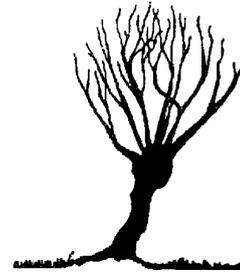


The Friends of Epping Forest Newsletter



November 1999

Dear Friend,

**Superintendent John Besent's
lecture on the Forest's Green Belt
Hawkey Hall, Woodford Green on
December 2nd. at 8-0 p.m.**

Following one of the first principles of journalism (I'm told), I've put the main point of the message at the top! - Put it in your diary now.

Our view is that every part of Epping Forest is as important as any other part, particularly to those who live nearby. Nevertheless walking through the Forest from south to north, one can by judicious route selection (and by eye closure around the Green Man and Waterworks roundabouts) ignore the fact that housing, industry and commerce lurks just beyond the trees.

The necessity for this minor self-deception gradually disappears and north of Chingford the Forest is largely bounded by agricultural and horsicultural land and golf courses, except on the eastern side where it is Buckhurst Hill and Loughtonised!

Virtually all the undeveloped areas flanking the northern Forest are part of the Metropolitan Green Belt. The objects of the M.G.B. are to prevent the coalescing of towns and

preserve the openness of the countryside. In 1955 the Government created M.G.B.'s and declared that within them, apart from limited in-filling and rounding-off of existing settlements, and buildings related to agriculture and forestry, "no further development would be permitted unless very special circumstances could be demonstrated". There has been very considerable erosion of these strictures since 1955 as a glance at a map will show.

The Friends have recognised, virtually since coming into existence, the vital importance of preserving the Forest's hinterland from further development and for that reason have persistently opposed offending planning applications and sought to support and influence the E.F.D.C. in its task of upholding Green Belt principles.

Naturally the Conservators policy of acquiring 'buffer' land on the periphery of the Forest is of vital importance here and it is to be hoped that as opportunities arise, Corporation funds will be available for further purchases. Such land is then not only protected from further development but acts as a haven and reservoir for Epping Forest's wildlife.



Throughout formal meetings with the Superintendent it has been clear for many years that he shares many of our concerns in this connection and has been giving much thought to strategies that might be employed to frustrate the forces that are leading to a deterioration of the Forest's environment.

At his Hawkey Hall lecture he will take the opportunity to tell us his views on all this... **Please try to be there if you can!**
Editor

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Please send all letters to the Secretary and Editor:
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Natural Aspect

In mid-September I made some notes for this newsletter. I wrote – ‘early September, an Indian summer?’ What a mistake, there has hardly been a day without rain since then.

August was similar, the first two weeks were hot and dry and in the countryside the harvesting of barley was virtually complete. Then just as the farmers were about to cut the wheat, it started to rain. However it seems to have been quite a good spring/summer for birds. Statistical surveys suggest there have been breeding successes and one’s own observations support such a conclusion. House Martins were feeding young in mid-August and I saw Greenfinches nest building in the last week of July (a third brood ?) The juvenile Greenfinches were feeding on the bird table at the beginning of September and there were newly fledged Blackbirds, Robins and Dunnocks about too! July and early August was also a ‘good’ period for butterflies.

Now as I write, in the first days of October, sadly all the Swallows I see are flying south. The Forest is damp but still quite warm, so it looks as if we might have a ‘good’ autumn for fungi. Our Forest, being ancient woodland is rich in such strange ‘fruit’. I say fruit because what we see above the surface of the ground or on the outside of trees, is only the ‘flower’ or fruiting body of the fungus. It fruits by shedding millions of microscopic spores into the air and on to the ground from under the cap of the typical ‘umbrella’ toadstool. The ‘main body’ of the fungus plant is a tangled mass of threads below the ground – or in the wood of trees – the mycelium.

At this time of the year we frequently see people with a plastic bag and a short stick wandering about in the Forest. Often these folk have an origin in or some connection with the continent of Europe where knowledge of edible fungi and familiarity with cooking and eating them is widespread. There are well over a thousand species of fungi to be found in Epping Forest – the exact number depends upon where you stop counting the little ones. However, less than a dozen species are worth eating and whilst the majority could be categorised as ‘inedible’, a large number will make you sick or very ill and a small number are really deadly poisonous.



‘Deathcap’ (*Amanita phalloides*)

Some of the most poisonous species are found in the Forest. The notorious ‘Deathcap’ (*Amanita phalloides*), the one responsible for 90% of deaths by fungal poisoning, can usually be found every year somewhere in the central or northern parts of the Forest. I am surprised that so few people in Britain are affected by eating the ‘wrong’ fungi considering the amount of media attention given to ‘survival in the wild’ and ‘living off nature’ etc. Maybe we have a basic distrust of fungi inculcated at an early age and that, in the absence of knowledge, I hope continues to be spread among children. Many books describe in horrific detail just how you die if you eat the Deathcap. Symptoms do not appear sometimes for many hours, by which time it is too late and the several complicated and little understood poisons have been absorbed irreversibly into the body. A dreadful agonising death will follow taking up to ten days – and, there is no known cure! This is not ‘scaremongering’ or exaggeration.

Even the common mushroom has a close and indistinguishably different relative that can make you very sick. Fortunately when cooked it produces in the pan a quantity of evil black inky liquid that smells strongly of carbolic. That stopped me eating some once! Older members will remember the smell of school inkwells? That is the Yellow-Staining Mushroom (*Agaricus placomyces*) which as its name indicates, within seconds goes bright yellow wherever marked or cut.

There are also several common plants that are dangerously poisonous growing in the Forest, but as I have said, fortunately in this country there is little tradition of eating wild berries or ‘wild food’ generally.

Most people will know about Deadly Nightshade, now quite a rare plant, but all members of the nightshade family are poisonous to some extent, even parts of the potato and tomato plants. Common in woods and hedgerows are the shiny red berries of Woody Nightshade, or Bittersweet as it is aptly called, fortunately it is one of the least poisonous of the family. Also scrambling over bushes and hedgerows are Black Bryony and White Bryony. Black Bryony twists clockwise as it climbs whatever support it can find. White Bryony uses tendrils to climb and they twist first one way and then the other. Although these two plants are unrelated – the first belongs to the Yam family and White Bryony to the Cucumber and Melon family – both have bright red berries and both plants are very poisonous. Every part of the plant is poisonous, even the root, indeed the White Bryony is called ‘Devil’s Turnip’. It is said that less than 20 berries will kill a child and double that number is fatal for an adult.

The Arum Lily or Cuckoo Pint is another wild plant with poisonous red berries. They are bunched at the top of a six inch white stem usually in the bottom of a hedge.

