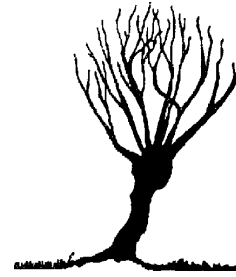


The Friends of Epping Forest Newsletter



November 2000

Dear Friend,

In the July Newsletter I reported on the fencing and grazing situation, and indicated that in June a Report had been submitted to the Epping Forest and Open Spaces Committee on the subject.

I mentioned in the last paragraph that our Committee had not yet met to discuss the new proposals but that doubtless we would have something to say in due course.

Well, we have met, and we had something to say. We have therefore written to the Superintendent and the Verderers in the matter.

We have previously said that we were not opposed to the grazing or wood pasture at a modest level. However, we did oppose the apparent objective of creating an interaction between grazing and wood pasture that could eventually spread these two aspects extensively in the Forest. We also questioned the Reports emphasis on wood pasture as being the determinative management tool in earlier times.

The Report also raised fears that the Forest would become increasingly inaccessible without a return to grazing. We pointed out that again this was a more complex matter than simply relating any access difficulties to the absence of grazing. In any case much of the Forest's attractiveness related to its secret and mysterious nature that provided parallels with the "wilderness and remoteness of National Parks".

Our views were summarised as follows:

- i) We believe the past 'exploitation/management' of the Forest was more complex than simply labelling it 'wood-pasture' and that grazing and pollarding did not always coincide in the same place. Also that widespread grazing did not necessarily occur over all the Forest and that different regimes were applied at different times.
- ii) We do not believe the establishment of widespread 'wood-pasture' (a socioeconomic use of the Forest that is no longer relevant) will create a varied and diverse Forest for the public to enjoy all its 'natural aspects'
- iii) We welcome the return of cattle to the Forest. What we

- are concerned about is the extent and intensity of the policy of creating 'wood-pasture' - and indeed what this means. Such a policy of reintroducing cattle, re-pollarding and clearing now appears to be more extensive than previous statements and assurances.
- iv) We welcome the traffic proposals and the reduction in the amount of fencing proposed.
 - v) We believe 'public access' *is* of major importance. However, we also believe it should be seen as access *into* the Forest and not necessarily access *over* all parts of the Forest
 - vi) We welcome your cautious approach to the commitments involved in establishing a grazing herd on the Forest.

Some people aver that the Forest is closing up, that it is much less open than it was, implying that then it was as it should be, and should be returned to that condition.

In this connection I was interested to re-read the chapter "Forest under Management" in Addison's Portrait of Epping Forest. He draws a picture of a Forest consisting of a good deal of pollard thicket especially in the Chingford, Loughton area, that in many places was pretty inaccessible for recreational purposes.

This was a situation that existed despite the presence of hundreds of cattle in the Forest which the early years of the City's management set out to address by extensive tree felling and thinning, road, track and path making, marsh draining and glade cutting.

A Forest was thus created that was quite different from that previous to the 1878 Act. Nearly a thousand animals grazed the Forest in each of the early years of the last century. During the World War II heavy grazing took place, 607 animals being recorded on one day.

These numbers plus a large rabbit population to say nothing of a very big deer population during World War II failed to seriously arrest the natural regeneration of the woodland. Perhaps it is a transition stage between the heavy management operations of the earlier years that was being observed and regarded as how the Forest should be.

continued over...

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Please send all letters to the Secretary and Editor
Mrs P Bitten, 9 Frederica Road, Chingford, E4 7AL

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In 1996 the Forest was put forward by the Government as a candidate Special Area of Conservation under the European Community Habitats Directive.

The proposal was made in respect of two aspects:

1. Beech forest on acid soils for which the area contains more than 10% of the UK resource.
2. Stag beetle for which this area is one of only three outstanding localities in the UK.

The Government is now reviewing the features of interest in existing candidate SACs (one would have thought that 5 years is a long time to be a candidate!), and is considering adding two further features in relation to Epping Forest:

3. European dry heaths for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.
4. North Atlantic wet heaths for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

These additions are said to be welcomed as a recognition of the significance of the open component of the - wait for it - wood pasture structure of Epping Forest.

Editor

The Natural Aspect

As I write, in the last days of September, autumn is rapidly approaching and the summer of 2000 has gone - what summer you may ask? Well it was very mixed and fluctuating. Warm periods in February and March started the year 'early'. Birds were beginning to nest two and three weeks early. But we had a cold wet April, and then warm - and sometimes hot - periods followed by wet spells right through until now. Bird surveys and records tell us that some largely insect eating species suffered and yet others survived reasonably well. When the warmer days occurred insects were in abundance but they naturally disappeared immediately the temperature dropped or the rain came.

In the garden I provided food, nuts and seeds, throughout the summer. This is no longer taboo! Birds have been rearing families successfully longer than we have had bird tables and no doubt instinctively they can provide the 'correct' food.

I noticed that few birds took the food in warm weather but reappeared in numbers immediately the temperature dropped. I hope the 'wrong' food gave them energy enough to hunt for the 'correct' food for their young. Regular feeding during the winter is increasingly important. I have noticed that if I am away or neglect to notice the feeders are empty for a day, birds disappear and it is two or three days before they are back in the same numbers as previously. Clearly they have to go elsewhere to look for food and it demonstrates how dependent they become upon us.

May I urge you to leave the garden 'untidy' - do not cut down the perennials with their seed heads until the spring and thus provide food for seed eating birds and protect the plant's new shoots in severe weather. That's my excuse anyway!

There is some good news from this summer however. I expect most readers will know from TV, the press or journals that the rare - tho' once common - Red Kite is increasingly seen in England, in Essex and occasionally in our area. They were once restricted to a few pairs in mid-Wales but have now spread eastwards and have been reintroduced successfully into several areas of England. Distinguished by their long forked tail, they can often be seen circling where the A40 is cut through the Chiltern

Hills. So if you are a passenger being driven towards Oxford look around. They have been seen locally, so maybe one day they may breed again in Essex.

The Common Buzzard has also spread from the wooded hills of the West Country and is breeding again in the County. Look out for this large broad-winged bird of prey circling around on thermal up-currents. Watch also for Peregrine Falcons, they too are spreading increasingly into SE England and are breeding in a few places. It seems that man made structures, pylons, industrial structures and tall buildings are attractive to them as hunting posts and potential nesting sites, where pigeons, gulls and starlings are favourite prey items.

Most encouraging however is the increase of the Hobby, a once rare falcon, that is a summer visitor to Britain to be seen between April and the end of September. Not so long ago only a few pairs bred in one or two closely guarded places in England. Now it is almost 'commonly seen' and also breeds in our area.

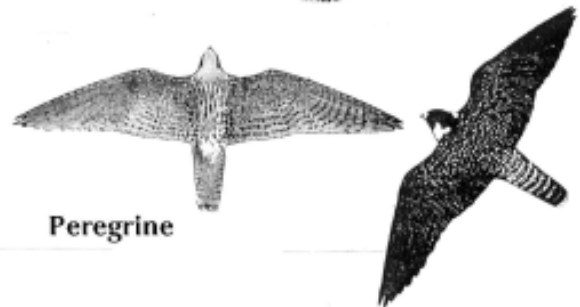
A week or so ago I was thrilled to watch a male Hobby provide a great flying display in bright sunshine on a warm but windy afternoon over and around Baldwins Pond.



Kite



Buzzard



Peregrine



Hobby



Sparrow
Hawk

It seemed to be oblivious of me as I stood on the dam of the pond. It was hunting at great speed for dragonflies over the water and trees using the wind to gain height and barely ever beating its wings.

Another bird of prey that really has become relatively common is the Sparrow Hawk. Distressingly they have been taking Blue Tits or 'favourite' Robins from some folk's gardens. However try to accept that if a pair of Tits have eight young per year, on average by the next spring eight out of the family of ten must die just to maintain a stable population. Sparrow Hawks take some small birds but the domestic cat takes many more throughout the year. I think in gardens and even in the countryside the cat is a major predator. (I now have a longer journey home late at night after meetings etc. and in the headlights I see more cats hunting the hedgerows than any other predator.) I also believe that the present falling bird populations are more likely to be caused by changed farming practices, habitat loss and environmental changes.

