

Memento Sound Walk: Wanstead Park

Transcription

ScreenDeep

OH, HI, SO... THIS WALK DOESN'T LOOP AND FINISH BACK UP AT THE START POINT. I KNOW - BUT IT'S EASY TO FIND YOUR WAY BACK.

YOU CAN ALWAYS ASK FOR DIRECTIONS OR LOOK AT THE MAP AT SCREENDEEP.CO.UK.

THERE YOU GO...JUST FIND YOUR OWN WAY.

WANSTEAD TUBE STATION LOCATION

Narrator: Busy here isn't it? Don't worry - you'll be somewhere peaceful soon. There'll be lots of voices along the way but when you hear mine - Listen - I'll tell you where to go.

When you start walking it will be continuous. No lagging behind -no getting lost. If you're unsure at any point just keep going straight.

Allow what you hear, to be the backdrop to what you see. Just watch out for cars, for people, only you are responsible for you. So look after yourself.

OK let's get ready. Make sure you have the sound at the volume you need it. If you're listening on a phone, switch to airplane mode. And now? Put the technology away.

Can you see the grass?

Keep it on your right. And the tube station on your left. Stay on this side, sticking to the pavement.

Look down the straight tree lined road ahead of you. There'll be a small junction ahead to cross over. Start walking.

Peter Brown: I was born in Wanstead. I went to school in Wanstead and I grew up in Wanstead.

Kate Tiernan: In all honesty, being a Londoner, I like where I'm from in London I don't feel...I haven't explored the rest of London. Because it's so easy to access the city and it's so easy to leave it behind.

Gill James: People have been living here a long time and you just walk across and you see loads of people all the time. Like my next door neighbour who was called Mrs Pantry, she lived in the same street all her life until she died in her 90's. And her son, grew up in the same house and there are still quite a few people like that who've inherited the house from their parents and it is quite a nice place to live. People think east London is horrible but it isn't, at least this bit isn't.

Cafe Voice 1: You get used to certain people over here, if you don't seem them for a while they wonder where you are. (See you later on...in background)

Haydn Powell: I've lived in the area for nearly 40 years and I've walked in the park, I've run in the park, I've gone to events in the park, I've sat in the park, I've been to the music festival, I've been to the open air theatre. I've done everything in the park.

Cafe Voice 1: It must be at least 40 years - God what am I now? Or maybe even 50 years now. Yeah time catches up. You forget how long things are.

Marion Davies: I think, if you live on the Aldersbrook Estate, the Wanstead side of it - you know you come round where the church is and you see the sign for the golf course and you think it's just a golf course.

Haydn Powell: There's no bus stop or train station in the middle of it, there's nothing there for people to shop or be entertained. There's no sign posts to it. It's not visible from anywhere unless you live right on the edge of it. So I guess that's why some people might not know it exists.

Cafe Voice 1: When I was fishing round on the lake and I had the guy and his son come up and say 'we've down this turning here for 30 years and never knew this park was here'.

Cafe Voice 2: We like it strictly left alone . We like it like it is. And the fewer people that came the better. And if we had our way, there'd be barbed wire in rolls at the entrances.

Narrator: It's quite calming walking with the trees, we're getting closer. When you see the church ahead, cross the road to the strip of grass and wait there.

CHURCH LOCATION

Peter Brown: I may be churchwarden but I'm still in the choir. So I sing here and I sing at Christ Church. We were here, the church was here, not me - the church was here when the house was there. And doubtless the family would come to worship. There's the family pew sitting in the chancel - there's a distinct difference between the pews here and the pews in the gallery. The pews here are polished oak, the ones in the gallery are painted deal. You knew your place. The families rented pews down here and the staff, villagers and estate workers were upstairs. And I'm still here after 50 odd years..growing old and grey.

Narrator: Keep the church gates on your right and start walking. Stay on the grass where you can. You'll pass the golf club and come to Warren Drive. Turn right onto it. Follow it around to the very end and wait there.

Terence McDowell: I mean, places like golf clubs you see, were way outside working class people's...they just didn't think of golf clubs, it didn't even enter into....football was the thing.

Roger Godbold: Most of us were much better at football and much more keen at football because we're all West Ham supporters around here. If you wanna call that football but that's another matter.

Terence McDowell: When I retired - I thought about golf and then I came over here. And of course in those days, you couldn't get into golf clubs - nowadays if you're walking past a golf club someone might run out and snatch you - and you're a member.