So what I think I am saying is, don’t let the kids imitate these survival guys with their macho messages (you wouldn’t let them pick up a snake would you? – it might be an adder) – for there are more wild plants in the woods and countryside that are harmful than can be usefully eaten. The same warning should be applied to DIY herbal or homeopathic treatments – ‘a little knowledge is a dangerous thing’. Buy it from the shop unless you are sure you know what you are doing ! So, enjoy the autumn woods – it might be sunny by the time you read this in November.

Ken Hoy

Rain

It rained and it rained and rained
The average fall was well maintained
And when the tracks were simply bogs
It started raining cats and dogs.

After a drought of half an hour
We had a most refreshing shower
And then the most curious thing of all
A gentle rain began to fall.

Next day was also fairly dry
Save for the deluge from the sky
Which wetted the party to the skin
And after that the rain set in.

Stort Valley Ramblers

Website

A good 'friend' has put us on the 'Web', he says...

<http://members.aol.com/friendsef/foef.htm>

Huh? Shurely shome mishtake?

No, no, no – that first line is *not* a typo; it's not the work of an Esperanto-speaking Eskimo tapping a Korean keyboard; nor is it the product of an unlimited amount of monkeys hammering away on an unfathomable number of typewriters... though ... who knows? ;-)

It's the address of The Friends of Epping Forest's new website.

<http://members.aol.com/friendsef/foef.htm>

Hmmm, complicated, surely?

The address may seem complicated to folk unused to web addresses. But those who have used the Internet know they need only type that long-winded address once then save it as a Favourite Place – they need only point and click to visit, thereafter.

What makes the site interesting enough to visit or save as a Favourite Place?

Well, apart from hosting the newest Forest news as we get it, there's the Walks Programme, ideas about a Millennium Wood, several photos of the Forest – and Friends enjoying it, and links to other Epping Forest or Conservation related sites that may interest friends.

We've set up the site for further reason: publicity. The site contains information about FoEF and its history – so there's some of that in there, too, with details of how to join us!

But isn't "<http://members.aol.com/friendsef/foef.htm>" a terribly long-winded address to simply stumble upon?

Uhm... yes. It does have the benefit of being totally in lower-case with **no capitals** and **no spaces** but usually people won't just stumble on it. They'll find us via links from other sites, similar to those which our website suggests as mentioned above. Already, the Friends site has had 157 visitors (as at 20.09.99) – and it hasn't been publicised yet! Reciprocal links from other sites is the main reason, though the image of an unlimited amount of monkeys hammering away on an unfathomable number of typewriters does cause sleepless seconds!

A way of 'stumbling upon' the site is via Search Engines. There are many of these: we now feature on some. A search simply looking for 'epping forest' drags us in at lowly 56th of several thousand finds! Using search engine **Altavista** to look for '**friends of epping forest**' brings us

up **FIRST** out of 1,401,390 finds! That aspect has yet to be fine tuned. As will be the website: it is still growing – but hopefully will never mature! We'll try to keep it fresh, interesting and maybe amusing. Info contained in it will naturally change as the seasons do.

How long will it exist?

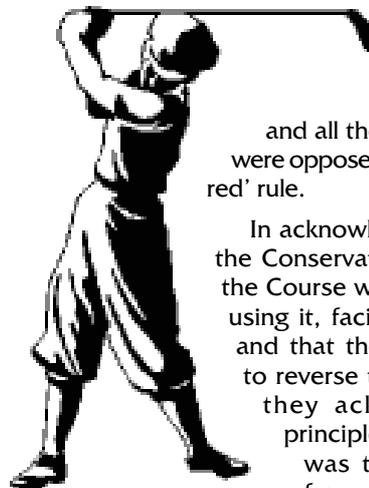
No time limit is contemplated. The worst that can happen is it dies of indifference and apathy. Visits will be monitored and we'll know if we can get new members in this manner, soon enough. It won't replace the Newsletter but hopefully some of the fascinating items contained there, such as Ken Hoy's "Know Your Forest", can have a longer life on the Web.

What if I don't like it?

Feel free to comment and criticise: the Webmeister is quite new to the game and doubtless has lots to learn. This website is yours to do as you wish. Suggestions for pages or links are welcomed. You can email directly from the site itself or email to: friendsef@aol.com

Chingford Golf Course

Together with every other part of the City Corporation's administration the Epping Forest and Open Spaces Committee have been and are engaged in a 'Best Value' exercise. The object of this is to aim at achieving the maximum perceived benefit from the minimum amount of expenditure. Chingford Golf Course seems to have come under the searchlight of this scrutiny and in August notices appeared around the Course indicating that for an 'experimental period' it was proposed to drop the rule that golfers were required to wear something red whilst on the course. Comments on this proposal were invited.



As far as we can discover a fair number of people have responded to this invitation and all those that we are aware of were opposed to the lifting of the 'wear red' rule.

In acknowledging these objections the Conservators have indicated that the Course was, due to fewer golfers using it, facing a financial challenge and that they were exploring ways to reverse this trend. In saying this they acknowledged that the principle reason for the decline was the competition arising from the proliferation of golf courses created in the area over the last 5-10 years. However they felt that the 'wear red' rule had the effect of discouraging some casual 'day' golfers who would not wish to go to the expense of buying red clothing which might not be much use afterwards. In addition visiting Clubs and Societies might be discouraged by the rule. The Conservators also asserted that abandoning the 'red rule' would shift the duty of care to the golfer and thus make the course marginally safer for the walker.

In the Walthamstow Independent of Oct. 1st there was a front-page news story about the proposed end of the 'red rule'. A walker was quoted as opposing the end of the rule on the grounds that it was a sensible safety measure and that its ending would cause difficulties for both golfers and walkers. The reason for the ending of the rule was to try to increase income for the Conservators. In response the Corporation spokesman is quoted as

saying, "It has been decided that we will have a trial period for a year... and that we have got rid of the rule because we are in the middle of a process of modernisation. The golfers are insured in the event of an accident so if walkers got hit they (the golfers) would be liable." We do not know the identity of the spokesman and there is always the possibility of misreporting.

The position now we understand is that no decision has yet been made in regard to the 'red' rule, this will be made in the light of the wider financial and other considerations now ongoing.

The 'Friends' have made our own representations opposing the end of the 'red' rule on safety grounds. Insurance does not come as part of the 'green fee' and so golfers are often not covered if they injure someone. We have suggested that a supply of red cotton tabards are kept and offered to golfers with no red clothing on payment of a suitable returnable deposit.

We find it difficult to believe that dropping the 'red' rule will be a significant factor in increasing the usage of Chingford Golf Course, but our main concern anyway is that what is widely perceived as a long standing and sensible safety measure, enabling golfers and walkers to amicably share a part of Epping Forest, should not be abandoned.

Many of the local golf courses, especially the newer ones developed to respond to what was predicted to be a rising market, are under the same pressure as is the Chingford course.