Incidentally, during the first two weeks of November walk up Loughton or Staples Brook to Baldwins Pond. Not only is this the best time to see the autumn colours, but it is worth a visit to see the repair work to the 'dam' of the pond. It is now finished - and although expensive it was apparently 'just in time'!

One last point - if you have had a nest of wasps in your roof this summer and you wisely left it alone, it will soon be safe to remove it if you wish. With the beginning of cold weather the colony will die out and the queen wasp will leave and find somewhere safe to hibernate until next spring. The nest is a wonderful construction. It was built by several thousand wasps and has several horizontal 'floors' of larvae cells connected by 'pillars' like a multistorey car park. The fragile layers of surrounding, insulating linked 'plates' are all striped in different colours. Each stripe of colour is one wasp mouthful of chewed wood - 'papier mache'. The stripes are differently coloured because each wasp's mouthful was no doubt taken from a different source of wood.

Ken Hoy

Millennium Wood Phase II

The first phase was to collect acorns in October 1999 and then overwinter them and then plant the resulting plantlets out in Coopersale fields the following March.

Coopersale and Theydon Garnon & Oakhill Primary Schools participated in both these activities as did a number of volunteers from the Friends.

Phase II took place on 6th and 8th October 2000. The two schools turned up again on the 6th October with

around 50 children participating. A small select group from the Friends (15 including 5 grandchildren out of a membership of over 1500!!!) appeared on the 8th October. All those involved had an enjoyable and productive couple of hours and the school kids seemed really enthusiastic.

One apparently serious problem that confronted us this Autumn was that none of the oak trees around the area or in nearby Lower Forest had any acorns on them!

Panic Stations? Not at all, we used hornbeam seeds supplemented by Midland Hawthorns and a bag of acorns contributed by Tricia Moxey.

This time having collected the seeds, we planted them directly into the ground, which given the amount of rain recently was nice and soft! A swift examination of the Fields indicated that masses of tiny oak trees are coming up and they are not all from the plantlets we planted in March! Nature, in the shape of Jays and squirrels, is also proving a valuable ally to help our own efforts.

Thanks are due for help, advice and support, to Ian Cox the Conservators Forester, and Alan Bilous one of his assistants. The latter marked out the planting pattern and will organise the spraying to suppress adjacent grasses and maximise our seeds chances.

Harry Bitten



*Members collecting hornbeam seeds...
...and planting them below*



John T Bedford - another footnote:

Verderer Richard Morris wrote to us after references in previous newsletters to John Bedford of the 'Bedford Oak' mystery. The 'mystery' being, why was the name of the Oak changed to 'Grimston's' and why were John Bedford and others ignored during the visit of Queen Victoria to the 1882 celebrations. You will remember that we quoted from 'The Transactions and Proceedings' of the Essex Field Club (a well respected body) who when referring to the Queen's visit had said: "... and it was a matter of surprise and comment that, while the mere ex-officio members of the Corporation received all the rewards and honours, the men who had done battle for the Forest for years, including even Mr J T Bedford, were utterly ignored and neglected"

In his letter about a booklet he had discovered, Richard wrote:

"on the end cover of the document (booklet) there is a notice of the presentation of Testimonials and Addresses to Sir Thos. Nelson, Lt. Col. Palmer, J.T.Bedford, W.G.S.Smith, and E.J.Daniell, at a public luncheon. The year is I think 1880 ... In the Annual Report of the EF Committee to the Court of Common Council for 1878 or 1879 there is a paragraph thanking John Bedford for all his work in saving the Forest. References are made in other Annual reports of the time to George Burney who received 'compensation' from the Corporation for some of the expenses he incurred in his legal actions, and to George Palmer who due to ill health was unable to attend the celebrations at High Beach in 1882 when Queen Victoria visited the Forest.

As you know George Palmer was one of the old pre-1878 Verderers and for 30 years from 1840 he wrote endless letters to Ministers, MPs and The Times complaining about the illegal enclosures. The only memorial that we have to him is Palmer's Bridge at the end of Fairmead Road. However he would turn in his grave if he could see the condition of the bridge and the adjoining road which today is the major fly-tip for old car tyres, burnt-out cars and other rubbish".

This reference confirms that John Bedford was still 'in favour' in 1880 and is thanked for all his efforts. Readers will remember in a previous Newsletter we quoted widely from a lecture he gave to the City of London Tradesmen's Club in July 1882 where he recounted (his version?) of the story of the Preservation of Epping Forest - in which he played a (if not 'the') leading role. Yet, at the celebrations some two months previously he had been 'officially' shunned! Why? It could not have been the fact that he, with A.C.Morton MP, supported the small commoners in their fight against the Conservators over the denial of grazing rights to many of them, for that occurred nearly ten years later.

Also on the back cover, the reference to George Burney being compensated for his legal expenses is interesting:

'EPPING FOREST (BURNEY) TESTIMONIAL FUND'

"A numerous and influential COMMITTEE of GENTLEMEN has been formed for the purpose of publicly recognising the energetic and continuous services during the last twenty-five years of Mr GEORGE BURNEY, of Millwall, in preserving the rights of the people to the free use of the Forest."

George Burney was a prominent member of the Commons Preservation Society and Chairman of the

Epping Forest Preservation Society, but was also a freehold commoner of Loughton. He is mentioned most often for having organising four carriages of 'workmen' who, in January 1878, after pulling down fences in Wanstead, left the 'White Hart' Woodford, and then proceeded to Buckhurst Hill where they defiantly tore down more fences that had been erected around enclosures of Forest land. Apparently Police Constables were present, but only took 'names and addresses'. One of the enclosures was by Nathaniel Powell and was of land near Buckhurst Hill Cricket ground, now called 'Powell's forest'. This was, at a crucial time when, although judgement had been given in 1874, there was still some indecision about the legality of such enclosures (the Epping Forest Act was not passed until later in 1878). He had also made several other challenges that involved him in considerable legal expenses.

Have you heard of this?

The document/booklet that Richard Morris mentioned is in Ilford Central Library, Ref. Section, and is part of a two volume book, published by J. Jones of High Street, Woodford in 1880. It is written by a John Philip Hore, entitled 'The History of Epping Forest', Part One, price 9d. - as if it was published as a supplement to a magazine. It includes the contents for Volume One and the text of the first two chapters - although in the case of the latter it ends in mid-sentence.

The author did not suddenly die, as he wrote 'The History of Newmarket and the annals of the Turf', pub. 1886, and, 'Sporting and Rural Records of the Chevely Estate' pub. 1890!

However in a Dedication to the Duke of Connaught (dated May 1880) the Author says "... the work now in course of publication is respectfully submitted, and if it should prove satisfactory, the author's labour will not have been in vain" suggesting that the document was prepared as a synopsis with two 'sample' chapters and that although the first part was printed and published the whole book was not completed. Could it be that the author had heard that W.R.Fisher's famous book 'The Forest of Essex' was at that time also in preparation?

Richard can trace no other references to it - has anyone heard of this 'History of Epping Forest'?

Ken Hoy

A Lost Epping Forest Painting found!

"Autumn Landscape. Epping Forest 1933"

It is well known that whilst living in Loughton in the 1930's Sir Jacob Epstein would from time to time retreat into the Forest to paint watercolours of the area he admired. Very few of these can be traced, most being in private collections. I was interested to learn that Epstein's widow had given some of his watercolours, of all places, to Walsall! On making contact with the new (Lottery funded) art gallery there I was delighted to learn that they had just one painting in the collection of Epping Forest, and had produced a postcard of it regarding it as a prized exhibit. It is a fine example of this artist's work and shows the Forest in all its autumn glory albeit in an abstract style.

It is unlikely that many will make the journey to Walsall to see the original, but is good to know that at least one such work is in a public collection.

John Howes.