Roger Godbold: It's now about 400 years old I believe - an old covenant - that says 'thou shalt not built an inn or tavern on the aldersbrook estate.' Which is way there was no pub. You have to go to forest gate or manor park for the nearest pub but of course that's why the bowls club, the golf club, the cricket club, the tennis club, the sports club all have bars. Because there's no pub but there's nothing to stop you having a bar on a private club. I have been a member of the bowls club, which is literally at the top of my road, 400 yards away, for just under 44 years. I regret to say that i have yet to play the game of bowls.

Narrator: Nice houses here on warren Drive - stop when you can't go any further.

Haydn Powell: Like many parts of London, the fact that somebody had the foresight to protect it from development is...one of the lungs of London. It's a little oasis in an urban environment. You can sort of hear the A406 in the distance. But apart from that, it's a silent country-fied atmosphere.

Cafe Voices: When we do find people that don't know their way around they say 'how do I get out of this park?' - we say 'oh you don't - there are little white heaps of bones of people who have tried to get out'.

Well, it's like the people who never used to come here - I used to say come over here - and then they'd come and get lost. They'd ring me and I'd say 'I'm by the golf course' and then I'd say 'I'm just..' and they'd be like 'It's alright we can hear your voice - we're just gonna come to your voice'.

ENTRANCE TO PARK LOCATION

Narrator: Which way's in? Can you see any signs? It is a discreet entrance. Find the no cycling sign - just there. Head on in. Down the straight path. And remember to go straight if you're ever unsure.

Alan James: People have the concept that the park is an unsafe place. But to me it's perfectly unsafe, in fact, I cycle through the park late at night after socialising in Wanstead and I've walked through the park as well late night with no problem whatsoever. Because why should anyone be there?

Kate Tiernan: I definitely think that in my late teens I would retreat to here. I mean, I'd come here to smoke. Go for a walk and not worry at all about being on my own in the park. Never crossed my mind. I remember saying 'do you wanna play out?' - we were like 14, 15 and gather various different friends and then we might play..yeah..I really have a strong memory of first kisses - playing spin the bottle. We were flashed at a couple of times. One time we were flashed at there were a group of boys behind us in our year and we went and told them and then we all kind of felt empowered - because we were many and he was only one, this guy. 'We're gonna get him' - we called the ranger and the ranger called the police and the police came and we drove in the police car across the park you know, bumping up and down trying to find him and we found him!

Narrator: You're about to encounter your first fork - which way do you feel like going? Let's go right - keep the water on your left, stick to the main path and wait when you get to the benches.

Alan James: Well I can tell who's running and who's jogging when I see them in the park. It's a different cadence, it's a different style. When you're pushing yourself and you're somewhere near your limit and it's a really great feeling - a feeling of almost like you're flying. There's the old film the 'Loneliness and Long Distance Runner' and it did get a bit lonely, without headphones.

The time when I was running along with this fantastic noise behind - it was frightening - and we wondered - we'd never heard a noise like that before and when we turned around - coming out of the path towards us were three cows that were very very frightened because they were being pursued by these two big dogs. Umm...and we were so scared I actually went around tree and started climbing it.

Terence McDowell: You know when the cattle were there and were shunted off - the foot and mouth - probably 15, 20 years ago. Maybe not that long. They would take them off in these trucks - for slaughter i should think. They were just there for the summer months. Come autumn they would be collected up again.

Roger Godbold: Years and years ago when my dad couldn't get out of the house to go to work. Because there was a cow standing right by our front door in the porch. And no way my dad could move it - far too big - so he just had to be late for work that day. We're quite proud of the fact that cattle wander around east London as most people wouldn't believe it but they did. They did.

Gill James: If you keep your eyes open, you always see something new. Like the other day - I found some puffballs lying on the earth, icy ground, and they were still puffing. And I run a little nature

group for kids on Wanstead Flats - once a month. Because once you get the kids into woods like this - they go mad. Rush about with sticks screaming.

Kids voices: Mummy, the pond is up here! (screaming, muffled)

A heron! I hate herons! They ate my fish!

I hardly want to put this into my bag..what is it?!

It's a dead frog. Oh yuck.

The frog must have been quite desperate to lay there.

Did it lay all of that?

And then there's a deep passage way all through there.

Oops, dropped the frog in the passageway.

It's like loads of little brains...