Much of the misreading, misunderstanding and wild speculation that has gone on about this subject stems from the fact that the consideration of it has taken place in the confidential part of the Epping Forest and Open Spaces Committee's Agenda from which the public are excluded.

Oh for an effective Freedom of Information Act!

Harry Bitten

How well do you Know the Forest?

5

This time we are considering the rest of the central block of Forest north of the 'Clay Road' as far as the Wake Arms roundabout. A knowledge of the streams in this area of the Forest is as essential – to avoid being lost – as knowledge of the Rides. Always remember the water flows down to Staples Road Loughton, when deciding whether to walk up or down stream!

Also considered this time are places to the west of the Epping Road as far as the road (A121) from the Wake Arms down Woodreden Hill to Honey Lane.

Blackweir Hill. If you are standing outside the Foresters Arms on Baldwin's Hill, Blackweir Hill is the hill in front of you, beyond Baldwin's pond. It is north of the Clay Road and east of the Green Ride.

Blackweir Pond, is the correct name for the '**Lost Pond**' which was mentioned in previous Newsletters. It was given the popular name 'Lost Pond' by James Brimble and, as he says in his book, was a favourite place visited by Jacob Epstein – the sculptor. It is one of the most tranquil and picturesque ponds in the Forest and its situation on the top of Blackweir Hill might seem rather strange until one realises that like many other Forest ponds it was originally a gravel pit. First created by digging in 1895, it is obviously not marked on earlier maps, e.g. Buxton's

(1883). There are records showing that Loughton Urban District Council contracted to purchase and remove gravel and hoggin from 'the pit' from 1909 until 1915 (last recorded date) for use on local roads. The record for 1911 for instance, is as follows: '100 yds (cubic) of hoggin were dug and carted from the Forest pit to bind in the granite (chips) and to put upon the hills damaged by storms and rendered slippery in frosty weather'. These were gravelled or 'non-tarmac' roads then, of course.

Sadly the pond is now badly silted-up and therefore is not as healthy as it was a few decades ago.

Goldings Hill Ponds are at the top of Goldings Hill beside the A121 (Loughton to the Wake Arms road). Both are possibly old gravel pits and the pond that adjoins the road has a close association with the use of the highway. The road was originally constructed in the second decade of the seventeenth century. Later, in 1770, the Epping and Ongar Highways Trust began a major reconstruction in order to reduce the gradient of Goldings Hill. The ponds could have originated from gravel digging for the road at either of these times. The southern pond that is farther into the woodland is deep and may have functioned as a reservoir. Both ponds are shown on a map surveyed in 1773 (Chapman-Andre). Two or three decades ago a row of posts and rails still existed in the pond parallel with the road. These were guide rails for horses to pull coaches, haywains, wagons and other carts into the water to wet the wooden wheels, thus tightening the iron wheel-rims and wooden spokes. The horses having completed the climb up Goldings Hill could also drink and be refreshed. Posts having a similar function existed in the pond where Nursery road joins the High Road, Loughton, and in the pond beside the road on Bell Common, Epping.

Like many Forest ponds silting and the growth of vegetation has reducing the area of water and the richness of aquatic life. Many Forest ponds, and particularly this convenient roadside pond, suffer from the thoughtless – and illegal – introduction of alien species, especially predatory fish, which then destroys the natural balance of life in the pond.

Little Monk Wood: This wood is south of the lower Wake Valley and north of the Clay Road between the Green Ride and the Epping Road. With Great Monk Wood it has a recorded history since medieval times. The two Woods are mentioned separately in records before 1860 but the earliest records just refer to 'Monk Wood'.

Great Monk Wood: is situated to the north and east of the lower Wake Valley and it covers the high ground between that valley and the one to the east that is parallel with the Green Ride. As stated these two woods have a long history within the Forest. In the thirteenth century a part of the wood belonged to Stratford Langthorne Abbey and part to the Abbey at Waltham. Throughout the next three or four centuries there was some conflict between them as evidenced by the need for representatives from both Abbeys to be present whenever timber was being felled on behalf of either Abbey. There are Court records, from the late fifteenth century and again a hundred years later of 'great spoyle and waste in Moncke Wood'. This was when large-scale illegal felling (without a licence) had occurred and the offenders were presented before the Forest court. Interesting is a reference to the trees as, 'oke, beach, hornebeame and birch.' – the same four trees that are the dominant trees in the woodland today. Also mentioned as 'special vert.' (those trees important as food for the deer) were 'crabtrees, hawthornes and hollies'.

Both woods have been famous in the more recent past because they contain impressive great and ancient pollard Beeches and (a few) Oaks. The history of their management is different from the surrounding woodland that was lopped regularly by the Loughton Commoners. Lopping rights were not practised in Monks Wood; pollarding, last recorded there in 1840, was undertaken by the Lord of the Manor and it is possible that it is more than 160 years since some of the trees were last lopped. Victorian writers, including Buxton speak of Monk Wood: '...its billowing mass of tall trees rises like an island above the rest' of the surrounding woodland which has been subjected to '...unsparing pollarding ... which gives it the effect of having been mown by a scythe'. Clearly Monk Wood was very different '... a conspicuous object' – as Buxton says. Unfortunately the giant Beeches are now old and are suffering from disease and storm damage, as a consequence thickets of birch and bramble are growing in sunlit patches and the woodland is changing rapidly. Although Monk Wood has been designated as a 'minimum intervention area' the creation of some 'maiden' beech pollards is being undertaken to ensure the continuity of the invertebrate and lower plant life for which the wood's old pollards have been famous in the past.

Court Hill is the southern flank of Great Monk Wood. It rises steeply from the stream in the lower Wake Valley. The hillside is south facing and in the past its lightly sun-dappled slope was carpeted with the rare (elsewhere) 'cushion' moss (*Leucobryum glaucum*) for which Epping Forest's beechwoods are famous. During the last decade or so much of the plateau above the slope has lost many of its old Beech trees. They have been replaced, as the

forest cycle begins again, by young trees growing in a tangled thicket of brambles.