How Well do you Know The Forest? No 8

The remaining areas of the Forest, which have not yet been dealt with in this series, are in the southern part below Ranger's Road as far as Wanstead Flats. This and the next and final section will cover that area. We hope to combine the nine sections into a booklet entitled 'GETTING TO KNOW EPPING FOREST'

Wanstead Flats: This is the name given to the open Forest land between the old districts of Wanstead, Leytonstone and Forest Gate. More than a century ago this old heathy grassland was the common grazing land for the 'Commoners' of those districts. In 1885 Buxton refers to it as "the Common". In the 18th Century the area was called the "Lower Forest" (Chapman-Andre), confusingly this is now the name used for the Forest north of Epping.

Historically the Flats have played an important part in the 19th century struggle to save the Forest from enclosure and disafforestation. Several large public protest meetings against enclosures were held on the Flats during those times.

Thousands of years before, during the periods when the ice was melting after the Ice-ages, the ancient Thames carried away vast amounts of floodwater. 'Wanstead Flats' was part of a flood-plain terrace of a much wider Thames during one of those periods. The sand and gravel layers now covering the Flats were deposited at that time (geologically called the 'Taplow' terrace).

Soon after accepting management of the Forest the Conservators created a large ornamental amenity water, Alexandra Lake, along the northern edge of the Flats on the site of some old brick workings.

Today Wanstead Flats, cut by several roads, forms a large and popular open recreational area for east London, including some 150 acres of playing fields.

Bush Wood: This is an area of woodland and open grass land that adjoins the western part of the Wanstead Flats and provides a narrow continuity for the Forest by also joining Leyton Flats at the Green Man roundabout. Once part of Wanstead Park Bush Wood contains relics of the old avenues of trees that radiated from Wanstead House. Some of the existing Lime trees are replacements of those that formed one of the original avenues. There are also five great and ancient Sweet Chestnut trees that were also planted as part of the landscaping of Wanstead Park, as were the old Chestnut trees on the nearby **George Green** that was also part of the Park.

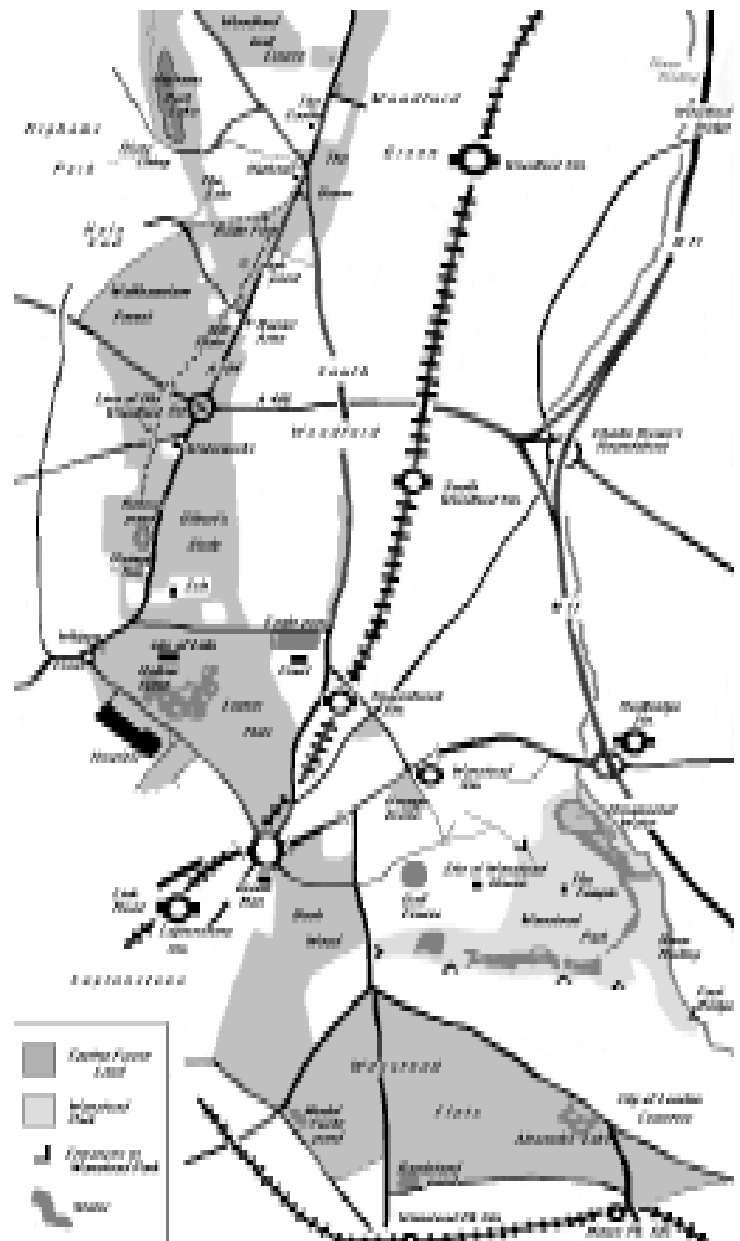
Wanstead Park: This park is the relic of the great estate that surrounded the famous and fashionable 18th century mansion Wanstead House, where building began about 1715. Earlier the Manor House that occupied the site had played a significant role in Court history going back to the early 16th century. Sir Thomas More's daughter, Cecilia, lived there, later Lord Chancellor Rich acquired it, Robert Dudley Earl of Leicester bought it and Queen Elizabeth I certainly slept there! The estate had been imparked - enclosed as a deer park - in 1545, (two years after Henry VIII began his great park at Fairmead in the Forest). In the 17th century it was owned by Sir Henry Mildmay, who was one of the Judges who sentenced Charles I to death. After the Restoration, Charles II gave the estate to his

son, Duke of York, later to become James II.

Eventually the 300 acres estate (some 120 hectares), was bought by Sir Josiah Child, who made his wealth whilst Chairman of the East India Company. In 1667 Sir Josiah began to lay out the great gardens, a project that was to be continued by his son Richard, later the first Earl Tylney, and then to be landscaped and developed during the rest of the 18th century. In 1810 it passed to Catherine Tylney Long, who two years later married William Pole-Wellesley, nephew of the Duke of Wellington.

Ten years later he had spent the huge Tylney Long fortune (when she was married Catherine was said to be the richest heiress in the country) and the estate was sold off and Wanstead House demolished in 1824. In 1880 the Corporation of London acquired what was left of the Park, nearly 75 hectares (184 acres) in exchange for some small pieces of Forest land and £8000 and opened it to the public.

It included some 12 hectares (30 acres) of water created as ponds and lakes in the 18th century. The River Roding had been diverted to form **The Ornamental Water**, which eventually provided the site for the famous heronry after the Herons left the island in Heronry Pond.



Sometime in the mid-18th century a garden pavilion, **The Temple**, was one of several building features introduced into the landscape. It still exists, having had various past uses - as a keepers lodge and a 'poultry house' for rearing pheasants. It has recently been renovated and is now used for receptions and exhibitions.

Although managed by the Conservators of Epping Forest, Wanstead Park has its own byelaws and is not actually part of the Forest. At the moment restoration of some historic landscape features is being undertaken in association with English Heritage.

Leyton Flats: This popular area of open Forest land between the Green Man PH. and Whipps Cross was in older times called Leyton Heath. Like Wanstead Flats it is an ancient flood-plain terrace of the River Thames created as it carried away the melt-waters of an earlier ice age. This sandy gravel terrace (called the Boyn Hill terrace) is therefore older than the gravels of Wanstead Flats. Exploitation of this gravel created the **Hollow Pond**. This is the large irregular area of water on the southern edge of Leyton Flats containing several islands. In 1883 the Conservators enlarged it from a group of old gravel pits. During the next two decades it was further enlarged twice. The hilly surrounds of the pond show the gravel nature of the area. It is the only stretch of water in the Forest still used for boating.

In 1905 another nearby area of old pits, farther to the north, was dug out to create a swimming pool. By 1932 it had been lined with concrete and expensively renovated by Leyton and Walthamstow Borough Councils and became known as **'The Lido'**. In 1933 during a drought it was found to be unhealthy and had to be closed. It was reopened in 1937 after further work and for a few years was very popular. In 1982 it was closed, filled in and returned to the Forest.

Nearby, to the west beside the road, a shallow pond called the **Cow pond** developed naturally during the 1940's when a swampy area became flooded and vegetation died.