GLADE LOCATION

Narrator: Have you been taken this in? It's a perfect view of the Ornamental Water. And that lush green carpet up there? That's the Glade. Look inviting...for a run, a lie down, or a muck around.

Kate Tiernan: There was one year that it snowed really heavily. And it was the kind of snow that you could build stuff and it would stay - people got really creative. And my brother and his friends...he's 28 now so must have been about 20, they decided to build an igloo so over the course of about 3 or 4 days in the glade over there - they came with these beer crate things and they set them and molded bricks and built this igloo which stayed for ages. Even as it started to melt...you know, they had this compact ice. They really got into it.

Narrator: OK, let's get back onto the main drag - in the direction you were heading. This time, take the small slip road left - we're going off track. Stay left, and remember, keep walking...

Roger Godbold: Literally, we would go into the park and there would be 3 on each side - 3 people would go and run out into the park and the other 3 would go out and find them and it was not unknown for the people who were hidden, to stay hidden all day long. Or at least for 4 or 5 hours. And then we'd all meet up and come home, mid afternoon - having had a wonderful day. And really, not seen anybody - not even our friends.

Terence McDowell: We used to like to pretend about the grotto - well that, we used to pretend was a roman place - some defended it and others attacked it.

Ralph Potter: You climb up on the edge of that face - of the facade - it's quite high up and a lot of kids used to do that. There was a coffin. A stone coffin in one of the niches, as you look on the left hand side as you look it - and that was always a source of interest - because we were told that in there was the body of Catherine Tylney Long - with a chastity belt.

Richard Arnopp: It was built around 1760 by the landowner John the Second Earl Tylney - it was a dual purpose building. Downstairs it as a boathouse and the earl had a gondola that he used to sail around the ornamental water. And upstairs was a room which was designed in a way that was characteristic for grottos of that time with some geological specimens and it was used for entertainment. That had a large arched window looking over the lake.

Narrator: Still on the path? Good. We're in the thick of it now my friend, in the thick of someone else's home. Those birds. Think they're singing for you. Take off your headphones until you reach

the huge trees - there are 3 or 4 clustered together. The first is the most breathtaking. And the best for shelter - in case you need it. Wait there for me with the music.

Narrator: Enormous aren't they? Have you had a good look at them - had a feel? Don't miss your chance to run your fingers over all the bumps. Look inside the cracks. Keep the cobwebs in tact if you can. Start walking - you'll soon come to a fork by the fallen trunk - take the right. After this you'll need to stay on the path and head straight - you're heading for the clearing. Don't be tempted by all the little paths splintering off. Stay straight after the right fork. Oh and make sure you digest all those trees. Trees - they tell stories.

Kate Tiernan: And there was a boy called James - despite being told we were not to do that. And he couldn't do that and obviously the teachers couldn't get to him. And um... a boy's mother who had grown up in Sri Lanka I think and she was one of these 'right, I'm going up the tree' and she took her shoes off and climbed, scaled up this tree and got this boy James down. And I remember feeling in awe of this amazing woman...

Ralph Potter: All the boys would carry pen knives and there wasn't all this issue of stabbings and god knows what else - of course everybody had a pen knife - I used to love the pen knives. I can remember losing one very nice one I had over at wanstead flats and going over there trying to find it. Never did. Was heartbroken. And also I remember, carving mine and my girlfriends name in a tree - everybody did it. Unfortunately, it's not there anymore - got blown over. All the trees had, you know, Ralph loves whoever...can't remember at that time.

Narrator: Remember to head for the clearing. Or maybe you're already there? CAN YOU SEE THE WATER? KEEP THE WATER ON YOUR LEFT. Do you ever walk with your eyes closed? Look at the

path ahead. Keep walking, breathe in - now, close your eyes. I usually manage 5 seconds. Try again.

Ralph Potter: And as I say, you used to be able to lie on the grass and watch up at the sky or whatever. But now you've got to watch out for the dog mess.

Dog Walker Voices:

- No, we met through the dogs! I think we started coming together about a year ago?
- Well, I've used it for a long time. I've got 3 children, my oldest one is 21 and we used to come here when he was a baby and a toddler and a child. But obviously now he's at uni so I've got a dog. A replacement for the child.
- It's just a nice open space - safe - not too busy. (dogs barking)
- When you go to somewhere regularly - you get to know other dog walkers, see them more and more.
- It becomes a community. I mean we haven't been coming over here so much lately so we've kind of lost touch with people...but it starts off being about the dogs and then it ends up...they're your pals.

