



Friends of
Thetford Forest Park

March 2009

NEWSLETTER No. 46

**E-mail: info@fotfp.org.uk
Secretary Tel: 01953 601105**



SPC printers of Thetford, the one stop shop for all your printing requirements, have again printed this issue of the newsletter for us.

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**Friends of Thetford Forest Park Tour of the Stanford Training area
On Wednesday 19th August 2009**

Following previous visits to this site and many requests for another, Friends have been given the above date for a tour this year.

Meeting at Forestry Commission Offices Car Park, Santon Downham at 5.15pm we will travel by coach to West Tofts Camp to be met by our guide, WO 1 Trevor Gedge. After a short briefing, the coach will enter the base; the tour which lasts approximately 3 hours will include the history and conservation of this closed part of Norfolk.

Because of the nature of the site there are some restrictions.

No person under the age of 18 years is permitted on the training ground.

No dogs allowed

Cameras and Video Recorders are not permitted without prior consent.

No fee is levied for the tour but any voluntary donation made will be divided between The Army Benevolent Fund and The Soldiers, Sailors and Air Force Association.

The cost of the coach will be £4.00 per head and tickets will be issued on receipt of payment. Previous visits have been over subscribed so early booking is advised.

A collection for the donation to the base will be made on the coach.

Any enquiries please phone 01953 457520 or email mandsu@supanet.com

Please send cheque made out to FoTFP to: - Freepost RRAT-JZSA-AYUG

Friends of Thetford Forest Park. 33 Elizabeth Close, Attleborough, Norfolk NR17 1QJ (please enclose an SAE for your tickets)

Calendar Photographic Competition 2008/2009

Just a short reminder that you only have until 31st March 2009 to lodge your entries. If you do not have an entry form this can be downloaded from the website, e-mailed to you or even posted upon request.

2009 Friends membership and High Lodge Season Ticket renewals

Following consultations with the Forestry Commission, FoTFP are pleased to report that a discount on the season tickets for High Lodge will be available for Friends members when both membership and season ticket are purchased at the same time.

Benefits for the year 2009-2010 are:-

£10 discount on the season ticket for High Lodge Forest Centre (when purchased with Friends membership)

10% off shop & catering purchases over £5.00 (Friends membership card must be shown)

10% off hire of High Lodge and booked functions

10% off Halloween bookings – subject to availability (booking fee applies)

Receive Newsletters and Forest Life when published

The Halloween tickets must be booked in advance and early booking is strongly recommended as places are limited

From 1st April the season ticket will cost £44.00, Friends membership £9.00

However when purchased together they cost just £43.00.

How to renew

The Forestry Commission will be contacting all season ticket holders before the expiry of their current season ticket with the details, either by email or post.

Members who join Friends direct will receive a membership renewal form from the membership secretary.

Please remember that Friends Membership year is a rolling programme depending on when you took it out, this also applies to the High Lodge season ticket.

Summer Concerts at High Lodge

There is, again this year an opportunity to steward at the concerts at High Lodge in June & July, the offer includes two free arena passes to a concert of your choice. The places are limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Contact Sheila Hume on 01953 457520 or mandsu@supanet.com for details.

Please continue to support Friends, subject to a successful grant application, we will be installing up to 25 benches around the play sculptures and on the short walking routes at High Lodge, this along with other projects are only possible with your continued membership.

Join FoTFP because it benefits you and benefits the forest.

See Friends leaflet or visit www.fotfp.org.uk

If any more of our members would like to join the mail list to save paper & postage by having their news-letters by e-mail in future, please send an e mail to membership@fotfp.org.uk showing a subject of e-mail newsletter and we will add you to the growing list which is now 8% of the total membership. Thank you.

THETFORD FOREST -

A WOODLAND FOR ALL.

In 1995, The Friends Of Thetford Forest Park was inaugurated. Our aim is to increase knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the park, as well as being the eyes and ears of the forest.

Set in the heart of the East Anglian countryside, over a million visits are made to Thetford Forest Park each year.

Thetford Forest provides quiet picnic areas, adventure playgrounds & educational visits whilst many species of plants, wildlife and insects make the forest their home and offer the opportunity to see them in a natural habitat.