Eagle Pond: is a very ancient pond that is shown to have much the same shape that it has today on a map surveyed in 1773 (Chapman-Andre). It adjoins the Snaresbrook Road that runs west from the Eagle Hotel, once a coaching inn as this was the main road out of London to Newmarket until 1829. To the south the pond borders the grounds of Snaresbrook Crown Court. The Pond was once popular with anglers, but fishing is now banned because of the proximity of the road. Very attractive for waterfowl in winter it has been popular for years with children eager to 'feed the ducks'. It is also a great gathering place for non-breeding Swans. An old well, 'Birch Well', can still be found near the western end of the lake.

Gilbert's Slade, is east of the Woodford New Road, (A104) opposite the 'Rising Sun' PH. It formed part of an old forest track that ran parallel to the ancient roadway (the 'Old Woodford Road') that can be traced through the Walthamstow Forest west of the present A104 road. Both old tracks are shown on the 1773 map. In 1829 the 'new' road (A104) was cut through 'the waste' (the Forest) for two miles to Woodford Row (Woodford Green). This saved the detour to Snaresbrook and avoided the need for horses to pull coaches through South Woodford and up Salway Hill.

Gilbert's Slade is now a long glade extending northwards through the Forest from Forest School. 'Slade' is an old Forest name for an open glade often along the valley of a stream.

Bulrush Pond: is sometimes referred to as the 'Rising Sun' pond as it is near the Public House. The pond was for many years a children's boating lake where the small paddle-wheel boats were particularly popular. The once well used open area around the pond, was known locally as **'Canada'** or **'Kennedy' Plain**. This was the name of the enclosure established further north for the 'Spade Husbandry Society's' allotments in 1834. The area became a popular and convenient picnic spot as it was near the terminus of the horse-trams that began bringing visitors to the Forest in 1889. Across the road from the 'Rising



The Eagle Pond, Snaresbrook from a drawing by T M Baynes, published 1832

Sun' a patch of gravel was often the site of swings and other entertainment. The **'Waterworks'** pumping station a short distance to the north, built in 1876, was in another enclosure from the Forest. From there water was pumped to Buckhurst Hill reservoir and then in 1887 to High Beach. Local legend always claimed that the water level of Bulrush pond was maintained by leakage from the Waterworks reservoir. A deliberate discharge did occasionally occur and perhaps is the basis of such a belief. The pond was always shallow and it completely dried up during the drought of 1976. It was very thoroughly dredged in 1996.

Walthamstow Forest: This is the block of Forest between the roundabout on the North Circular Road (A406) and the 'Napier Arms' PH. and is virtually all that is left of the Walthamstow 'waste' - used by the commoners of the district for centuries to provide grazing and firewood. The old boundary between Woodford and Walthamstow ran parallel to but just west of the A104 road.

The history of this piece of the Forest seems always to have been linked to roads. The oldest is the ancient trackway, the 'Old Woodford Road', the route of which can be still traced through the Forest. It is marked by the footbridge over Forest Road near the 'Waterworks' and the bridge over the North Circular Road (A406), just to the north, which provides a link with the rest of the Forest. From here the route of the old road, followed now by a horse ride, continues through the Forest and then crosses Oakhill, where it is marked in the pavement by cobbles. It was shown on the 1773 (Chapman-Andre) map but, although no doubt used by wagons, pack horses and livestock, apparently it was not fit for carriages and coaches as they used the lower road through South Woodford. As previously mentioned, in 1829 a new and more direct road was built from Whipps Cross to Woodford Green, now the present A104 - the 'Woodford New Road'.

In the late 1920's the North Circular Road was constructed passing over 'new' Wadham Bridge that replaced the level crossing of the railway.

Finally after 1968 the present 'new' North Circular Road (A406) sliced right through the southern end of Walthamstow Forest. An access tunnel, for cattle, horses and pedestrians, that passes under and through the roundabout was provided. This and the bridge are the only means of passing on foot to the rest of the Forest farther north.

The only gain for the Forest as a result of the 1968 road scheme was public access to the grassy top of the new Waterworks' reservoir.

The fires in the dry summer of 1976 were severe in this part of the Forest and the subsequent regrowth of Sallow and Birch was very dense. Since then some of the old pollarded Hornbeam trees in the woodland have been re-pollarded creating in places small clearings. Just west of the old trackway is the memorial marking the site of lay preacher 'Gypsy' (Rodney) Smith's birthplace in 1860.

In the southwest corner of this piece of woodland an old 'wood-bank' marks the boundary of an earlier enclosure. **Mill Plain:** is the grassy plain adjoining the road (A104) at the NE corner of Walthamstow Forest opposite Chelmsford Road. So named because Walthamstow windmill was built nearby in 1676. In 1800 the wind blew it down and Oakhill Gdns now occupies the site.

In the Walthamstow Forest a long east/west glade now exists from Mill Plain down towards Wadham Bridge/underpass. This is the remains of the 'anti-tank trap', now filled-in, created in 1940 when Britain was threatened with

invasion. Where this defence line crossed Mill Plain it consisted of a row of large square concrete blocks that were not removed until the early 1950's. On Mill Plain an Oak was planted in 1932 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Forest.

Walthamstow Forest - North: This is the name we should use for the Forest north from Oak Hill as far as **'The Bridle Path'**. This area of the Walthamstow 'waste' suffered much during the 17th and 18th centuries from the digging of clay for brick and tile making. A cottage and brick kiln were built on an enclosure from the Forest - called 'Scotchman's Hoppit' - made in 1607 near the bottom of The Bridle Path (Cottingham Road). During the next two centuries this developed into an industry where the digging of clay nearby covered many acres of 'the manorial waste'. In the Forest near the Bridle Path many of these clay pits can still be seen. The origin of **'Leighs pond'** on the east side of the woodland is probably as a clay pit. It is said to have been known as the 'Brickfield pond' and is certainly dug deep into the hillside. Although it is not shown on the Chapman-Andre map, surveyed 1772-4, the manufacture of bricks and tiles continued in the area for more than a decade after that date. However there are also other suggestions that it may originate from the extraction of gravel to surface Oak Hill or to maintain the surface of the 'Old Woodford Road', the route of which passes nearby. Farther north, near the road and opposite Bunce's Lane, was one of the old wooden cattle pounds.

On the north side of Oak Hill a house was built on an enclosure from the Forest in 1852 that was demolished in 1933. Later the 'Kingfisher' swimming pool and then the 'Waltham Forest Hotel' were developed on the site. The original enclosure is one of many throughout the district that, although 'illegally' enclosed after 1851 had been subsequently built upon and was therefore allowed under the Epping Forest Act of 1878 to remain 'outside' the Forest.

Ken Hoy

Openness in the Green belt and E.F.D.C.!

From time to time we have in the Newsletter mentioned the subject of the redevelopment of the Royal Ordnance Factory site in Sewardstone Road Waltham Abbey.

In its original use the site was occupied by numerous small low elevation buildings at low density often surrounded by earth bunds. Mature trees spread over the area and the development was low profile, made little impact on the landscape and was included within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

When many MoD sites were sold off in the late 1980s to British Aerospace there was some press criticism of the deal.

Three sites, Enfield, Waltham Abbey and Patricroft (near Manchester) were said to have been sold for £13.6m, surveyors acting for the National Audit Office reportedly valued the sites as having a maximum development potential of £230m. A realistic valuation based on local plans and likely planning potential was put at £40 — £65m.

Planning aspects of the re-development of the site were considered by E.F.D.C. and now forms part of the Local Development Plan. The construction of a new road from J26 M25 and Highbridge St. was approved and is now functioning.

The road bisects the part of the site to be developed, (see map p8). The then owners of the site did their own

calculation as to the square footage of existing buildings which figure was accepted by E.F.D.C. As a consequence 250 was set at the number of dwellings permitted on the housing part of the site. This has now risen to 440.

The part of the developmental site between the new road and the M.25 was reserved in the LDP for business use which was classified as 50% B8 (storage and distribution) and 50% B1 (light industry) and B2 (general industry). This requirement was reiterated in a Development Brief approved by Dev. Committee. members in January 2000. The rationale here was that generally storage and distribution developments are low concentration employers and that a mixed use site would provide a range of jobs and would accommodate some of the small businesses which used the site after its disposal by the M.O.D.

