



THE FRIENDS OF CHARNWOOD FOREST NEWS



The heading picture this time: Longhorns at the Altar Stones - LRWT nature reserve in Markfield.

Summer 2016

Website: www.focf.org.uk

Mission Statement: To work towards the preservation of the countryside and local environment of Charnwood Forest Regional Park for the benefit of those who live within it, and for those who visit, and for future generations. We aim to be an effective, informative and influential voluntary organisation.

Fracking, our new neighbour?

Dick Howard introduced our talk at the April meeting, saying that he had chosen this title as Charnwood Forest had been neighbour to so much



David Bridge answering questions, with Chairman Paul Day

Our speaker, David Bridge, is a retired geologist with much experience in the oil and gas industry. It quickly became clear that his factual explanations were unbiased and could be respected. However it was equally clear from what he said that there is an ever increasing requirement for gas in the UK and a diminishing reliability of supply into the future.

On the other hand, his detailed explanation of the process of fracking to obtain a new supply of gas left few in doubt that the process was an expensive, messy and dirty business with many threats of pollution and disturbance, all for perhaps a 40 year supply.

The search area of interest to us - called Bowland - covers the full width of the UK across the north Midlands and northern England. The southern extremity includes Loughborough. Not far to the north there seem to be deposits which might be worth exploring. The regulatory framework covering exploration and extraction will be demanding. So far, no licences have been issued for Leicestershire.

David left us to make up our own minds on the subject. Our guests included a group of protesters whose interruptions were capably countered by our officers. But one suspects that they may well, in any case, have been addressing a sympathetic audience.

"nasty" extractive industry that he wondered if fracking for gas might be yet another such neighbour.

TALKS and WALKS

Our activities for you to enjoy

Individual invitations for each event will be sent to all members by post or email

Indoor meetings take place at Woodhouse Eaves Village Hall at 7.30pm, finishing about 9pm followed by refreshments. Your guests and other non-members are welcome at our talks (for whom we make a small charge of £3 at the door)

2016

🌟 **Wednesday 8th June** VISIT to Ulverscroft Woods and Herbert's Meadow, Leics. & Rutland Wildlife Trust, led by Neil Pilcher. Meet 10am Copt Oak Church (maximum party 25. Members only)

🌟 **Sunday 26th June** THIRTY YEARS celebratory lunchtime Hog Roast at The Brand by kind invitation of Robert and Janie Martin. Full details will follow.

🌟 **Wednesday 20th July** HISTORICAL TOUR of the ruins, Bradgate Park. Meet at Bradgate House entrance 10.30am. Maximum party of 30. Members only.

🌟 **Monday 19th September** TALK by Celia Sanger: *Calke Abbey, History and Gardens: Echoes from the Past.*

🌟 **Monday 24th October** TALK by Roger Hailwood - The National Memorial Arboretum

🌟 **Wednesday 16th November** ANNUAL DINNER at the Grey Lady. Being arranged

2017

🌟 **Monday 23rd January** TALK by Tony Jarram: *Lacemakers and Luddites*

🌟 **Monday 20th March** AGM followed by TALK by Liz Robson, owner of Kingfishers' Pool Vineyard, Rothley: "English and Welsh Wine; the local connection". Followed by 76 tasting.

🌟 **Monday 24th April** TALK by Michael Webster: *Living Wild in South America*

A Video to Watch

Hello, I'm not sure if this might be of interest, but I have just completed making a 20 minute video exploring part of Charnwood Forest, which includes Bradgate Park as well as brief visits to Swithland Wood, Newtown Linford and Beacon Hill: <https://youtu.be/3gHNib3L-xs>

Many thanks, Regards, Patrick

Our Annual General Meeting

There was a large turnout on 14th March for the AGM. This marked the completion of 30 years of the society. There were over 60 members present together with 31 visitors.

Mrs Janie Martin, President, presided with Councillor Paul Day, Chairman. His annual report showed a very good year, with over 200 members and a healthy financial position. There had been a very successful programme of talks and walks and there was a full calendar of events for 2016.

The Committee and Officers were re-elected unanimously, with the addition of Mrs Marilyn Palmer M.B.E. who was warmly welcomed.

After the AGM there was a most interesting talk by Matt Beamish. He is a Project Officer for University of Leicester Archaeological Services. He has worked as an archaeologist in Leicestershire since 1990. His talk was entitled:

From Ice Age to war games

Recent archaeological survey and excavation in Bradgate Park

Mr Beamish explained that there had been a recent LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) aerial survey of Bradgate Park. This (together with more conventional field walking, etc.) had revealed a multitude of fantastic details of the landscape which had not been visible from the surface. It had shown medieval field patterns and probable sites for stone age man. They had discovered many tools from the end of the ice-age. This site is of international importance.

The survey had led to excavation of many pits where digging had proved extremely fruitful. As well as tools, pottery and other artefacts they had found the foundations of a number of buildings. These had led to many further studies of the park and its history since the twelfth century. Armed with the new data the University has embarked on a series of excavations with the hope of discovering more about this wonderful and perhaps unique landscape.

A stroll through the Park will never be quite the same again as we spot the numerous interesting features to be seen.

The evening concluded with refreshments and a chance for members' questions and discussion.

Come and Celebrate our 30 years

I would like to encourage you all to come and enjoy and celebrate the 30th year of your Society. We have much to be proud of what we have achieved to preserve and enhance Charnwood Forest.

You will receive a Welcome Drink on arrival, the Hog Roast will be accompanied by a range of salads, and our Birthday Cake will be very special. In addition Robert and Janie Martin are also inviting you to enjoy their extensive garden.

This is a special appeal to those members who founded the Society in 1986, and those who have served on the Committee over the past three decades, without your input the Society would not be so healthy and flourishing as it is today.

Please come and enjoy the occasion.

Dick Howard

"How shall we spend our surplus funds?"

This question was asked at last year's AGM and has occupied the Committee for some time. After much publicity in which the ideas of members were sought, it was decided to fund three notice boards - two for the Wildlife Trust and another to be sited outside Woodhouse Eaves Village Hall.



By happy chance, the task of installing the new board at Charnwood Lodge Nature Reserve fell to Doug (compiler of this newsletter and a conservation volunteer for LRWT) on the left of this group pictured, together with colleagues Roger and Rob. Getting the old board out was tough and the new board is very solidly fixed. Why not take a look - near the 'bomb rocks'.

Who's Who?

President Janie Martin

Chairman Paul Day chairman@focf.org.uk 0116 2364376

Secretary Patricia Bell secretary@focf.org.uk 01509 556668

Membership Linda Thompson mem@focf.org.uk 0116 2387715

Treasurer Kim Turner 01530 244921

Events Dick Howard events@focf.org.uk 01530 245373

Web Master Toby Manning webmaster@focf.org.uk

Committee Peter Bertram, Pauline Day, Marilyn Palmer

Newsletter Douglas Maas doug@idnet.com 01530 242534

Data Protection Act We are obliged by the Data Protection Act to inform you that we are storing some of your personal details (name, address, email address, etc.) electronically. This information is used purely for administrative purposes, and will NOT be divulged to any third party (except in the unlikely event that this is required by law). Should you object to this, please let us know and we will remove your details from our database.