



Friends of
Thetford Forest Park

JUNE 2009

NEWSLETTER No. 47

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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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Welcome to you all, members new and old. With summer almost upon us it's the ideal time to get out and about in the forest with so much to see and do - and this year there is plenty of added attractions taking place on the field at High Lodge in addition to the annual concerts.

In the current climate of recession it is gratifying that so many of you have rejoined The Friends, it is after all your choice to do so and we do not take your renewal for granted, but it is our only source of income to continue our work.

Although not taking place until August, the trip into STANTA was swiftly fully booked up and the coach is at capacity – we look forward to meeting you on the day as it is always good to meet our members face to face.

As you may or may not know, FC have decided to stop publishing the Forest Life magazine (please see below) and move over to information on their website instead, and we have also looked at going down the same road, however we have made the decision to continue with our newsletter, although it is time for a change and this will be the last issue in this format – For the last 10 years it has been produced entirely on a word processor at home, and will continue to be compiled this way but look out for a new style and to this end if anyone has any ideas on articles or items that they feel would be of interest to others, please do let me know.

Dave Goodrum - Editor

Forest Life Magazine

Regretfully the Forest Life magazine is no longer being produced by the Forestry Commission which means FoTFP cannot offer it as a membership benefit
However there are some copies of the spring edition still available, if you would like one please contact me with your membership number and a copy will be put in the post

Phone:- 01953 457520 or email:- mandsu@supanet.com

The Secretary, FOTFP, 2 Peacock Chase, Wymondham, Norfolk NR18 0XL

Membership update

In the past, Friends members' have had to wait for their membership to arrive before being able to claim discount at High lodge Visitor Centre and this time gap can sometimes cause problems. The delay, when taking out membership with the High Lodge parking permit is due to Friends awaiting the details being transferred by the Forestry Commission. To resolve this issue, a temporary discount card will now be issued at High Lodge when you take out a combined vehicle permit and membership. Members will receive a full membership card and other details as soon as possible.

Lynford Arboretum

Since the February Newsletter much has taken place in the arboretum. The talk of planting trees new to the site has got underway, with strange and wonderful specimens whose seeds were collected around the world and nursed into life in the Weald of Kent.

Seed collecting is not for the faint hearted; it entails giving up most, if not all, of one's holiday entitlement. Jetting off, on cheap flights, sometimes at your own expense, if you cannot get grant aid, and staying in some weird accommodation to trudge into remote, damp, locations. Here the wild life, mostly small and winged, attacks you ferociously. However, the aficionados of this form of masochism describe it as "Exhilarating and Worthwhile". To me, it is for those who are young, or with understanding wives, or both.

The results, it has to be said, are always interesting; among the recent arrivals at Lynford is a *Phyllocladus aspleniifolius*, which, as you know, is the Celery-top pine from Tasmania. This coniferous tree can reach 20 metres in height but its claim to fame is its leaves. Unlike your Christmas tree its leaves are not needle shaped but flat and irregular; it does take a little imagination to see the connection with a bunch of celery though. But wait, these are not leaves or needles, they are 'clododes', flattened twigs; apart from some tiny, brownish, triangular scales on the younger twigs, it has no leaves.

If you are confused, why not join us for coffee one Sunday morning (about 10:30) and then walk round the arboretum and introduce you to some more 'whacky' trees.

LYNFORD DATES: The following are the dates for meetings of the Lynford Arboretum Group for the next six months.

July; Sunday 12th and Wednesday 22nd.

August; Sunday 9th and Wednesday 19th.

September; Sunday 13th and Wednesday 16th.

October; Sunday 11th and Wednesday 21st.

November; Sunday 8th and Wednesday 18th.

December; Sunday 13th and Wednesday 16th.

There will be additional meetings throughout this period; for dates and times please 'phone 01953 457520. Meetings of the 'Wednesday Luncheon Club' will be convened from time to time, with apologies to those of you who have to work.

FOTFP 2010 CALENDAR COMPETITION

The recent photographic competition, run by Judy English on behalf of Friends, attracted a total of 185 entries, although this did not reflect the total number of entrants as some submitted multiple photographs.

The object of the competition was to produce from photographs submitted a Calendar for 2010 in support of the work of Friends, and it was encouraging to get such a good response

The judge Chris Knights, a well known Wildlife Photographer, had the difficult task of just choosing 13 photographs which were to be used in the compilation of the Calendar. It was necessary for him to choose 13 photographs, 1 for the cover, and 1 for each month of the year.

The overall winner was Bridget Gillies for her photograph Heath & Heather.