The development as a whole will require the Green Belt boundary to be re-drawn at a suitable opportunity and this will follow the Black Ditch. South of this the site has been transferred to the Lee Valley Park.

The whole development is now owned by the Kier Group apart we believe from those parts of the housing area being developed by housebuilders that are not part of the Group.

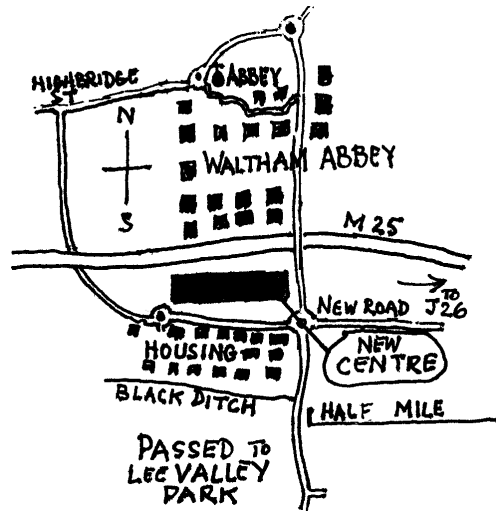
Recently a planning application was made by Kier Ventures and Norwich Union to construct a huge building 575 metres long, 100 metres wide and 19 metres high and covering a floor space of 61,211 square metres to be utilised by Sainsbury's as part of their new distribution strategy. "The company's existing centres are becoming outdated and are of a capacity that is unable to meet current automation processes."

The Distribution Centre will operate 24 hours a day 7 days a week and based on a traffic assessment report submitted by the developers and based on comparisons with much smaller centres at East Kilbride and Milton Keynes the total vehicle movement per 24 hours is calculated at 3324 including 952 HGV movements.

A number of objections were raised to the application including from London Borough of Waltham Forest, C.P.R.Essex, F.O.E.F. opposing the scheme on Green Belt grounds, traffic generation, effect on landscape, departure from LDP, Development and Design Brief etc. Thus the Development Brief for the site states "The philosophy of the Park will be to encourage well detailed quality buildings located sensitively within their individual plots. Care will be taken to maintain sufficient breathing space between the adjacent buildings and to ensure that they do not become oppressive in their relationship with the highway."

The Corporation of London expressed concern about the scale of the building and effect on views from the Forest and heavy traffic on Forest roads. In respect of the latter an assurance has been given that lorry movements will be via J26 M25. At no time will routes through the Forest or on Sewardstone Road, Honey Lane and Woodredon Hill be used by HGVs except in cases of emergency.

The application was considered by E.F.D.C. Development Committee on 3rd October. Despite the very



considerable importance of the subject only 9 minutes, divided into 3 slots, was permitted for the public and non-members of the Dev.Com., to address members. One slot was filled by the developers, one to a representative of the Waltham Abbey Council who also was in favour. The only objector allowed was Terry Callaghan Chairman of the local C.P.R.Essex who managed to speak for perhaps 5 minutes and was constantly urged by the Chairman to finish his statement.

The Friends were not allowed to address the members although a Dev. Com. member very kindly read our objections to the meeting. The planners recommended approval of

the application even though it infringed a number of points in the Development and Design Briefs for the site. Furthermore the Government Office for the Eastern Region had advised that the Council should give particular attention to the impact of the building on the Green Belt and the extent to which it exceeds in size any previous development on the site.

The planners asserted that one of the favourable aspects of the application was that it removed uncertainty about the site!

With two or three exceptions the members spoke in favour of the development almost entirely on the matter of employment prospects for Waltham Abbey. It was argued that the previous dependence on one big employer, Pan Britannica, now closed down left an unemployment situation to be solved. So they voted to put their eggs in one basket again. Brilliant!

CPRE pointed out, in addition, the effect of large numbers of HGVs grinding their way around roundabouts all night was not going to be good news for residents of the nearby houses. Another point raised by us was that Sainsbury's new strategy could lead to the closure of some of their present distribution centres. Perhaps the one at Buntingford would go! It is on the edge of the town and would make a nice brown field housing development. Employment in one place meaning unemployment in another! Employment is of course important but there is no evidence to suggest, and none was put to the meeting, that given time employment opportunities provided by a mixed use site could not be as good as that offered by this proposal.

Despite all the objections members voted overwhelmingly for this vast building which will very shortly probably obliterate the view of the Abbey Church from Fernhills and Trueloves and dominate the view of the Church from many other points along the Forest ridge to say nothing of helping to clog—up the M25 even more.

Harry Bitten

Obituaries

William Humphreys

William expressed a lifelong concern for the environment, conservation issues and deep love of Epping Forest which was reflected in the amount of time he gave in serving these interests, devoting much of his abundant energy to promoting a better understanding of the value of the green environment in today's hectic world.

He was noted for his genuine kindness, friendly nature and real concern for people. His stature, self confidence and gentle sense of humour gave him the ability to get on well with all sorts of people, whom he would challenge to explore the world around them. All of us who came into contact with him were enriched by the experience.

An outstanding ambassador for Epping Forest, he was a stalwart supporter of the Friends of Epping Forest, the Woodford Green Amenity Group and a much valued member of the volunteer team at the Corporation's own Information Centre at High Beach. Although these organisations took up much of his time, he was an active member of the Essex Wildlife Trust and took an interest in the work of the RSPB and the National Trust.

All of those who knew William well would agree that he possessed a significant bump of curiosity, which he nurtured by examining the natural world - improving his skills in tree identification and bird watching with enthusiasm. He loved Epping Forest, soaking up its atmosphere, enjoying its views and varied wildlife. He marvelled at its stately veteran gnarled trees, meandering streams or languid pools and encouraged others to do likewise. He took inspiration from the natural world around him and encouraged others to share in this, to try to capture its essence on canvas, film or in words.

Armed with his powerful binoculars at the ready, William willingly led guided walks through the Forest, spending much time researching not just the route but also something of the history of the area that he then enthusiastically passed on to those accompanying him. His passion for ferreting out information kept all of us on our toes as we never knew what he would wish to discuss next.

When on duty at the Information Centre, he enthusiastically welcomed visitors to the Forest frequently guiding interested individuals to the nearest beech, hornbeam or wild service tree where he would knowingly expound upon their specific features. He contributed records to the Corporation's biological data base and was always willing to discuss various aspects of the Forest's changing ecology and which management techniques might be worth using to protect its habitats. He was not afraid to speak his mind and occasionally challenged the Management regime. Sometimes William's sound advice was heeded.

A natural leader and facilitator, he could focus on the nub of a problem, dissecting away the difficulties and suggesting simple remedies for solving the task. William's approach to life was definitely "hands on" and he happily became involved with various community projects which were undertaken with infectious good humour and a desire to participate to the full. He will be especially remembered for his ability to sell raffle tickets, serve behind the bar at the Friends Annual Supper, or pick up litter. His record for persuading other people to take part in various events is exemplary and he will be remembered for his energising influence on committee meetings.

His passing leaves a large gap in all our lives. William will be missed; he will not be forgotten.

Tricia Moxey

The Friends are sending donations totally £125 to the Woodland Trust to plant a plot in their Woodland Creation Scheme probably at Wheatley Wood near Rayleigh, Essex.

Raymond Cassidy M.A.

Friends of Epping Forest lost a valued member when Raymond Cassidy died suddenly on August 5th.

By profession a musician, members are more likely to have known him as an author and speaker on local history and in particular for this research on the history of Copped Hall and Warlies. He was extraordinarily gifted with words and had a vast fund of quotations - as members of the Upper House discovered when he led the petition to a House of Lords Committee, against the M25 in Epping Forest.

He loved the Forest and Upshire in particular and encouraged every form of wild life into his garden. Although he did not agree with all the views expressed in these Newsletters (he was strongly opposed to the closure of Lodge Road on historical grounds), Epping Forest has lost a good friend and those of us who know him personally, an entertaining and erudite companion.