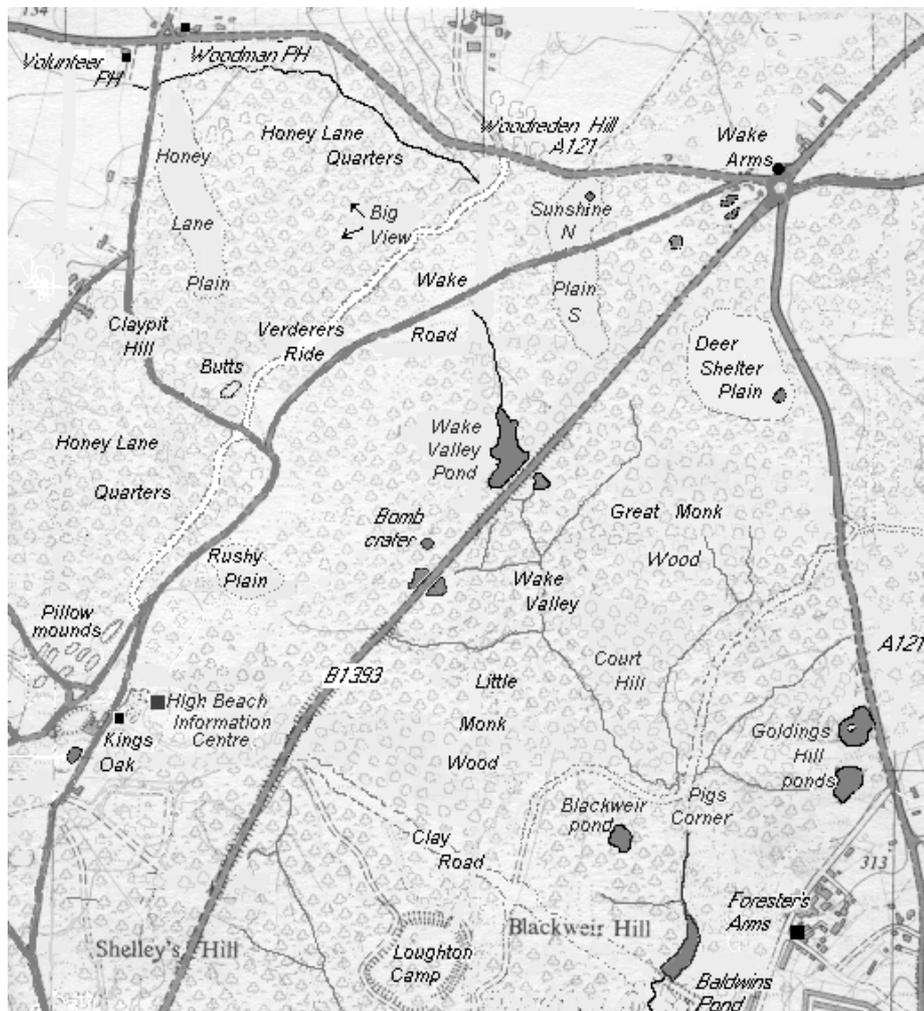
Pig's Corner or **Bell-ringer's Hollow** is where the Wake stream and its collected tributaries pass under the Green Ride as it dips down and bends round to cross the narrow



*The Deer Shelter, Deer Shelter Plain
(from Epping Forest Then and Now)*

valley. There does not seem to be an explanation of the names – except the obvious ones. It is a landmark spot – when you reach it you know where you are!

Deer Shelter Plain is a relatively recent name. The present Deer Shelter plain was a large wide heather covered clearing near the northern tip of the area we are considering, just before the two roads converge at the Wake Arms. Before the 1940's the heather was thick and deeply criss-crossed by deer paths. Birches and a few small, but old, oak pollards were scattered around the plain. The area is so named because a large round conical deer 'shelter' stood just beyond the southern edge of the heather plain until a fire destroyed it in the late 1940's. It was nothing more than a very large thatched roof standing on eight 'legs'. In harsh winters hay and root vegetables were placed under it to feed the deer. In the forties the deep heather provided the last stronghold for the Nightjar in the Forest. By the 1950's birch scrub was invading the area; however much of this has been cleared in recent decades to encourage a return of the heath conditions. On the eastern side a sizeable pond has been created recently to provide water for the deer and suitable aquatic breeding conditions for dragonflies.



Wake Valley Pond This picturesque and comparatively large pond is on the other (west) side, of the Epping New Road (A1393). It appears to have been created when the embankment for the road was made in the early 1830's. However, contrary to what has been previously

written, this is not so for the Epping Forest Committee agreed to the construction of the pond in the valley in 1881 (A.Wheeler,1998. L.N.). The pond has been used for swimming since it was first made (my father swam there as a boy) and it even had a diving board. It has been the scene of several deaths by drowning. It is 3.8 m deep, (over 12ft.) and is notorious with swimmers as there are warm and very cold areas allegedly causing cramp. Swimming is now banned for health reasons. Although fishing is permitted and it is popular with anglers, the illegal introduction of unsuitable species has damaged the aquatic life of the pond, including important amphibian and dragonfly populations.

Little Wake Ponds. These are a little south of the previous pond, one being either side of the road.

There is a third small pond on the east side of the road opposite the large Wake valley pond. At least the two southern ponds do date from the construction of the embankment of the road across the Wake Valley. They were dug then, in the 1830's, to provide the extra material for the embankment. The deposition of silt over time has caused all of these ponds to be less healthy for aquatic life than they once were.

'The Bomb Crater'. A short distance north of the small pond on the west side of the road is a small circular pond that although known locally as 'The Bomb Crater' was in fact caused by the explosion of a V2 rocket in 1945. It formed a steep sided and deep pond, and for a period this was also a favourite swimming 'hole' for local youths.

'Pillow Mounds'. These are long mounds of varying length that are raised some two or three feet above the surface. About twenty of them can be seen on the top of the slope in front of the car park at High Beach. Their origin has been the object of a controversy for many years. It was long thought that as some 'worked flints' and odd pieces of pottery similar to that found at Loughton Camp and Ambresbury Banks had been found in the mounds, that they were perhaps Iron Age burial 'barrows'. However, that is not now thought to be the case and it is generally accepted that they were constructed as rabbit warrens. At least from the late 16th Century there is evidence to suggest there were 'Coney warrens' in Epping Forest. These were constructed mounds provided for rabbits – that were valued for their meat and fur. By 1753 a Forest record lists several sites, including "at the King's Oak" (High Beach). It seems that eventually the mounds were within enclosed feeding areas as they were said to be "occupied" by certain named individuals. There are several similar mounds in (what is now) woodland to the south of Sunshine Plain (S).

Rushey Plain is the recent name of a small open area north of the Kings Oak PH. at High Beach. A century ago open heathland covered much of today's woodland along the top of the ridge north of High Beach. This was especially so along the road to the Wake Arms from High Beach (the Wake Road) – clues to show where it was open can be gained by observing where there are young trees and an absence of old pollarded trees.

Honey Lane Quarters is all the woodland on the western slopes from High Beach to Woodridden Hill (A121) on the west side of the Wake Road down to the Volunteer and Woodbine PH's.

Clay-Pit Hill. This is the steep winding road that cuts Honey Lane Quarters in half as it runs down from High Beach to the A121. An older name for the road is Honey Lane (Buxton). Recently it tended to be a traffic 'rat-run' across High Beach to the M25 and it was experimentally

closed for some months. However local protests caused it to be opened again and 'humps' and 'pinch-points' substituted.

