warm sunshine which the doom-sayers at the meteorological office had signally failed to predict. No fewer than 152 residents crowded

round a series of trestle tables groaning with home-brought food, including that trusty stand-by Coronation chicken as well as newer creations such as Jubilee trifle & Coronation quiche.

There were games for the younger guests which included bubble-blowing, crown-making & space hopper races.



Grateful thanks must go to the overall organisers Susan Wright, Irina Miklavchich, Helen Burrluck & Cheryl Prax, who were responsible for the impressively smooth running of it all.



LATE QUEEN ALSO REMEMBERED

Although the event was to mark the coronation of King Charles Formosa also took the opportunity to conduct a formal dedication



ceremony for the oak sapling planted halfway down the Sutherland Avenue side

of the Garden in memory of his late mother. The honours were done by actor, TV presenter & Formosa resident Sir Tony Robinson who planted a brass plaque at the foot of the tree. Sir Tony spoke warmly of the Queen, whom he had met personally, & asked the audience to give thanks for her many years of service in 70 years on the throne.



IT'S DEJA VU ALL OVER AGAIN

Long-time Formosa resident Carole Ridnell was not only among the crowds for the Queen's coronation in 1953 – she was given a bird's eye view. Her father worked for the London Tin Corporation at the time & the company rented office space looking out over Trafalgar Square for all who wanted to see the royal procession at close quarters. The then 13-year-old Carole remembers the excitement of setting off from her home in Pinner, North-West London at around 5.30 am to reach London before the nearby tubes & roads were closed for security reasons. The weather she said was even worse than on the day

of the King's coronation, but the parade led by the Royal Horse Artillery & the Royal Marines - preceding the legendary gold state coach - went off impeccably & among the great & the good the Queen of Tonga could be spotted smiling gamely to crowds nine or ten deep "while getting soaked to the skin", as Carole recalled. Of the Queen herself there was only glimpse of what might have been the royal hand waving through the



coach window but for Carole it was a thrilling experience which remains with her to the present day. This time she watched the Coronation more sedately at home in Warrington Crescent with her husband George.

(FULL DISCLOSURE: I too am old enough to remember the Queen's coronation, but only just. As a child of five my sole memento of the occasion was a silver-plate spoon handed out to all the children in my primary school, also coincidentally in Pinner).

SO, WHAT'S THE NEXT BIG THING?



....The wine-tasting of course, being held this year from 5— 7.30pm on Saturday 17th June.

You will need to register for this hugely popular event by emailing Sandy David at sandydavid0462@gmail.com before **14th June**. Residents will be given vouchers for two glasses of wine (to a maximum of four per household) & there will be a cash bar for subsequent drinks &

for guests (payment by card only). As before the wine is being kindly being provided by the Winery on Clifton Parade (www.thewineryuk.com), with a range of cheeses from Provisions London (www.provisionslondon.co.uk). Music will be courtesy of the Cassandra & Rodrigo Just Two Duo who could be seen performing in Regents Park last summer.

FAMILY FUN DAY ONLY WEEKS AWAY!

This year's event is being staged on **Saturday 8th July from 12 noon to 6 pm**, when attractions will include Magic Mikey, the renowned kids' magician & entertainer, along with face-painting & inflatables for the younger children. On the refreshments front there will be a food vendor, plus the ever-reliable ice cream man Raffaele Raimondo in his 36th year at the event.

As last year we have a generous sponsor in Jack Graham-Lindsay of local property consultants Harding Green, who is organising a raffle for a Fortnum's hamper with a free beverage for anyone who enters it!

FORMOSA EVENTS



JUNE 11th Open Squares weekend

JUNE 17th Wine-tasting in Garden

JUNE 27th Formosa AGM St Saviour's Church

JULY 4th Shakespeare in the Squares:
"Twelfth Night" in Crescent Garden

JULY 8th Family Fun Day

NOVEMBER 4th Bonfire Night

WHO'S DOING DAMAGE TO THE GARDEN?