Sue McKinley

Walk Reports

Thursday August 24th was a beautiful summer day and at 10-00 am 20 members met at the Jack's Hill car park on the Theydon road. Sadly Bill Humphrey who should have led the walk was not with us and many of those present did not know of his sudden death a few weeks previously. We tried to continue the programme he had planned by visiting Ambresbury Banks via Long Running.

It would amuse Bill if he knew - and I shall blame the height of the bracken this year - that almost immediately the party broke into two sections as a deviant group (led by Harry) followed the 'right' path whilst the rest of us flourished in the bracken jungle.

At one point however, being in the front, I did see a fine Common Lizard and we all eventually 'met up' in Long Running.

Most of Long Running has been fenced and grazed for a few months each year for some five years. This experiment was to direct the effect of grazing in this area of heathland so that the dominant Purple Moor Grass was reduced and the return of heather encouraged. We were able to see the extent to which this has been successful. Grass tufts were greatly reduced and new heather growth was spreading widely in the areas where the top layer of grass was removed a few years ago. This was still low 'prostrate' heather due to the heavy grazing however. A very fine display of 'mature' heather was flowering freely *outside* the fenced area providing an indication of what might be the appearance of Long Running in a few years time!

It was possibly too hot to see Adders, but a beautiful green Southern Hawker dragonfly put on a fine performance at close quarters over the 'cattle pond'. Red males and greenish females of the Common Darter dragonfly were also enjoying the sunshine.

We walked along the bank of the 1940 'anti-tank trap' (now filled in) and stopped to examine a fine Sessile Oak - one of just a few in the Forest. Then we saw the other far more impressive earthwork 'defences' nearby - not merely 60 years old but some 2,300 years since construction. It was of course the Iron Age 'hill-fort' called Ambresbury Banks. We wondered at the size of the ramparts and about the size of the work force needed to dig the ditch and create the bank - still 10 metres wide after over 2,000 years of erosion - and, did they have the help of horses and oxen?

We circled two sides of the nearly 12 acre site before reaching the Green Ride.

Eventually we turned southwards through the open birch woodland, still containing some heather, and noted the two species of birch trees that grow widely in this part of the Forest - the Silver Birch and the Downy Birch.

We finished at noon. It had not been too hot under the trees and we had taken our time enjoying the summer woodland - but sadly we had missed Bill.

Ken Hoy

Centenary Walk Number 16.

This year we assumed that our usual luck with the weather would continue. At the start in Manor Park the day had dawned fine and although a few showers were predicted, we were confident that these would not amount to much. What a shock was in store.

Fifty walkers were at the start including the Superintendent and his Deputy, Verderers Adams, Davies and Morris, the Head Forest Keeper and the Head Forester. Sadly our President Lord Murray who nearly always does the whole walk was rather ill, and unable to attend - see elsewhere in this issue.

We walked to Wanstead Park by circling the City of London Cemetery, and alongside the River Roding. This initially involved a trip along the public footpath between the railway and cemetery. This is even more depressing than usual now that a high wire addition has been placed on the top of the railway fence.

We picked up more walkers at the Green Man Roundabout and proceeded across Leyton Flats gathering a few more joiners, and then over Gilbert's Slade to the Waterworks Roundabout, and then over Mill Plain to Oak Hill and the County Hotel where more walkers awaited us.

The County Hotel very generously provided tea, coffee, squash and biscuits no less, inside the Hotel itself! This was very much appreciated by all as were the other facilities freely available. We have written to the Manager expressing our thanks. About 80 walkers were present here.

As usual we then walked down the Sale and alongside Highams Park Lake at the far end of which some of us (not me!) saw a kingfisher. After crossing the Ching by Whitehall Plain, we made a slight deviation to check out the **Forest's Native English Black Poplar (*Populus nigra*)** before arriving at Butlers Retreat somewhat behind schedule! More walkers joined here, and over 90 headed over Chingford Plain, and then round Connaught Water before plunging into the woods en route towards Fairmead.

It was towards the end of this section that things started to go a little awry, and a thin drizzle started! In the bit between Fairmead and the lunch stop at the Robin Hood the heavens opened and by the time we reached the pub we were all soaked. A bit of a long shower we thought as we munched sandwiches and drank a draught or two, and gazed at the lowering sky! Many of the more pessimistic/sensible people among us abandoned the walk at this point leaving the optimistic/daft/wet group to proceed.

We visited Loughton Camp (Verderer Peter Adams spoke here), the Lost Pond (where Verderer Richard Morris spoke about the history of Monk Wood), the Deer Sanctuary (Head Keeper John Holton spoke here), and then the Deer Lawns at Wormleyton Pits (Dep. Sup. Jeremy Wisenfeld explained these to us). The rain continued unabated throughout, but 50 of us pressed on to Bell Common Epping where miraculously the sky cleared, the

sun appeared, and John Haynes the Chairman of the Epping Forest and Open Spaces Committee of the City of London emerged from the trees!

He had nobly driven all round the M25 from Dorking just to welcome the bedraggled sodden group that presented themselves which he did with humour tinged, I thought, with incredulity. Nonetheless, it was a long way to come to speak to us and we were very grateful.

Better luck next year chaps when I hope good weather will return.

Harry Bitten

Forest News

➤ Did you see a full page story in the local paper about palms, bamboo and eucalyptus trees spreading into the Forest - the threat of Japanese Knotweed and Asiatic Tiger moths and other non-native species appearing in the Forest?

This was attributed to a Report made by the Corporation of London (The Forest Conservators). But apparently these are extreme examples speculatively mentioned in the Report, that have become exaggerated by being selectively reported.

The Report is concerned with any signs that may be occurring that can be linked to 'global warming'. Certainly there are some hard facts, for instance, the many years that have elapsed since folk were last able to skate on Forest Ponds - once this was a fairly frequent event, and, certainly our Christmas card photographs of a snowy Forest 'go back' a decade or more!

Also some species of insects and plants, where Britain is/was the northern edge of their range, are becoming more frequent. For instance the Ruddy Darter dragonfly and the Clouded Yellow butterfly. But don't get too alarmed whilst walking in the Forest you are not likely to be struck on the head by a coconut just yet!

➤ Connaught Water has suffered from too many fish - too many that are too big and too many of the 'wrong' kinds. Much of the problem being caused by illegally introduced fish. The result, with increasing amounts of silt, is 'muddy' water caused by bottom stirring species, which cuts down the light, followed by loss of aquatic plants and insect life, meaning less food for the fish. Too many large and predatory fish have also helped to destroy the balance of life in the lake.

Remedial measures to be taken include the removal of many fish, reintroduction of a more balanced population and the planting of aquatic and waterside emergent plants.

➤ On Yardley Hill some of the older areas of scrub growth are to be cleared and the edge of the ride to be 'scalped' by cutting back growth.

The two patches of ancient coppice woodland, Bluehouse Wood and Hatch Grove, which are on the west side of the Ching Brook upstream from Chingford Hatch are to be partially re-coppiced. This will eventually encourage the regrowth of bluebells and other woodland flowers.

Ken Hoy

Black Poplar

Extract from Essex Wild Life, Autumn 2000

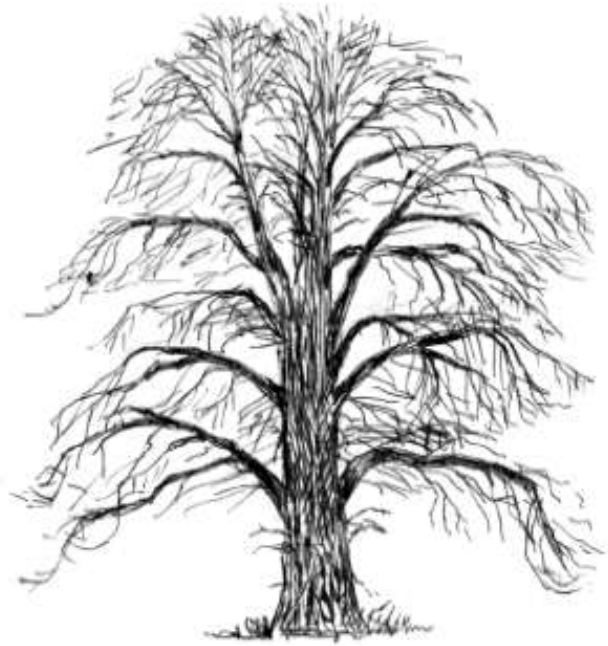
Toby Gibbs (Essex Wild Life) Trust Biodiversity Project Officer, gives an insight into the conservation work presently being undertaken throughout Essex as part of the Biodiversity Action Plan.

The Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is a national initiative aimed at conserving and enhancing populations of Britain's most threatened species and habitats. How shocking then that some of the species listed would, only a few years ago, have been considered common. The song thrush, otter and dormouse are now in need of our immediate help as is the Black Poplar.

The black poplar is a splendid tree. Certainly John Constable must have thought so, as his painting 'The Hay Wain' is dominated by two large, mature examples growing alongside a meandering watercourse. At that time this would have been a common sight throughout much of southern England, but now conservationists are struggling to ensure that the tree survives in this country at all.

To clear one point up, we are talking about the native black poplar *Populus nigra* subspecies *betulifolia* which probably colonised Britain around 7,000 years ago. Many believe the tree looks mysterious with its gnarled disfigured branches and fissured dark grey bark. However, there is no doubt that a mature example, attaining a height of 35 metres, is an impressive feature of its riverine habitat. Current estimates suggest that 8,000 individuals are all that remain in Britain with upwards of 200 in Essex. Why so few? Well, the tree could be considered its own worst enemy because of the specialised wet, undisturbed conditions it demands for its seeds to propagate. Also most trees found are male, as historically people chose to plant males because females produce a drifting white down considered to be a nuisance.

In Essex we are making concerted efforts to increase numbers of the tree. The county is rapidly being surveyed in order that we can establish numbers and sex of those trees that remain. Councils are being encouraged to serve Tree Preservation Orders on black poplars that occur within their boundaries and landowners are being asked to manage any that occur on their land.



Perhaps most exciting is the establishment of a clone bank which aims to conserve genetic material from the remaining trees of both Essex and Suffolk. Now holding cuttings from 135 trees we can be reassured that, even when our old black poplars die, Essex genetic diversity will be maintained. In fact cuttings from individuals in the banks are already being planted throughout the county.

This work in Essex is being mirrored in many other areas throughout the country. It bodes well for the future that so many people care about the tree's plight. Continued successful conservation work will ensure future generations are able to enjoy similar views of black poplar that Constable enjoyed and painted.

FOREST SUPPER – NOVEMBER 24TH 2000

Hawkey Hall, Woodford Green (7.30 for 8pm)

The caterers for our Supper this year are again– the Magpies Nest at Bell Common, Epping. They have offered us a cold meat and salmon platter and four salads followed by a choice of two sweets and coffee at a reasonable price. We will supply wine and glasses; plates and cutlery.

There will be the usual quizzes, goods for sale including new Christmas cards, new mugs, greetings cards, and new sweatshirts and fleeces, and of course good company. We have invited local M.P.s, Verderers, Chairman and Deputy of the E.F. & O.S. Cttee, the Supt. the Chairman of L.G.B.C. and C.P.R. Essex and many others connected with the management of E.F. Hopefully there will be opportunities to meet and chat with them and other friends.

If you can, please donate a gift for the RAFFLE. We regard the Forest Supper as our annual social event and we don't aim to make a profit. However, the income derived from the raffle makes the difference between a small profit and a big loss. You all made a wonderful contribution last year, so please help us to bridge the gap once again.

Entry price will be £11 this year, up £1 to cover the increased costs, especially Hall hire, but hopefully you will think this is still good value. Following last year's successful trial it will again be a **ticket only** event. Tickets will be issued on a first come first accepted basis. As in previous years we expect the demand to be high and suggest that requests are submitted as soon as possible, and before Sat Nov 18th. Please complete the booking form on the back page of the newsletter and send with your payment and **s.a.e.** to:

Hazel and David Shukla
(who have kindly agreed to take on this task) at:
6 Knighton Drive, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0NY

REMEMBER – ADMISSION BY TICKETS ONLY

- There is a fine example of Black Poplar in EF between the Ching and Warren Pond Road (Please see account of this year's Centenary Walk). Some years ago Peter Burman the late Dep. Sup. and Conservation Officer took some cuttings and they are being nurtured in the walled garden at the Warren. One of them was planted in the Warren Plantation, Epping in memory of Peter.)

Hales Brinks North

There has been an ongoing saga for nearly 3 months in the local press about this small triangle of land between Sky Peaks Road, A406 and E.F.

Originally it was allotments and after being used for storing heavy machinery whilst the A406 was extensively "improved" at Wadham Bridge, the land was put up for sale. We believe it is Green Belt land and, therefore, protected from development and we, and the local residents, hoped that the Conservators would purchase it and add it to E.F.

This did not happen and eventually it emerged that a Mr. O'Connor had bought it and obtained planning permission for grazing and for a shed in which to keep horses. He then put in an application to house his family of 9 in 4 caravans. A Council spokesman said "The following day the caravans entered the site, so the application will have to be considered retrospectively. The Caravans entered the site without planning consent".



*Macedonian gypsies camping in Epping Forest
(earlier in the 20th century)*

Council officers prepared an enforcement report for a planning Committee meeting. Local residents attended in force, complaining about noise and litter thrown into neighbouring gardens. Mr. O'Connor's representative at the meeting claimed the council was not providing adequate provisions and that the housing needs of gypsies should be catered for. He said the applicant had a medical condition which meant he needed somewhere stable (pun not intended!) to stay, and that he had a big family. A local Cllr. said that the Council already has an official gypsy site.

The Council ruled that the family of travellers must move and enforcement proceedings were commenced.

Passing the site on Oct 11th, it appeared that the land has not been vacated.

It is a great pity that the City did not purchase this land when it came up for sale, and all this trouble and aggravation could have been avoided.

News in Brief

Brook Road, Buckhurst Hill.

Back in March I wrote to the Chief Executive of EFDC (once again) about the footpath on Forest land alongside Brook Road. It runs satisfactorily from the Chingford Lane end to the boundary of Redbrige where it comes to an abrupt stop, and pedestrians are forced to walk the last few hundred yards within EF District on the dangerous narrow, winding road. And, incidentally, where the speed limit changes from 30 mph to "unrestricted"!

Mr. J. W. Burgess, Chief Executive, replied on 22nd March 2000:

You mention two issues in your letter which I shall respond to as follows:

Footway

We have a large number of sites within the District where footways have been requested. Unfortunately, no monies were provided in our allocation from the County for such works. This has been the position over the past two years, and I am bound to say that it is unlikely to change for 2000/2001. I am afraid that prioritisation of resources is a reality, and basic maintenance and accident reduction will always have first call on those resources.

Speed Limit

We are aware of this limit anomaly, and officers will be preparing a report for the Council's Transportation Committee to rectify the situation.

I hope that this response satisfactorily deals with the matters you have raised.

Yours sincerely ...

There has to date (Oct 10th) been no action on this. Is there anyone out there that could have any influence in this matter? Could EF Countrycare include the short length of pathway in their programme? Could EFDC pay a small fee to Redbrige to finish the path? Could Essex be persuaded to find a small amount of money before there is a serious accident here? **PLEASE**

Editor

Our President, Lord Murray

He spoke to me on the phone just a couple of days before the Centenary Walk. He had been having a little heath problem for a while, but assured me that he intended to do the Walk, he being a very regular participant.

Alas fate decreed otherwise, and during a trip up to town with his wife he became ill, and was rushed to the nearest hospital. Perhaps luckily this was the very modern and hi-tech Chelsea & Kensington Hospital where he underwent a very serious operation. For many days Lionel was sedated and in intensive care.

However, he has now come round and is out of intensive care, and in a general ward. He has even taken a few steps! We all hope for a speedy and full recovery and an early return to his wife and family.

Harry Bitten

See you at the Forest Supper!!

Peggy Bitten

Dates for your Diary

November 10th Friday 10.30 am.
An autumn walk in the beechwoods. Meet in the car park opposite Earl's Path Pond on the road between the Robin Hood P.H. and Loughton. 15 min walk from Loughton Central Line Station.