Marion: If you're one of the houses that overlook there - very nice. (why do you think you never went back?) It's kind of just there. Probably because once you've seen it, you've seen it. That's it. It's not the most exciting place to go. I saw two dog walkers, one jogger. Two workmen getting a cup of coffee from the cafe, and the guy talking to the...and that was it. No one else.

Narrator: Any idea if you're on the right path? You can call this 'blind walking'. You're heading for the next set of benches.

Cafe Voices:

- If this estate had stayed where it was before it burnt down - you'd be looking at a house here as big as...buckingham palace...
- Because as you come into the road, the traffic lights, what's the name of the next road?
- I've read bits about it - Henry the 8th used to come here - I forget it all now but...
- I visited the temple but...
- The golf club is actually housed in the stables of Wanstead House which dates from the 18th century
- Where it runs down... to whipp's cross...Overton Drive...at the traffic lights...those pillars there
- The famous French scientist Lalande came here in 1763 and his journal is in the bibliotheque nationale in paris..
- It's obviously the way it is because it was once a park for a big house - it was known as the petit versaille wasn't it? It's nice that there is that history
- What you see from the clubhouse end is only half of it, there's a clump of trees. There are all these sources scattered around europe and beyond...Benjamin Franklin came to Wanstead to conduct scientific experiments on the pond.
- Those house when they built them - that was one drive - but the house would've been huge
- And all of the grounds even spread over there to the flats...all of that over there...
- All we've got now is the Wanstead Park Estate...it's called wanstead Park because it is a park but this would have been all the estate. This must have been some place.

TEA HUT LOCATION

Dog walker Voices: Started to come here because it's an easy walk and then there's the tea hut.

Tea and cake! I think the tea hut is really important for more than just tea - there's a group of

older people that come every day and it's weird - they're not there today - but that will be us one day. (laughter)

Narrator: So that small building there...that's the tea hut. A kind of mini version of the temple. Turn around, look around. Can you see the temple? Over there, peeking out? Looking very grand with its cream pillars. There's a row of shorter trees leading down from the temple. Chestnut trees planted not long ago. Walk along the water's edge to meet where the trees end and wait there.

Peter Brown: It has changed - when I was a lot younger it...the park has been through a period...a phase...some might call it neglect. And I think there's a hope at some stage to get it opened up further - not necessarily completely as it was a manufactured landscape as it was in the 17th century but closer to it.

Marion Davies: I don't know why they would get heritage funding - what would they do with it?

Ralph Potter: My view is that we ought to think about this place in terms of its historic value as a garden.

Dog walkers:

- I think a tidy up would be lovely and beneficial for everyone.
- I think it's perfect just the way it is - a bit rugged!

Terence McDowell: One guy used to walk a pig. Most people were walking dogs and he used to have his pig on a lead.

Gill James: You don't see kids playing out like you used to.

Terence MacDowell: Another fella used to come out with husky dogs and a dog sleigh.

Roger Godbold: I've not heard the word chalet used...I'm thinking when you get into the park, before you get to the trees. Immediately before that there was a big pavilion. It was like a very decent size...a big big house...my mind's eye tells me it was in tudor style and I was about to say, it had a fancy top - it was not square, moulded - rather like the top of a posh ice cream.

Alan James: Chalet Wood - on an autumn day. Late autumn and the leaves were coming down and the trees were golden, the air was golden with the leaves coming down and the floor of the forest was golden with the leaves that had fallen which were already there and I was just....and as it was all still falling down it was a magic moment and I was enveloped in this mist of gold..the sun was shining through the trees and it was not a moment you could capture in a camera, video camera, still camera - it's just there in your memory.

TEA HUT LOCATION

Narrator: Chalet wood, or bluebell wood - you get to it by creeping into those dense trees. But we won't be going in now, you can pay a visit later, alone. So you have your own magic moment. And this is the point where you make your choice. We've been going at a pace so feel free to end your journey here - I won't be offended. I'll do this walk again and again. Taking a fresh memento every time. Or you might want a tiny bit extra. To continue a short walk keep the headphones on. To stop - headphones off now and thank you.

Ok - so we're carrying on together. Make sure you're looking square on to the temple now. Locked up for years it was - no one really paid much attention to it. Turn your back on it so you're looking at the water, Rejoin the main path with the water on your left.

