



THE FRIENDS OF CHARNWOOD FOREST NEWS



Autumn 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.

Our 30th Birthday Party

Members of Friends of Charnwood Forest (FoCF) celebrated their 30th anniversary on June 26 with a Hog Roast at The Brand, Woodhouse Eaves, by kind permission of Colonel and Mrs. Martin.

The sun shone, the gardens beckoned and the good food and wines were thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The members chatted and old friends and new shared a wonderfully happy occasion.

The Chairman, Councillor Paul Day, welcomed the guests and thanked Colonel and Mrs Martin for their kindness in hosting the day.

Mrs Janie Martin, President, said how pleased they were to see so many members here again and went on to praise the work of the Committee and Officers, not only for today's party but also for their many hours of hard work for the Society. Peter Bertram, founder member and first Chairman, spoke of the origins of the Society, particularly mentioning Colonel Andrew Martin, Lord Lieutenant, and David Thorpe and their efforts in founding the Society. He mentioned past achievements and a steady plan for the future, based on our strong membership and sound finances. Finally he proposed a toast to Friends of Charnwood Forest and its future. A lovely afternoon for all.

Peter Bertram



The heading picture this time: The massive quarry hole at Bardon, seen from the top of Bardon Hill.

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

☛ **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

☛ **Tuesday 15th November** ← **CHANGED**
ANNUAL DINNER at the Grey Lady.

2017

☛ **Monday 23rd January** TALK by Tony Jarrah: *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*

"Hog roast a wonderful occasion"

At the recent Committee meeting, our President, Janie Martin, reported on the feedback received since our 30th Anniversary Celebration at The Brand. Even two months after the event, people were still telling her how wonderful the occasion had been. Friendships had been renewed. There had been a chance at this well-attended event to relax, catch up, chat and explore the beautiful gardens of The Brand. And especially it was one of those rare occasions at which nobody was trying to make money - no raffle tickets in evidence! The fine weather helped as well. The only downside - not enough helpers to get everything ready. Oh well - time to get organised for the next one - in 5, 10, 20 years time ???

Guided walk

Herbert's Meadow & Ulverscroft Woods



There was a good turnout on Wednesday June 8 for a guided tour led by Neil Pilcher of Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT). 30 members of Friends of Charnwood Forest (FOCF) had a fascinating walk through lands cared for by the Trust with much information from Neil Pilcher.

Herbert's Meadow is a site of about 8 acres, managed by the Trust. The Trust also manages several nearby sites, owned by itself and the National Trust. The meadow is managed on a five year cycle, with grazing and this year a hay crop.



The meadow is ablaze with wild flowers. There are many varieties of orchid; Common Orchid, Bee Orchid, Fragrant Orchid and many other plants. Neil showed us various grasses and other plants and explained the cattle's choice of their favourite foods, which necessitates careful control.

The Trust has the management of old oak woods and work on Sites Of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Members are free to visit but otherwise advance permission is necessary.

Councillor Paul Day, Chairman of FOCF, thanked Neil Pilcher and presented him with a cheque for the Trust's funds.

Peter Bertram

The Red Café Bus at Hunts Hill Car Park

The Committee thought this should be discussed and learned that this weekend/Summer holiday facility was important as part of the Bradgate Park Trustees' strategy to try to relieve the pressure on Newtown Linford, which can only get worse. The bus will be gone by early September and its value or otherwise will have been considered before next year. Steps will be taken to mitigate the effects of the noisy generator.

Calke Abbey, History & Gardens

Echoes from the past

Talk by Celia Sanger on Monday

September 19 at 7.30

Woodhouse Eaves Village Hall

Celia is a volunteer at Calke Abbey with several roles. She leads groups of visitors on guided walks of the gardens, talking about history, plants etc. She is part of a recently formed research group and also participates in other activities such as Calke Alive when she represents 17,18, and 19th century members of Calke family, and also now co-ordinates the Calke Talks service.

This is her second year as a NT speaker, and she likes to keep her presentations informal, with a minimum of dates and lots of illustrations. Her talk covers the history of the gardens from the 18th century to the present time, with a little about the family and the work of the NT in the saving of the gardens over the last 25 years, to the present time.

Away from Calke she is Treasurer for the Ticknall preservation and historical society and a member of the Ticknall garden club, and Ashby historical society. Before Calke she had a successful craft shop in Ashby for 8 years, before which she worked for a local charity managing a small plant centre at Conkers visitor centre.

Committee Notes

◆ The Committee was saddened to learn of two fatalities in Bradgate Park in the space of 48 hours believed to be of older people unwisely attempting to climb hills on hot days. The air ambulance attended on both occasions.

◆ Planning: Many objections raised to 3 terraced houses for Grey Crescent, Newtown Linford. There has been some alarm about the siting of tipis in a field near Johns Lee Wood but it seems these are recommended for planning approval.

◆ The date of the Annual Dinner (previously published) came under review due to possible clashes with other events. **Revised date: Page 1.**

◆ Peter Bertram was congratulated on his very successful publicising of our events. Some 12 editors were now being fed our news and they always seem to be eager for more.

◆ A definite increase in fly tipping was blamed on the newly-imposed charges and rigid regime at County Council waste disposal sites. The Chairman said that Charnwood BC was doing a good job at responding to the fly tipping but it was agreed that he should write to LCC drawing attention to the adverse effects of their policy.

◆ Toby Manning referred to the our website which he maintains, saying that - although already comprehensive - refreshing its content always depends on members submitting suitable items, pictures, etc.

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Walking through Little Matlock to join the party at Bradgate House, we noted how, almost each year, the deer seem ever more comfortable with people. Except of course, you can get too close (as in the case of the startled fine fellow pictured here).

Below are just a couple of scenes from our well-attended visit. Even those who have known these ruins from previous visits say they enjoyed seeing and hearing more.

The Ruins of Bradgate Park House

On Wednesday July 20, one of the hottest days of the year, Roger West, a Bradgate Park volunteer historian led a group of 30 members of the FOCF on a guided tour of Bradgate House. Bradgate House was the childhood home of Lady Jane Grey, the famous "Queen for nine days". He provided us with a thoughtful insight, suggesting that we should think of Bradgate House as a Grand Hunting Lodge.

The house was started in 1495 being built at the end of the Medieval Period and on the cusp of the Tudor. So this was a transitional era, castles were out, unfortified Manor Houses were the new fashion. Hence the return to the use of bricks; in this instance, made locally within the Park. Significantly there was no Grand Entrance (therefore not a Manor House), but Bradgate did adopt the new status symbol of tall chimneys that could be seen, hopefully, from miles around. We enjoyed exploring the ruins and finding out about their original use. We viewed the leet, or channel, that was dug to bring water from the River Lin to the stock pool, and subsequently to overflow and power the water mill. We discovered that the Tiltyard is not capable of fulfilling its name being too short, so perhaps it was just a practice area.

There is so much see, both in the ruins and the Chapel (try to find the carved head of James 1). Also it would be remiss not to mention the shy herd of hefted fallow deer that only live within the confines of the House and grounds.

It was a most interesting and informative visit even for those who have frequently visited the Park. You can do the same by contacting the Estate Office at Bradgate Park, telephone 01162 362713.

Peter Bertram



Who's Who?

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