



APRIL 2003  
NEWSLETTER 27

*Friends of*

Thetford Forest Park

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**The Secretary, F.O.T.F.P., 2 Peacock Chase, Wymondham, Norfolk NR18 0XL - 01953 601105**

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### **Opening words from the editor**

Here we are again and almost one quarter of the year gone – With Spring upon us and the forest coming back to life it really is a good time to spend a while in and around High Lodge. There have been so many changes in the last few months to make the site more accessible and ‘user friendly’ that it is difficult to know where to begin, but the most obvious is the completion of the new restaurant and shop together with all the landscaping work on the grassed area towards the car park.

Following on from the launch of the web site in the last newsletter, we are pleased to report that we have actually received in excess of 1000 ‘hits’ since it was made public. So far the feedback has been positive, but we would stress that the site has nothing to do with Forest Enterprise and is intended to publicise the ‘Friends’ activities, not those of F.E. who of course have their own site. If you have any ideas of items you think should be on the site, please let us know ([info@fotfp.org.uk](mailto:info@fotfp.org.uk)) and we will see what can be done.

At a recent committee meeting it was suggested that in order to spread ‘the word’ further it might be an idea to make the newsletter available in certain surgeries and waiting rooms and to encourage our members to pass on the newsletter to their friends after they have finished with it. Obviously some members may prefer to keep their newsletters themselves, so we are looking into a way of having the newsletter posted on the website although there are some technical problems associated with any advert images we use.

The Friends major upcoming event is the St. Georges Day Celebration on April 26th, and we hope to see many of you there on the day. For more details see the article on page 3.

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### **Subscription Time !**

Can we please ask that you renew your subscription to The Friends as soon as possible now? The fee for membership for the next 12 months remains at £6.00 and of course entitles you to obtain a reduced price season parking ticket from Forest Enterprise, future issues of this newsletter and the chance to take part in the varied activities organised on your behalf. Cheques should be made payable to ‘The Friends’ and sent to:

**Mrs. Sheila Hume, F.O.T.F.P. Treasurer, 33 Elizabeth Close, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1QJ**

To ensure our records are up to date, please complete the details overleaf and enclose this slip with your remittance, thank you.

## Quiz Time

On a the topical subject of St. George, all the answers rhyme in traditional manner and to check how you've done the correct answers are hidden elsewhere in the newsletter!

*From furnace and steel of blacksmith's forge*

**The valiant weapons of bold** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

*Secrets of ages locked and sealed*

**In the patterns on his mystic** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

*And see the April sun drops dance*

**On the tip of his bright and gleaming** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

*Trampling on hedge and fence and wagon*

**The scaly feet of a roaring** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

*The sparks and leaves they spiral higher*

**Caught in the breath of a monstrous** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

*Menacing field and crop and farmer*

**Who has gauntlet, Who has** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

*A countryside maiden, white in dress*

**The tears of a damsel** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

*A race it is for a life to be freed*

**Silver spurs on a flying** \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

*The dragon rears with flaming tongue,*

**The swift blade flashes- the day is** \_ \_ \_ .

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## Conservation Group

Having made good progress with the clearance of the ponds at Hockham, the planned tasks for the next three meetings have been changed around slightly to cover other tasks in need of doing:

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April      Tidying up around Mildenhall Warren Lodge itself and the circular walk.  
Meet at the site 0900 Hrs (Entrance to Fire Route 303)

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May      Clearance of vegetation around bat boxes and fitting of 'anti-squirrel' material  
to the bases to try to limit future damage.  
Meet at High Lodge Visitor Centre 0900 Hrs

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June      Finish fitting the anti-squirrel material, putting up new and replacement boxes.  
Meet at High Lodge Visitor Centre 0900 Hrs.

As always everyone is welcome no experience is necessary, just enthusiasm. If you require any further details please contact the Secretary.

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## Subscription Renewal Details

Name:.....Telephone Contact No.....

Address:.....

.....Post Code.....

Current Membership Number.....

## **Mildenhall Warren Lodge**

By the time you read this newsletter, the project to restore Mildenhall Warren Lodge and provide a walk and interpretation of the landscape will be nearing its end.

The repair of the warren lodge itself was completed in December 2002 and Butlers of Sawston, the building firm, have done everything superbly. Forest Heath District Council are working with Friends' and Forest Enterprise on a leaflet describing the landscape features on the circular walk while the interpretation boards, concentrating on the life and work of the warrener, are nearly complete.

Bank Holiday Monday, 26th May, is the first opportunity to visit the site and go on the walk. This will be a special 'open day', beginning at 11am, with a story-teller, talks about the lodge's history and guided walks across the former warren, looking at the birds, butterflies, insects and flowers as well as the landscape. There will also be an opportunity to visit the Rex Graham Reserve, not far from the warren lodge, as Suffolk Wildlife Trust is holding the annual 'open day' there on the same day, 26th May.

