



THE FRIENDS OF CHARNWOOD FOREST NEWS



Autumn 2018

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.

NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES IN BRADGATE PARK

TALK by RICHARD THOMAS

Monday 17TH September 2018

Woodhouse Eaves Village Hall at 7.30pm

Frequent visitors to Bradgate Park may well have observed, over the past four years, fieldschools excavating various sites. These range from Stone Age remains around Little Matlock, to the Deer Keeper's House, various sites within and around Bradgate House and in this last year the possible stable block. These excavations have been organised by the School of Archaeology and Ancient History at the University of Leicester. In this talk, Richard Thomas, one of the project co-directors, will summarise what has been learnt so far, and present the results of this year's excavations which focussed on finding the stable block to the south of Bradgate House, just over the bridge.

Richard Thomas is a reader in Archaeology at Leicester University where he has been based for 15 years. He is co-director of the Bradgate Park Fieldschool so who better to explain what we can find of interest and to answer all your questions.

Visitors welcome £3 on the door.

For further information contact Dick Howard or look at our website www.focf.org.uk

Jean Mawby

Sadly we report the death of Jean Mawby who had been the caretaker at Woodhouse Eaves Village Hall for 34 years before retiring on 31st July. Jean and her husband were on their way to their new life in retirement in Spain when she suddenly died en route. No other details are known.

Jean was always very helpful at our meetings which have held there for about 30 years.

*The heading picture this time:
At the "Altar Stones", 17th July at 9.15pm*

TALKS and WALKS

Our activities for you to enjoy
Individual invitations for each event will be sent to 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).

2018

☛ **Date to be agreed.** VISIT Mountsorrel Quarry. Date cannot be finalised until early summer due to the progress of ongoing extensions

☛ **Monday 17th September TALK by Richard Thomas.** New Archaeological Discoveries in Bradgate Park

☛ **Mon 22nd October TALK by Julie Attard:** "What's in a Name?" investigating place names in Charnwood Forest

☛ **Tues 13th Nov Annual Dinner**



Open Farm Sunday on 10th June
Popular attractions at Bawdon Lodge Farm and Charnwood Forest Farm included guessing the age of the "unicorn", tractor/trailer rides, milking demonstration, crazy golf and much more!
more pictures overleaf ...

... from front page ... Open Farm Sunday



Pushing the Boundaries

It's very easy and understandable to think of 'our' Forest as the traditional central area with Bradgate and Woodhouse at its centre.

Nowadays, within the Charnwood Forest Regional Park, the area has become much wider and our Society has embraced it all (*see our Mission Statement on page 1*). It extends out towards Whitwick, the Soar Valley and Thornton in the south.

For example, it includes picturesque and tranquil Thornton Reservoir which, as it happens, is our only body of water with superbly easy access all the way around, used by many for recreational walking and fishing and so on. A peaceful haven for wildlife too.

It's about a 3 mile walk around the reservoir but there are plenty of opportunities for a rest →



COMMITTEE NOTES

At the meeting on 20th June:

It seemed that some of the Summer newsletters had not been received and it was thought that the transfer of membership information might have caused some omissions this would be looked into.

Dick reported that the fundraising in Newtown Linford for the Stag's Head had produced a surplus. This had been used to buy and plant additional trees in the village.

The Stag's Head itself had suffered from people climbing on it and steps were being taken to discourage this.

The Committee is concerned about the ongoing arrangements for booking speakers and managing our events for the future, following Dick's well-deserved "retirement" as events organiser. The Committee had many useful ideas and these need co-ordinating.

Forthcoming visits to Donington Manor and Mountsorrel Quarry were discussed. The Annual Dinner at the Grey Lady had been booked.

A new manager was being sought for Woodhouse Eaves village hall to follow the retirement of Jane Mawby.

Planning matters included noting that, despite an appeal against, consent had been given for 7 houses at the back of Briscoe Lane, Old Woodhouse.

A major concern is the current application for 50 houses off Maplewell Road, Woodhouse Eaves.

Dick advised about the arrangements he made for local publicity; this needed to be continued.

Kim reported that a WhatsApp group had been set up in the Ulverscroft area to try to help with the fly tipping problem.

Toby would draft a privacy statement for FoCF.

The Committee once more thanked Janie for her hospitality in hosting the meeting.



At the Manor House

We were treated to an excellent guided tour of the Manor House at Donington Le Heath on Thursday 12th July. The house was originally built around 1290 and is one of the oldest houses in Leicestershire with a long tradition as a family house.

The Digby family owned the house from the 15th century onwards and it changed hands within the family many times. Today we can see what the house looked like after modernisation in 1618 such as the addition of mullion windows. The house, now owned by Leicestershire County Council, has been preserved as the house would have been in 1620 with period furniture, decoration and utensils.

Our guide, in period costume, brought alive the role of the housekeeper in providing the meals, washing and cleaning, and knowing her place. In those days, before medical science, witches and evil spirits were ever present threats and we were shown evidence of the elaborate precautions taken to prevent them crossing the threshold. Even the spoons were laid face down on the table to deter these invisible spirits, and feathers would be waved to drive them out of the rafters.

We saw the legendary "King Dick's Bed" which had come from the Blue Boar Inn in Leicester. It is claimed that Richard 111 slept in this bed before the Battle of Bosworth. It is indeed a bed that can be taken apart easily to be transported and the King would have slept sitting up, as was the custom, to avoid evil spirits sitting on his chest.

It was interesting to be reminded that in the Jacobean era nothing in the household was wasted. Everything had a value and was recycled, whether it had been used, or even broken. We have a lot to learn today.

A thoroughly enjoyable and interesting visit enjoyed by all.

To answer a question about when did we last visit the Manor House as a Society, it was on 15th May 2000.

Dick Howard



Anyone is welcome to contribute to the Newsletter!

Who's Who?

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