Honey Lane Plain. This is a long narrow plain – with a Ride running down to the bottom of Clay-pit Hill

The whole area of the lower part of Honey Lane Quarters, down near the two 'pubs' and the water fountain, was open in the middle of the 18th.Century (Chapman Andre map 1773). More recently it became dense blackthorn thicket. What today we call Honey Lane Plain is a long narrow plain running southwards up the hill. Up this narrow clearing a rifle range was constructed in 1863 for a volunteer rifle corps, the 22nd.Essex Rifles. The gun pits were at the bottom of the plain and two butts were built at 600 yds and 800 yds. The range ceased to be used about 1894. A mound, which can still be seen at the top of the hill, is the remains of the farther butt.

Flagstaff Hill is an old name for the top of Clay-Pit Hill, as when the rifle range was in existence a flag pole was situated there which, when the range was in use, flew a red flag to warn Forest users and travellers on the road. Towards the end of the 19th Century there were complaints to the Conservators of bullets whistling overhead!

Verderer's Ride. This ride runs along the high ground of Honey Lane Quarters, parallel with the Wake Road, from High Beach to Woodridden Hill

Big View is a fine old viewpoint, made in the early days of the Corporation's management of the Forest, but cleared and recreated a decade or so ago. It provides a view westwards across the Lea Valley. Waltham Abbey is visible in the middle distance – but so is the M25 traffic! 'Big View' can be found just off the Verderer's Ride, to the west, in the northern part of Honey Lane Quarters.

Sunshine Plain (N & S) this plain is in two parts as the Wake Road cuts it in half. Together with Long Running and Deer Shelter Plain, it is all that remains of the wet heathland that once covered much of the flat top of the Forest ridge. It is now an important and unique habitat in Essex. In recent decades Birch seedlings have tended to colonise it and Purple Moor grass to dominate the heathers. Recently considerable voluntary conservation work has been undertaken to restore it to heathland. In the northern part an old bomb crater has developed into an interesting little pond.

Ken Hoy

M11 Link Road

It is now called the A12/M11 Link — but more of that later.



In March 1975 a letter was sent to the membership of the Friends of Epping Forest. After reporting the latest developments in the struggle to prevent damage to Epping

Forest and its surrounding countryside from the effects of the planned M16 (later called M25) our letter went on as follows: "... it looks as if we will soon be facing another threat to Epping Forest. The recently announced proposals for the Hackney to M11 Link Road will involve road widening in various places along the route from the 'Green Man' to Whipps Cross and from this point onwards along the A104 to the Waterworks Corner. Arising out of these proposals, at some later date one can foresee that it may next become necessary to widen the A11 road through Woodford Green right to Epping." That was the start! We were involved.

Hundreds of committee meetings, public meetings, Newsletters and Public Inquiries later on August 7th 1999, I drove down the M11 to Redbridge roundabout, through a tunnel by the George Green and then a 'trench' and came up to the surface at the Green Man roundabout. I was going to an exhibition in Leyton Library, to? — not celebrate, not mourn, to recognise I suppose, those years of struggle. But the story hasn't ended yet. I finally joined the traffic on the roundabout and spent ten minutes with a stream of cars stationary in Leytonstone High Rd. Eventually, where others were turning right, I thought, I can get around the back of the shops to the Library!

I turned right and found myself in MacDonalds Car Park!

Finally I reached the Library — and there they all were. The objectors and protesters of the 70's the 80's and lastly the 90's. What have we achieved?

It is difficult to comprehend all the pros and cons. I had arrived at the Green Man roundabout very smoothly (few people knew the road had just opened), experienced the congestion of Leytonstone, looked at the deterioration of the shops and all the other changes in the area. In the newspapers I read something of the bitterness of folk who live there. Since then the road has opened all the way to Eastway and the Blackwell tunnel. So what have we achieved?

Let me go back to the beginning. The Whipps Cross Road and the A104 past the 'Rising Sun' through the Forest has not been widened into a motorway (yet!). 'George Green' Wanstead is returning to relative quiet since the through traffic is underground. The 'Green Man' Roundabout does not have a high 'fly-over' for horses, cyclists, pedestrians and cattle, way above the traffic — Yes, that is what was proposed at one point! It has a walk-through underpass instead — in three lanes, for horses and cattle, cyclists and pedestrians. But the 'through traffic' is in a tunnel underneath. Those were the little local gains, what else?

There is no satisfaction in knowing that what we said in the 70's has been proved true. It is generally accepted now that Motorways generate more traffic, create greater problems and (in the case of this road) do not solve the problems of inner city traffic — but add to them, as more cars try to get into the city. Also on the wider scale, as Harry said in the last Newsletter, each separate motorway protest struggle contributed to raising the level of public perception that we cannot solve the problems of 'traffic' by building 'bigger and better' motorways. There is a realisation that access to inner cities and towns must be by better public transport. But, let's leave the general and get back to the particular.

I understand the M11 Link Road has cost three times what the Dept. of Transport predicted — that is nearly twice

what the Lister/Goldsmith proposal would have cost.

It was only on cost grounds that the Inquiry Inspector could not accept what he acknowledged was a better solution. There would have been green walkways, parks, community facilities and appropriate development over the top of the traffic — since the proposal was for a tunnel. In the short term there would have been far less disruption during building the road, because the scheme involved a new revolutionary method of tunnelling (now widely used).

The new road has divided Leytonstone in two, over 1,000 people have been turned out of their homes and this has helped destroy the livelihood of many small services and trades people who served the local community. With more traffic it is unlikely that air pollution will improve and doubtful, in the long term, whether Leytonstone High Road will be relieved of traffic pressure or recover.

The 'improved' road will encourage more traffic until what they call 'the Restraint Policy' begins to operate — that is, more people trying to use the road than it can effectively accommodate and they are then 'restrained' from using it further. The other road jargon word is appropriate here — a 'pinch-point' — which is part of a 'restraint policy'. This could be where three lanes of traffic are 'merged' into two. That will happen during the evening rush hour as three lanes of homeward bound traffic arrive at the two lanes of the Green Man tunnel. What will the 'surplus' traffic do? — go up on to the Whipps Cross Road and on to the Waterworks? But isn't this where we 'came in'?

Now we come to the A12/M11 bit. Throughout all the Inquiry statements the DoT witnesses claimed there were no plans to build an M12. So, although A12 traffic was clearly involved with the new road it was just called the M11 Link Road. Now it is the A12/M11 Link. Why was it not called that from the beginning? Perhaps I have become just too suspicious and cynical. However, a new climate of opinion about motorways and traffic problems in cities has been created and the Government has ordered a 'rethink'. While we all remain vigilant we must wait and see.