The runners-up were Jean Betts, Maureen Gronland, Barry Simmons, Ross Whatmore, Sally Goodrum, Nick Cattle, Bridget Gillies (again) and Stan Harvey.

Friends held a Photographic Exhibition at Oak Lodge on Saturday 30 May, with a preview evening for the winners on Friday 29 May, and during which the winner and runners-up were presented with their prizes. This was followed by light refreshments.

The Calendar, which is being produced for Friends by SPC Printers of Thetford, is now on sale at £6.50 plus 50p for postage, and can be ordered from:

FREEPOST RRAT-JZSA-AYAG
Friends of Thetford Forest Park
33 Elizabeth Close
Attleborough
Norfolk NR17 1QJ

Cheques should be made payable to FoTFP

In view of the success of this years' competition, consideration will be given to holding a similar competition for 2011. The matter will be discussed by your Committee, and a decision made.

Details will be advertised in a future edition of the Newsletter so **Watch this space!**

Conservation Group

The Conservation Group continues to meet on the 3rd Sunday in the month, and this year has seen us welcome some new recruits thanks to our insurers allowing day members to join us rather than be restricted to full Friends members only. Fortunately on all but one occasion we have been blessed with decent weather – So why not find out more and come along – Full details of the programme are on the website , or by contacting the Secretary.

STANTA Visit

As expected all tickets for the visit to STANTA have now been allocated and we regret that further applications will have to be turned down. For those fortunate enough to secure a place , we have reproduced an article written by Anne Mason containing some fascinating information on some of the villages within this closed area on our doorstep.

Villages within the area now known as STANTA as they were many years ago...

Information from White's Directory of 1845 and Kelly's Directory of 1883.

West Tofts in 1845 was a small community of cottages, a farm-house and a hall owned by Sir Richard Sutton for whom most of the 182 inhabitants worked. In 1883, the crops were listed as rye, barley and turnips and the tenant farmer was Henry Palmer of Hall Farm. The other landowner was Mrs Lyne-Stephens who lived at Lynford Hall and her agent was William Henry Read. Thomas Sayer was a beer retailer and carpenter and the school-mistress was Miss Elizabeth Mott. The number on role was seventy-two and the average attendance recorded as sixty.

Tottington in 1845 was larger, with 340 inhabitants and 3090 acres of land, nearly all owned by Lord Walsingham. The list of traders included William Chilvers, innkeeper of 'The Green Man'; John Chilvers, wheelwright and Robert Chilvers, carpenter; Thomas Watling, fishmonger; Simon Watson, shopkeeper and Thomas Buckle, John Lincoln, Thomas Palmer, William Sutton and Robert Towler, all farmers. By 1883, the son of John Chilvers had taken over as blacksmith and wheelwright and Robert Herring ran a sub-post office and was also the grocer and shoemaker. Israel Keymer was the estate bricklayer - there is a Keymer's Corner.

Buckenham Tofts is described in White's Directory as 'containing only 77 inhabitants, a few cottages and the hall, a large, handsome mansion, in an extensive park, on both sides of the river, belonging to Lord Ashburton who resides here occasionally.' It records that the ruins of the church were cleared away and that the churchyard 'forms part of the pleasure grounds near the hall.' By 1883, the population had sunk to 49 and the only names listed were those of John Hewitt who was head gardener and Anthony Horrex, farm bailiff.

Langford had only 57 inhabitants in 1845. Mr H E Knollis, steward to Lord Ashburton, and Mr J Rollison, farmer, are listed by name. The small church was restored in 1883 but the rector lived in Ickborough, the other parish of his living.

Even in 1845, **Sturston** was home to only 47 people. There was one farm occupied by Charles Hall and also 'a prolific rabbit warren'. The church was already 'a heap of ruins' though the burial ground was still used. In 1883, the population had increased by 19.

Stanford was on the turnpike road from Brandon to Watton and the number of people in the parish remained about 180. It was described as 'partly a rabbit warren and sheepwalk' in 1845 but by 1883, barley, oats, rye and turnips were being grown on the light, sandy soil. The ruined chancel and north aisle of the church were rebuilt and Kelly's Directory states that 'the church stands in a field a short distance from the village'. There was a shop run by Charles Coates and Henry Fairchild kept 'The Cock Inn', commemorated by a plinth. Edmund Robinson and George Spinks were farmers and Miss Spinks ran the school. Two women are named as farmers: Helen Denny in 1845 and Mrs John Robinson in 1883.

Anne Mason

Finally:-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 .