The Friends work closely with members of the Forestry Commission on many family events and projects, including building bat boxes and preservation of sites such as Mildenhall Warren Lodge. The Friends are often invited to help with stewarding on events such as concerts and the Halloween experience.

The group also has an interest in obtaining funding for projects, such as the oak benches, (built by members of Street Forge Workshops For The Disabled, Thornham Magna,) situated along the three easy access paths.

In December 2000, The Sydney 2000 paralympic medallist Jane White, herself being from East Anglia, opened the three Easy Access Trails, for those in wheelchairs or with a pushchair in tow; These being the path at Lynford Zig Zag, and one at St Helen's picnic site in Santon Downham, near Brandon, plus another situated High Lodge Forest Centre, on the Thetford to Brandon Road.

Information regarding activities in Thetford Forest Park, or indeed, becoming a member of the Friends, is available at High lodge Forest Centre, or by telephoning the Forest District Office in Santon Downham on 01842 810271.

A. Swann

What' s On 2009

FC have decided this year that they will not be publishing a paper version of the usual guide, all details of Events can be found by accessing their website or by visiting the shop at High Lodge, however we will list here and on page 4 the FOTFP Events:

Sunday March 15th	Conservation Group
Sunday April 19th	Conservation Group
Sunday May 17th	Conservation Group
Sunday June 21st	Conservation Group

More details from information@fotfp.org.uk or 01953 601105

Lynford: February 2009 marks the second anniversary of the arboretum group's formation so it is fitting to report the completion of work on the original portion of the site. This area comprises the upper, level section which had been the more formal part of the Hall's parkland with later planting by students from FC's training centre, then housed in Lynford Hall. Whilst maintenance of the shrub layer will be an ongoing process, it is now in fairly good heart.

Attention is now turning to the large meadow below the water tower, here it is planned to plant several hundred wild flower plant plugs, part of a rolling programme. This will be a hands-and-knees task so we are looking for volunteers. The area was left uncut for most of last year to be finally shorn with a forage harvest at the end of the growing season; a process which removes all debris reducing the build up of nutrients which are not conducive to many wild plants. Efforts will also be directed to the fringes where the shrubs and some of the less successful trees will be attended to. Trees removed will be replaced, subject to the sites being suitable, with young specimen trees grown from seed in the National Pinetum nursery at Bedgebury in Kent. This is part of a greater effort talked of in previous reports to members.

Events; once again there will be two tours of the arboretum during May as part of the 'Walk in the Woods' month, this year the emphases will be on the edibility of trees; curious? June and August will see the boffins back to survey the arboretum's moths; however there is to be a joint initiative between the BTO, Norfolk & Norwich Naturalist Society, the FC and Friends to introduce members of the public to natural history recording, in this case, moths. Dates and times are still to be fixed but the first indications are Friday evenings and on into the small hours of the Saturday, towards the end of June or early July, more details later. Yet another joint venture takes place on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th March, between 10 am and 3 pm, again in the arboretum. This time Friends join forces with the RSPB to promote both organisations and bird watching in and around the forest. It is pleasing to announce that these events are free and only the moth survey(s) will require booking.

Lynford Arboretum Group Dates:

Sunday March 8th	Shrub Pruning & wild flower planting
Sat & Sun March 14/15th	RSPB stand at Lynford – Find out the bids in the Lynford area
Sunday April 5th	Shrub pruning, nettle and bracken control
Sunday May 3rd	Walk around the world in 20 trees – Start 1030 AM (Please ring 01953 457520 for details and booking)
Sunday May 24th	Walk around the world in 20 trees – Start 1030 AM
Sunday June 14th	Checking nettle & bracken growth in Hamamelis Glade
Wednesday March 18th	Shrub Pruning
Wednesday April 15th	Shrub Pruning, nettle & bracken control
Wednesday May 21st	Weed control in planting cages & general maintenance
Wednesday 24th June	Checking nettle & bracken growth in Hamamelis Glade

Tuesday 23rd or 30th June Mothing – 8:00 PM till late – 01953 457520 for details & booking