Ken Hoy

Centenary Walk

The early morning weather forecast and a heavy downpour at 0800hrs cast a bit of gloom over our journey to the start of the walk near Manor Park Station. However there was a goodly gathering, numbering 60 including all four Verderers, Jeremy Wisenfeld the deputy Superintendent, Ian Cox the Forester, Neil Sindon, policy officer at Council for Protection of Rural England, Lord Murray, our President to mention a few (and not in order of importance!).

We had hardly set off across Wanstead Flats when a few shafts of sunshine made a watery appearance and, thereafter, there was a steady improvement which but for a couple of very brief showers lasted all day.

We streamed across the newly created/opened Green Man Roundabout to be joined by more walkers including a group of Ramblers from Wisbech. They had heard about the Centenary Walk from the Octavia Hill Museum at Wisbech. I try each year to lure someone from there onto the walk to give us a brief talk about the Forest connections of that remarkable woman. This year, unfortunately, we clashed with the Labour Party Conference and, for some reason I do not understand, Harry Cohen MP seemed to regard it as priority for him to go there rather than join us

at Leytonstone. I don't remember him missing a Centenary Walk before!

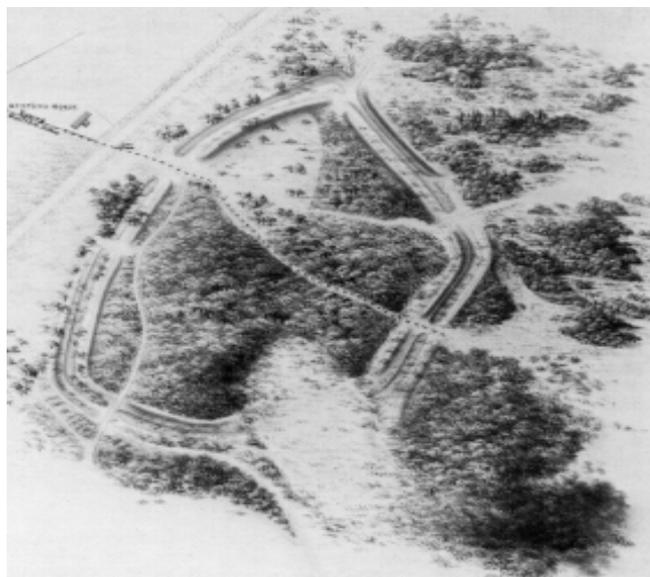
On arrival at the County Hotel they rose splendidly to the occasion with coffee/tea for at least 90 people all for free. Thank you very much County Hotel. Our President has written thanking them formally. We crossed Highams, the Woodford Golf Course and Whitehall Plain and pointed-out the native English Black Poplar before arriving and stopping briefly at Butlers' Retreat where more joined.

One hundred and ten walkers left there and headed over Chingford Plain to Connaught Water and then to Bedford's (Grimston's) Oak. Thereafter a very challenging scrubby, wooded not very well pathed route was followed to Ludgate House! After lunch at the Owl we crossed Fairmead and Hill Wood to Paul's Nursery Green where **Superintendent John Besent gave notice of his forthcoming lecture on the Forest and the Green Belt to be held at Hawkey Hall, Woodford Green on 2nd December at 8pm.** This is a very important lecture and we urge members to attend if possible (see editorial in Newsletter).

We picked-up the Verderers Ride passing along it to look at the 'Big View' before, with the help of Keeper Nick Baker, crossing the A121 to Woodredon. The dangers faced by walkers and even more by riders in crossing this heavily trafficated road are frightening.

After Woodredon we traversed St Thomas' Quarters to cross the Epping New Road again with help of Nick. See previous remark about road crossings!

At Ambresbury Banks Verderer Peter Adams spoke interestingly on its history and speculated about the Boudicca connection.



We were then welcomed at Bell Common Epping by Verderer Richard Morris who set the seal on an enjoyable walk by reading a couple of stanzas from Alfred Lord Tennyson's 'Ring out wild bells':

*Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty night:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.*

*Ring out, wild bells, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.*

Very appropriate for the millenium.

Harry Bitten

Spindle Walk

Bill Dexter led a very nice walk for us (a few of us!) on Saturday 16th October around Sheering, but including a very pleasant section along the River Stort.

A feature of the walk was the large number of spindle trees particularly lining the streamside banks near Sheering Hall. The predominance of ash in the area and the presence of flints in the fields point to a chalky composition in the soil which is the preferred medium for spindle.

The following extract from the Readers Digest Countryside Book gives further information:

Spindle tree *Euonymus europaeus*



For thousands of years before the invention of the spinning wheel all the thread used for woollen cloth was spun by women twirling a stick called a spindle between their fingers. The spindle tree got its name because its thin stems came to be used for this purpose. They had the advantage of being very hard, smooth and firm, and of not splintering. Hand-spinners fed wool towards the spindle from a hank, twisting it as it went; the spindle's rotary motion gave the tension needed to draw loose fibres into tight thread. To maintain the spindle's momentum, a circular stone weight with a hole in it was fixed on one end. Such 'spindle whorls' have been found on prehistoric sites. The wood was also used by gipsies to make pegs, knitting needles and skewers, hence its country name of skewer-wood.

The tree is never more than 15 ft tall, and grows mainly on lime-rich soils in southern counties of England. Young twigs are greyish-green and square in cross-section; older stems are rounded with thin, grey bark. The grey-green leaves, in opposite pairs, are small and oval. Small greenish flowers, which may be male, female, or a combination of the two, open in May. A complete flower holds four sepals, four petals, four stamens and a central pistil.



After pollination by insects this pistil ripens to the beautiful autumn fruit. This is a bright pink, four-lobed capsule, which splits to reveal the bright orange flesh surrounding each hard yellow seed. This gay colour contrast attracts birds, which spread the seeds. People also gather the branches as decorations. Seedlings, which bear two small seed-leaves, spring up along the hedgerows. At Norbury Park, near Dorking in Surrey, there is a spindle tree thicket — the only one in Britain.

The Forest – Before the Act

I have long been intrigued by the obvious differences in public attitudes to Epping Forest during the 19th Century – leading up to the legal conflict in the 1860's and 70's. and culminating in the Epping Forest Act of 1878. The differences were to a large extent a reflection of social class in those days. They were also very much determined by self-interest – or, at best, 'community' self-interest on the part of the Commoners. In sorting out my collected junk ('archives' I presume to call it!) to move house yet again (finally), I came upon another interesting item. It is, I think, a copy of a handbill or leaflet published 182 years ago on 17th Dec. 1817. It starts as follows:

***"THE LORD WARDEN OF THE FOREST,** overlooking private and local interests, begs leave to submit to the attention of all Persons residing within the bounds, or in the vicinity of the Forest, the following general public sentiments, extracted from a letter that met his eye, in the MORNING POST Newspaper of the 16th instant; and he has the less reluctance in doing so as he is totalling unacquainted with the individual whose signature it bears."*

Note that this handbill was issued the very next day – suggesting the matter was considered urgent and important. We might presume that the Lord Warden is objectively performing his public duty, for he goes on:

"The Lord Warden takes this opportunity of requesting, that all who have an interest in the Forest, will suspend their judgment, as to the propriety of opposing or acceding to the measures, to be brought before Parliament, with respect to the Forest, until some proper Person shall be authorized fully to explain the intentions, of His Majesty's Commissioners of Woods and Forests, on that subject."