This was the distressing scene in the newly-restored Med Bed after vandals struck in the early evening of May 24th, hacking slices of bark off the wild pear & olive trees and also chopping down swathes of oleander.



A resident later reported seeing children swinging cricket bats. If anyone else saw suspicious activity in the area around that time please let a Board member know. The heads of all the alliums in the meadow area under the big tree have also been removed, possibly using the same implement, & the heads of tulips have similarly been cut off over recent weeks. These incidents are all the more upsetting because they come just as Gravitas is busy preparing for our Open Squares Weekend appearance on **Sunday June 11th**, when the Garden will be thrown open to the public.

A lesser order of offence - - but still unwelcome - is that bags of garden waste are being left by Gravitas's shed, presumably on the assumption that the gardeners will dispose of them. But it's not their job - it's the responsibility of individual residents!

LOCAL “PILOT OF THE CARIBBEAN” GIVEN HERO’S FAREWELL

Hundreds of mourners gathered at the central London church of St Clement Danes on May 25th for the funeral of Flight Sergeant Peter Brown,



one of the last black “Pilots of the Caribbean” who came over from Jamaica aged 17 in 1943 & went on to fly five operations in Lancaster bombers.

Peter was a familiar figure in the Maida Vale area, always smartly dressed & up for a chat with passers-by. Sadly, he died alone aged 96 at his home in Warrington Crescent last December & with no known family appeared destined for a low-key funeral at a chapel in Mortlake, South-West London. That was until a Council appeal to trace his relatives went viral, sparking such an interest in his story that the decision was taken to switch the funeral to the RAF Church with its 600-

seat capacity. Military top brass & other members of the armed forces rubbed shoulders with members of the public, including six members of Peter’s extended family who’d travelled from Jamaica. There also were many of his friends & neighbours from Formosa Garden, including Eleanor Abu-Sakr who took these pictures.

She said: “It was an incredible ceremony, but I did wonder what Peter would have made of it all. I imagine he would absolutely have hated the fuss but rather enjoyed it a bit, from afar!”



Now there are plans afoot to dedicate this bench on Sutherland Avenue, where Peter is pictured by his friend & neighbour Paul Newman, as a permanent memorial.



HAVE YOUR SAY AT THE AGM

This year's AGM is being held at St Saviour's Church at **6.30 pm on Tuesday 27th June**, when all will be welcome. As well as financial & budgetary matters there will be a chance to put any queries relating to the garden to Jan, the head of Gravitass. Other topics will include upcoming social events & planning & Communications matters. Questions for the Board can be submitted in advance to salvatore@wb19.co.uk

This will be a hybrid event so please email Salvatore if you wish to join virtually.

IT'S A NO TO AIR-CONDITIONING UNITS IN THE GARDEN

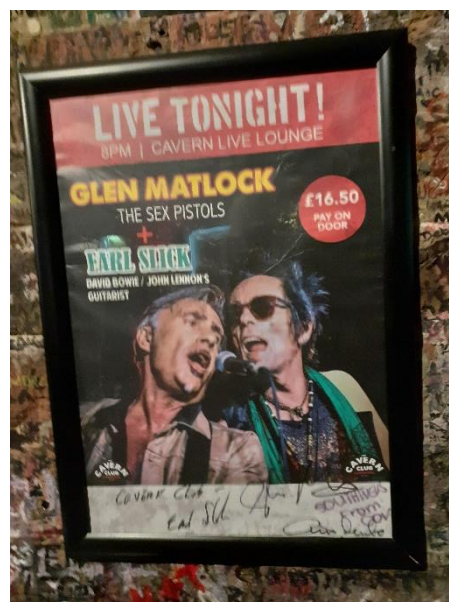
With global warming summers are getting hotter & we certainly had some uncomfortable spells last year when temperatures at one point topped 40 degrees. However, if you're thinking the solution could be to install an external air-conditioning unit on your property you need to be aware that such units are banned under Formosa rules, even where previously approved by Westminster Council. The reason is that they create problems of noise & vibration whose cumulative effect over time could be very noticeable. For those still relatively rare days when temperatures soar to unmanageable levels the solution may be portable internal units in a handful of key rooms which will not cause any disturbance to neighbours.