Leader: Ken Hoy GR 416 967

November 24th Friday FOREST SUPPER

7.30 for Buffet Supper at 8pm.
Sir James Hawkey Hall, Broomhill Rd (off Broadmead Rd), Woodford Green. See p11 for details.

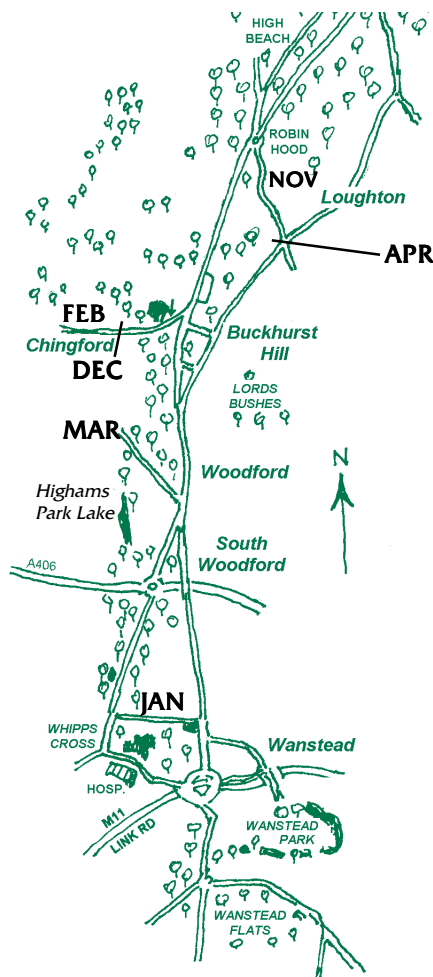
December 9th Saturday 1.30 pm. A winter's afternoon walk in the Chingford Woods, followed by drinks and mince pies. Meet in the Bury Road car park, Bury Wood end. 5mins from Chingford Station.

Leader: Harry Bitten GR 394 951

2001

January 28th Sunday 10.30 am. A walk around the Hollow Ponds area. Meet in the car park on the south side of Snaresbrook Road A 1007 (1st turning on the right going north on the A104 from Whipps Cross roundabout). Buses 2A and W12.

Leader: Harry Bitten GR 395 891



February 23rd Friday 10.30 am.
A walk through Hawk Wood to Yardley Hill. Meet in Hornbeam Lane off Bury Road Chingford.

Leader: Derek Meakin GR 393 957

March 29th Thursday 10.30 am.
A walk around the area of Highams Park Lake. Meet at the Wheelwrights PH at the junction of Friday Hill, Chingford Lane and Hatch Lane. (car parking at the pub or near-by in the street. Buses 212 and 357 pass the door and 2 mins walk away the 275 stops in the Avenue, Chingford Lane end.

Leader: Irene Buchan GR 391 928

April 29th Sunday 10.30 am.
Meandering along Loughton Brook. A walk taking in the recently de-silted Strawberry Hill and Baldwins Ponds and maybe even the Lost Pond! Meet in the car-park in Nursery Road (off Smarts Lane) Loughton. (Loughton Central Line Station 10 mins walk).

Leader: Verderer Richard Morris GR 418 965

Walks last about 2 hours. Please come suitably dressed for walking in the forest, which can be very wet and muddy. For help in getting to the meeting points please contact H & P Bitten on 020 8529 8594.

Other Dates

E.F. Information & Museum Service

Bookings and further details from the Information Centre at High Beach, Loughton, Essex, IG10 4AF
Tel. 020 8508 0028

Walks

Nov. 12th Sun. November Beeches. Meet opposite the Foresters Arms P.H. Baldwins Hill, Loughton. Leader Jeremy Wisenfeld GR 426 975

Dec. 10th Sun. Winter Wander. Choice of graded walks. Meet at the Info. Centre. Followed by hot drink and mince pies. GR 414 982

Thursday Lectures:

The 2000/1 Season of Lectures will be held in the Epping Hall, St. John's Road, Epping. All start at 8 p.m. - cost £2.00

Nov. 2nd Seasons in E.F. Iris Newbery.

Dec. 7th Practical Conservation in E.F. EFCV & EFC Trust.

Jan. 11th Farming & Wildlife in Essex. Rebecca Inman

Feb. 1st History & Wildlife in N.London. Paul Moxey

Mar. 1st International Conservation Issues - a South African Perspective. Nick Eade.

Walks start at 10.30 am and last about 2 hours.

E.F. Conservation Volunteers Programme.

Enquiries to Derek Meakin (020) 8500 1571

Nov. 5th Conservation Path, Long Running.

Nov. 12th Epping Cricket Ground Pond.

Nov. 26th Tree Planting.

Dec. 10th Bell Common Pond & Shepherd's Meadow

Dec. 31st Jack's Hill Bog, Long Running.

Jan. 7th Copley Plain.

Jan. 21st Conservation Path/Long Running

Jan. 28th Rushy Plain.

Feb. 4th River Ching.

We meet at the Warren at 9.30, off Warren Hill in Loughton, and we aim to leave promptly at 9.45.

Telephone the task leader if you need a lift, or you are going straight to the site.

Essex Wildlife Trust, EF Group

Thursday 30 November: British Dragonflies. A slide talk by John Coil. Come and learn about this spectacular and ancient group of insects, from a real enthusiast.

Meet at Methodist Church Hall, High Road, Loughton, starting at 8pm.

Saturday 2 December: Exploring Knighton Woods and Lords Bushes. A walk in this lesser known part of Epping Forest, once home of Edward North Buxton. Led by Ron Andrews. Meet: at entrance to the woods on Knighton Lane, just off High Road, Buckhurst Hill at 10:30am.

Thursday 25 January. From Royal Gunpowder Factory to Nature Reserve A talk by Peter Adams, Trustee of the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills. Find out about the wildlife of this fascinating site, now a SSSI and to be opened to the public in Easter 2001, with visitor centre, heritage interpretation and much more, Meet at Methodist Church Hall, High Road, Loughton at 8pm.

All meetings are open to non-members as well as members. Donations appreciated (suggested £1.50).

CHRISTMAS CARDS OF EPPING FOREST



We have this season's Christmas cards that depict five different attractive Winter scenes of Epping Forest.

They are available in packs of 10 cards (2 of each view) at £3.00 per pack. You will be able to purchase the cards at the Forest Supper on Friday 24th November or arrange to pick up supplies by phoning Seymour Moss, on 020 8529 0620, at 47 Long Deacon Road, Chingford, E4 6EG, or, Peg Bitten, 020 8529 8594.

If you wish packs to be sent by post please send a cheque for £3.50 per pack to Seymour.

HELP wanted

The Friends have a presence at a variety of events during the year which contains a display, usually in a gazebo and sell a range of related items. The object being to make ourselves known, meet old Friends and make new ones.

It is usually manned by members of the committee but sometimes owing to other commitments there are insufficient available. Occasionally this means that an event is missed, though more often a few hardy souls do the lot.

We would like to get a team of volunteers to help and are asking if there are any members who are prepared to assist for 2 or 3 hours (or more) on one or more occasions. Most events are from around 11 in the morning, setting up about 45 minutes before and finishing no later than 5pm.

The exact dates for next year are not yet known but they can reasonably be assumed to be the same or very similar to this year: Thornwood Village Day (Sunday, usually end of June), Chingford Village Day (Saturday, 30th June 2001), Chingford Day (1st Sunday in August), Epping Swaines Green (1st Sunday in September), Forest Festival (2nd Sunday in September).

We would also like to fly the flag in Loughton, Buckhurst Hill, Waltham Cross and Debden if there are similar events available. If there is an event where you think it would be advantageous for the Friends to display our stall please advise the Membership Secretary, or to offer help, contact the Secretary.

Forest Supper Booking Form

Please provide tickets for the 2000 Forest Supper @ £11.00 each (please list all names below):

Number of vegetarians, if any..... I would like, if possible, to be seated with: -----

Name ----- Telephone No. -----

Address -----

I enclose my payment for £..... **TOGETHER WITH STAMPED, SELF ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.**
(cheques/postal orders should be made payable to the Friends of Epping Forest)

Please return completed application form before Saturday 18th November to:
Hazel and David Shukla, 6 Knighton Drive, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0NY