OK, SO WE'RE CARRYING ON TOGETHER - REJOIN THE MAIN PATH AND KEEP THE WATER ON YOUR LEFT. ALWAYS. JUST KEEP WALKING ON THE MAIN DRAG - DON'T LOSE SIGHT OF THE WATER. Add music next?

Ralph Potter: Some of my earliest memories really...a really eery place, you know - the mist on the water that kind of thing. It had a very magical look about it.

Roger Godbold: Of course, we're old Heronians - sounds very posh. Makes sense - heronian.

Marion Davies: I mean, it was lovely yesterday, going through and hearing all the birds and the children. Wanstead Flats is what it is but Wanstead Park - is nothing. Neither one thing nor another. It's not the wild bit of epping forest or a formal park.

Narrator: SO WE'RE STILL ON THE PATH AND Soon, we'll be veering off. When you get to it - take the right fork. This is the last fork - make it a good one. Turn right AT THE FORK.

Terence McDowell: Kenny Dainty...I haven't seen him for about 65 years I would imagine...yep...probably since I was about 13, he moved away. But he was the fisherman of the outfit - I never had much in the way of a fishing rod, I used to use Kenny's old beaten stuff. He used to have nice gear. The fishing one was the Heronry Pond - the one with the concrete sides but in those days it would quite often drain out just a few inches of water. In those days the fish - the roach etc didn't have enough depth of water to swim in, they would literally push themselves through the mud. But if you were doing it properly you would then drag with an old sack - one at each end - drag through the water and then lift it up and see what you'd caught. We'd take them home - he used to keep them in a big tin bath in his back garden. Poor things never lived that long I don't think because we were always stocking the tin bath up in the summer months.

Ralph Potter: You could sit all day with a fishing rod and not even have a bait one. Because you sit all day, wind up looking at the landscape, the wildlife. When you fish - you always talk to the fisherman next to you. You could walk round the whole lake and be 'alright mate, what you got, catch anything?' Fisherman do that. It's always been a very sociable thing.' Look I need to go for a pee, can you keep an eye on me gear for me?' And they'd do it. So it's a fraternity if you like of anglers.

Terence McDowell: The other pond, they had erm...forgotten what it's called...yeah, I'm pretty sure it's called the shoulder of mutton pond, you could swim in there. Thinking back, it was not a good idea really...

Richard Arnopp: Yes, I remember summer days paddling in the shoulder of mutton pond where there was still a jetty that swimmers used in those days...

Roger Godbold: A tragic story of a friend of mine, when we were 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 who drowned in the small lake...which we called the leg of mutton pond but I understand it's the next one along that's officially called the shoulder of mutton pond these days - maybe I got it wrong.

Cafe Voices:

- Shoulder of mutton, shoulder of mutton - from the air it looks like a shoulder of mutton - not a leg!
- Well i'm used to having legs you see - I don't like shoulder - it's too fatty

SHOULDER OF MUTTON POND

Narrator: Go and sit as close as you can to the water's edge - it's time to rest...

Kate Tiernan: You can still come here and feel a sense of peace and solitude - I want it to stay a secret - that's actually quite true...the more people know about it, the secret will be out!

Peter Brown: Different opinions, different ages - I mean what am I? 74 - someone who's 30 years younger than me will have the same park but entirely different views

Kate Tiernan: It used to be great you know spend ages climbing on that tree because all the roots where up. And I was told a story about my brothers girlfriend and she grew up here too and she was telling me about somewhere they used to leave a little acorn gift somewhere. You had to leave a little acorn gift for the witches and the fairies and it was maybe something her mum made up about it and that's what they did with that tree, And we were chatting about it - how personal it becomes so personal for you. You have your own experiences in the same place but then you have your own little narrative about that place.

Narrator: How are you feeling? Brave? If so, I'd recommend carrying on past this pond - see what presents itself. Or come back the way you came. It will be your chance to walk all the paths that were calling you in. Take your memento or leave one behind.

SO - PLEASE FEEL FREE TO HANG OUT HERE.

WHEN YOU DECIDE TO MAKE YOUR MOVE ONWARDS, EITHER GO BACK THE SAME ROUTE YOU CAME... OR THERE'S A SHORTCUT LEADING UP THE LONG PATH WHERE THE TEMPLE WAS IN SIGHT - ASK OR LOOK AT THE MAP ONLINE AT SCREENDEEP.CO.UK