As the longer days tempt more of us out onto the Garden, please also familiarise yourselves with other Formosa Rules relating to outside gatherings. Parties can only go ahead with permission from Westbourne & no loud music or

barbecues are allowed. Plus, ball games can only be played if you are under the age of ten!

IT'S THAT MAN AGAIN!

This poster of local legend Glen Matlock was spotted at the Cavern Club in Liverpool & probably dates from the mid-1970s. Interesting to note he was actually headlining the Sex Pistols at the time! Glen was back in the news on the day



of the King's Coronation when he played an up-dated version of the Pistols' notorious protest song "God save the Queen" at London's 100 Club to reflect the change of

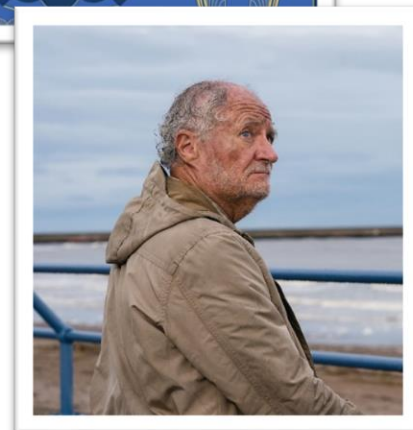
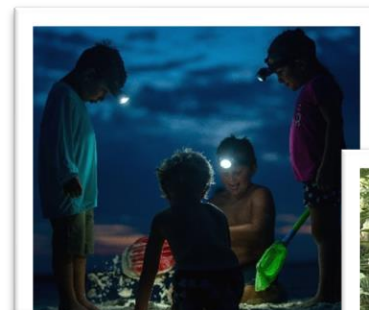
monarch. The lyrics were as iconoclastic as ever but when last heard of he was still at large.

WANTED: FORMOSA DIRECTORS

The Formosa Board is looking for qualified people who own their property on the Garden to act as additional members of the Board. Candidates should be pragmatic and community-minded and be prepared to commit to up to four hours a month. If you are interested, please contact the Board Chair Sandy David at sandydavid0462@gmail.com.

NEWS IN BRIEF:

- Keep an eye on the [Community Space](#) page of the Formosa website for details of a children's sleep-over in the Garden & possible open-air movie night.
- Formosa "SuperMum" Alison Lea (with help from daughter Lara) has set up a WhatsApp group so that local parents & carers with their babies & toddlers can meet in the garden for playdates. To join Alison's WhatsApp group please email her at alisonlea@gmail.com
- Those bus route changes have now kicked in: the No 6 runs to Victoria instead of the Aldwych & the 16 covers the same route as the now scrapped 332 service between Brent Park & Paddington but will no longer run between Edgware Road & Victoria (you need the No 6 for that!)..
- Tickets for Shakespeare in the Squares' performance of Twelfth Night in the Crescent Garden on Tuesday 4th July can be obtained from <https://shakespeareinthesquares.co.uk/venue/crescent-garden>. The garden will be open for picnics from 5.30 pm & the play starts at 7 pm prompt.
- The Wednesday Everyman Cinema Club continues to flourish, having clocked up three films since the last Newsletter: "Rye Lane", a rom-com described as "a love letter to South London", "The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry", a road movie with a difference as an eccentric pensioner embarks on a 450-mile walk to see a dying friend and "Book Club - -The Next Chapter", with Hollywood royalty such as Jane Fonda & Diane Keaton behaving like vacuous schoolgirls around a weak plot. One to avoid!
- Thames Water held a drop-in session on Weds 24th May to answer residents' questions about work in progress to prevent flooding and sewer back up. To book your free flooding resilience survey contact Amy Welbourn amy.welbourn@barhale.co.uk



The Autumn edition of the Newsletter will be published in October so please do send any contributions to me at vivvy.robins@gmail.com by **September 18th**. And don't forget that to receive the Newsletter by email you need to sign up on our website at www.formosagarden.co.uk/subscribe-to-newsletter.