The Commissioners were about to ask Parliament for powers to Enclose Epping Forest, that is, extinguish the 'rights of common'.

This was the preamble of the Handbill in which the Lord Warden, as we see, asks everyone to suspend judgement on a letter by a writer with whom the Lord Warden "is totally unacquainted". This individual is a Hector Campbell (with a London address).

However, we cannot help wondering whether The Lord Warden was 'batting' on one side or the other - did the letter 'let the cat out of the bag' and was it going to 'stir things up' too soon?

The rest of the Lord Warden's handbill is a reprint of Mr Campbell's letter to the Press, written on the 8th. but appearing in the Morning Post on the 16th Dec. 1817.

Remember, the handbill was written, type-set, printed, and dated the next day – could the Lord Warden have known of the letter before it appeared in the paper?

However, Mr Campbell's letter begins with a quotation:

"A time there was, ere England's grief began, when every rood of ground maintain'd its man."

The rest of the letter continues,

"Having for some years past occasionally called the attention of your Readers to the Cultivation of Waste Land, as the only effectual means of giving permanent relief to the millions of able bodied Men and Women, who, for want of employment, are a burden on their respective Parishes, a nuisance to themselves, and a disgrace to their Country; I cannot but congratulate you, upon the subject of the Notice, given by The Commissioners for Woods and Forests, of the intention of the Government to apply to Parliament for leave to – ENCLOSE EPPING FOREST.

The Forest contains 9,000 Acres of the best Land, perhaps in the kingdom; and therefore the consequence of its Enclosure must be (if equitably divided) to give constant employment and sufficient maintenance for Thirty-six Thousand out of the Hundreds of Thousands of individuals, who now subsist upon the Poor's Rate collected in, and within 20 miles of London."

The figure of 36,000 must be a calculation of those individuals supported by the Poor-Rate in the Forest Parishes. A year later, in 1818, a Thomas Street when writing a pamphlet that also called for the Forest to be enclosed and sold off to local landowners, also mentions the same figure of "36,000 paupers."

Hector Campbell more than slightly exaggerates the value of the Forest as "best agricultural land!" Also, he cannot be called sexist, when he suggests "millions of able-bodied men and women" should be employed in cultivating 'the waste' to avoid being a "disgrace to their Country." He goes on by asking:

"What are the grounds on which certain Opposers of this measure would actually, if my motto speak truth, destroy 36,000 of, – A BOLD PEASANTRY THEIR COUNTRY'S PRIDE, by denying them the only practical means of supplying their own industry; by continuing them a shame and a scourge to their Country as Paupers; and by rearing their Offspring as food for the gallows?"

Why, round assertions without anything in the shape of calculation to recommend them; without any clue to the gain which these Gentlemen derive from the Forest in its present state; and, of course, without data on which to calculate the loss which they would sustain by planting it with Cottages, and Lands sufficient to employ their Occupiers, and supply their wants, independent of parochial charity."

It sounds familiar doesn't it – the value of the Forest only exists in that which can be measured and calculated. Those who object to the plans to enclose the Forest are seen as not only unpatriotic but to be condemning "the paupers' offspring" to a life of crime whereby they can only end on the gallows!

One should bear in mind, to get a 'flavour of the times', that a decade later during the 'poaching wars' unemployed agricultural labourers with starving families were transported for poaching, and, if they resisted arrest by the gamekeepers were sentenced to be hanged!

The letter continues,

"And even had these Gentlemen (the objectors to enclosure) favored us with such clear data, still the question would be, how much, over and above their loss, would their Country gain by the creation of wealth and the restoration of morals, which the

constant employment of 36,000 hardy peasants give?”

“This is the true principle of calculation, laying it down as a rule, that private interest must give way to public good; and if acted upon, no doubt can remain that the balance would be incomparably in favor of the Country. Nay, also in their own favor; for they do not seem to consider, that the Poor’s Rate which they pay is the Rent which they give for the Forest in its present state; which, of course, would be left in their own pockets, if the means of supplying their own wants were given to the Poor of their respective Parishes round the Forest”

HECTOR CAMPBELL, 32 Warwick Street, Golden Square, December 8th 1817.

That was the letter in The Morning Post, as quoted by the Lord Warden of the Forest when asking local people to suspend judgement about “the propriety of opposing or acceding to the” Government’s proposal to enclose the two Forests.

Apart from the long involved sentences and consequent punctuation, one might be excused being confused about “private interest and public good.” Reference to “private interest” is presumably that by opposing the enclosures the ‘objectors’ are concerned to defend the “private” rights of the Commoners. The “public good” results from enclosing the Forest and somehow creating wealth. Note also there will be a “restoration of morals” and a drastic reduction of the Poor Rate.

There is no suggestion of how the 36,000 paupers would gain their “Cottages and Lands”. They could not afford to buy them; the cost of ‘giving’ them land would be enormous – were they to be offered mortgages? Or, were they to become tenants – of whom?

A similar attitude is apparent in the views expressed about the Forest and its deer a decade earlier in 1807 by Arthur Young, the agriculturist, who first declares that the Forests of Hainault and Epping are considered an intolerable nuisance by the local farmers. Who claim that the privileges of commonage (grazing cattle and cutting wood) are not equal to one tenth the cost of the damage caused by the increasing numbers of deer. He too supports enclosure and grubbing up the trees (as happened later in the case of Hainault).

He goes on:

“These Forests, so near the Metropolis are well known to be the nursery and resort of the most idle and profligate of men; here the undergraduates in iniquity commence their careers with deer-stealing, and here the more finished and hardened robber secretes himself from justice, or retires for a time with his plunder from his haunts in London.”

However it would wrong to think that all our local ancestors held such views. Thomas Street in his pamphlet, that calls for the Forest to be enclosed, expresses great surprise that in November 1817 (just before Campbell’s letter in the Morning Post) at a meeting in Woodford, of freeholders, that is landowners – who would also be Commoners – there was overwhelming opposition to the proposals to enclose the Forest. And, it would also be wrong to assume that the opposition was entirely a self-interested concern. From an angry meeting of freeholders/commoners, again in Woodford, in 1843, a petition was sent to the Government protesting about “enclosures and encroachments” in the Forest, *but*, included in it was a

plea that the Forest be preserved for “the health and recreation of the people of London.”