More details will follow nearer the time in the local press and on Friends' web-site or by telephone Forest Enterprise, 01842 810271 or Anne Mason, 01353 741416. No booking is required; just come along and see the results of this long-term project.

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QUIZ ANSWERS: ST. GEORGE, SHIELD, LANCE / DRAGON, FIRE, ARMOUR / IN DISTRESS, STEED, WON

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## **St. George's Day Celebration**

April brings a number of momentous days, 'All Fools Day', the 'Budget', and St. George's Day, which is shared by the 'Bard of Avon' for it is also William Shakespeare's birthday. To mark the anniversary of England's patron saint the Friends of Thetford Forest Park are holding a celebration at the High Lodge Visitor Centre on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup>. April (the nearest convenient day), between 11am and 4pm. Miss Carol Bundock, one of the presenters with the BBC news programme 'Look East', will open the event. Naturally St. George will be attending, as will a most odd Dragon together with items, which will illustrate parts of our history. Amongst these will be demonstrations and explanations of East Anglia's historic buildings, which are echoed in the High Lodge centre. This as a day for the whole family and we hope you will enter into the spirit of the day by dressing in appropriate costume, there will be a small prize for every one who participates. Surplus monies will be devoted to the provision of "All ability" play equipment to be sited at High Lodge so that young people with challenges in their lives can join in the fun. The 'Forest Toll' for the day is £5, however for season ticket holders the charge will only be £1.50.

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## **Young Rangers Club**

Once again this year Forest Enterprise are running the club for 6-12 year olds interested in learning more about the forest and its inhabitants. Details of dates and bookings are in the latest Whats on Guide. This year they are also running a similar club for those slightly older who want to build on their own knowledge – perhaps those that attended the beginners clubs last year, once again more details are in the same guide.

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## **A Thank You**

We recently received a donation from a grateful visitor to the forest who had mislaid her purse. The Rangers returned it to her and they passed on her donation to The Friends. We are indebted to Mrs McDonald and the Rangers for this act of generosity.

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## FORESTERS LOG Spring 2003

Visitors to High Lodge may have noticed that the Phase Two Building is complete but that changes are still happening. The field has got larger by the removal of banks and shrub growth which will give more space for our ever increasing number of visitors and give increased capacity for concert audiences. You may also have seen some clearance work that is taking place at the top end of the field. This is to make space for a new building for community/corporate use and for educational use in the widest sense. The new building will blend well into the High Lodge plan, being built by the same company as High Lodge itself. The first phase of the building is due for completion by end August 2003. The Friends will have a real input into this building which will include assisting Forest Enterprise with Fund Raising for the second phase, a Friends related name for the building (yet to be decided but possibly 'Friends Hall' or 'Friends Lodge'), and Friends being key holders. It is also expected that Friends meetings will take place in this new venue, and that Corporate Members will have priority access to the facilities. This is a new and exciting project more information will be available soon.

We now have our summer Ranger Staff in place. Abigail, Sonya and Emma join Nicky and Marcus, whom regular visitors will know well, for the summer. High Lodge is already busy and we are all looking forward to an exciting summer.

Concert Tickets are selling well, especially Status Quo who are expected to sell out this week. We are all expecting four fantastic nights of music. The details are in the What's On. Look out also for Shakespeare's 'The Merchant of Venice' on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August.

It is a wonderful sunny spring, British Summer time means lighter evenings for us, and I, for one am looking forward to a fantastic summer. See you at High Lodge.

Frances

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### Up and Coming Events

Included with this newsletter you will find the latest issue of The 'Whats On' guide from Forest Enterprise, which is crammed with lots of exciting and interesting events for the next few months. As you can see immediately from the sheer size of the booklet there are more events than ever laid on, and for the first time it also includes all the events taking place within at the Sandlings. Many of you were probably not aware that this area also comes under the control of the local Forest Enterprise office, but it has done so for some time and it is only recently that more recreational events have been organised for the people in that area- many of which are as a direct result of the enormous success that has resulted from the very hard work put in by the staff at Santon Downham.

To encourage even more people to visit the Sandlings, this years car park ticket includes access to their public car parks, so why not take a trip out see a different forest – You might even find some evidence of the UFO landing at Rendlesham that has recently received extra publicity courtesy of the BBC's programme on the history of the site!!

This success is equally due to the participation of so many of you in the events – there is no point in setting up entertainment or educational events that no one goes to!

It is the Friends intention to organise a trip down to the Sandlings later in the year, further details will be in a future newsletter. Depending on the level of interest we will run either a coach or a mini bus so to give us some idea of potential numbers we would like to hear from anyone interested in the trip. There will have to be a charge to cover the hire of either vehicle for the whole day.

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**CONTACT POINTS:      [info@fotfp.org.uk](mailto:info@fotfp.org.uk)   OR   01953 601105   OR**  
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