Throughout the first half of the 19th Century there were mounting protests against the increasing enclosures of Forest Land. Then, most of Hainault Forest was grubbed up (1851). Soon after this, there arose the support (from Cottagers and some wealthy local landowners) for the actions of Tom Willingale (1866), the involvement of the Commons Preservation Society (now, The Open Spaces Society) and the formation of The Epping Forest Fund. And finally, the decisive intervention of the Corporation of London and passing of the 1878 Act..

P.S. Readers may remember the account in the March Newsletter of John T Bedford’s lecture in 1882 about the struggle to save Epping Forest and our suggestion that the little known John Bedford should be honoured by renaming his tree ‘Bedford’s Oak’ – presently called ‘Grimston’s Oak’. My implication that his role was not fully appreciated was inaccurate in that I omitted to notice that Edward North Buxton writes the following in his book, “...we owe it to Mr J.T.Bedford – an able and fearless member of the Court of Common Council – that the duty of making a supreme effort for the rescue of the Forest was vigorously pressed upon the Corporation.” (of London).

Ken Hoy

Cook’s Folly and Belle Vue – again

We have received letters and comments from several members who grew up around the Walthamstow Forest. I have also found one or two further references in another book by Annie Hatley - ‘Across the Years’ – quotes from Walthamstow residents. It seems that by the end of the last century and during the early part of this century, ‘Cook’s Folly’ was the common local name for the Walthamstow forest. As I have said before Buxton uses the name and so does an old resident born in 1880 and quoted in Annie Hatley’s book, “I have gathered violets, anemones and cowslips at ‘The Rising Sun’ and in Cook’s Folly. Bluebells abounded in the forest towards Hale End...” A villager living in ‘Hale End village’ speaks from the last of the 1890’s thus, “Belle Vue House on Cook’s Folly had belonged to George IV and his ladies went to bathe in the pool where now is Pentire Road. Since then I have heard a much more lurid tradition, but certainly there was a genuine underground passage”. (More scandal! and ‘goings on?’) Another lady born around 1880 walked “along towards ‘Sky Peals’we passed six old cottages and two more houses before arriving at ‘Belle Vue’ House, or Cook’s Folly,



Cooke’s Folly – an engraving of 1809 by Gyfford (Essex Countryside 1959)

which was occupied by a Mr Harrison, an official at the Bank of England.” (No more scandal now – surely!).

However, more bizarrely Robert Smith writes to say he purchased a book in New York! that was published by Charles Cooke (owner of Belle Vue) in which there is an extravagant description of Belle Vue House.

The book is a guide to the County of Essex and written by George Alexander Cooke (a relative?) He describes the “elegant” building and the “exquisite taste” exhibited by the layout of the grounds, which he says, “comprise about 75 acres, principally woodland.”

Robert also sent me copies of letters about ‘Cook’s Folly’ from the Essex Countryside Magazine of April/May 1959. One letter includes the following “The house was designed by the architect Edward Gyfford, in 1807, and was known locally as Cook’s Folly. It was alleged to be ‘haunted’ by members of a harem supposed to be caged at the top of the house.” Later the letter quotes “a clerical friend” writing to Charles Cooke thus, “Regarding your foolishness...” and “... I consider the gardener acted rightly in giving information to the authorities...” The first letter continues – “The gardener was presumably the man who stated that he saw seven members of the harem dancing in front of the house, attired as nature intended them, while Charles Cooke and his son supplied the necessary music. Charles Cooke died after a painful operation in 1816.” (No wonder !)

The stories of ‘the goings on’ vary slightly but they seem to ensure that Belle Vue House is remembered as ‘Cook’s Folly’ even though the name is eventually confused with Walthamstow forest – but we begin to wonder about his ‘Folly’.

Ken Hoy

Millennium Wood : Update

Twenty or so volunteers picked up acorn, sloes and haws on October 10th around the Coopersale field ‘buffer’ land. Afterwards we took the collection to the Warren and under supervision by Ian Cox, Forester/Works Manager, packed them in silver sand in specially perforated metal tubs.

On the 15th October groups of children from Coopersale, Theydon Garnon and Oakhill Primary Schools repeated the exercise. A good time was had by all!

During the winter the area to be planted-up will be defined and in March 2000 it is planned to organise a planting exercise. More about this in due course.

Many thanks to all those who took part.

Harry Bitten

Qvist’s Oak

Members will be familiar with Grimston’s (Bedford’s) Oak, but you can be forgiven for not being familiar with Qvist’s Oak. This is the mature English Oak of fine form that stands on its own on the plateau at the top of Warren Hill, alongside the horseride.

On Tuesday, 20th July, Alfred Qvist’s grand-daughter and two grandsons came to the Forest and dedicated this splendid oak to the memory of their grandfather and in commemoration of his work for the Forest over a period just short of half a century.

Alfred Qvist was appointed Superintendent of Epping Forest in 1949. He was the 5th holder of that post and succeeded three generations of McKenzies (Alexander, Francis Fuller and Colin) who superintended the Forest for

70 years from 1879. The first Superintendent was William D’Oyley. He was a land surveyor and exercised his skills in laying out Rangers Road and the Green Ride.

Towards the end of his 29 year term as Superintendent, Alfred Qvist was instrumental in setting up the Epping Forest Centenary Trust in celebration of the centenary of the Epping Forest Act of 1878. The Trust is a charitable body independent of the Conservators. Its objects are to supplement, for the benefit of the community, measures designed to conserve the Forest, educate young people in the need for conservation, encourage Forest research and assist the public in their enjoyment and understanding of the Forest, but not to undertake the statutory obligations of the Corporation of London, nor the education service provided by the Field Studies Council. Alfred Qvist was a founding director of the Trust and served as its Honorary Secretary until his death in 1998.

The education service provided for and on behalf of the Conservators is, of course, based at the Field Centre at High Beach. Originally called the *Conservation Centre*, this building, too, and the concept of providing a service for schools, was the brainchild of Alfred Qvist. Throughout his long association with the Forest he was concerned to bring the ‘Epping Forest experience’ to young people, especially children of the inner London Boroughs, to whom the ‘natural’ world is unfamiliar.

All three residential buildings at the Field Centre have a name: Ravensmead, Harting and Buxton. However, the Centre’s main building – the teaching and administration block – was not given a name upon its construction in 1970 in celebration of European Conservation Year 1970. Having regard to Alfred Qvist’s pioneering role in establishing the Centre, the Conservators have been very pleased to name this building the *Alfred Qvist Building* in his memory. In the corridor of the building, where it leads from the new foyer, is a photograph of Alfred Qvist, which Senior Verderer Eric Dormer unveiled in the presence of Mr. Qvist’s family, also on 20th July.

John Besent

Forest Land Taken

The Conservators have agreed to cede 390 square metres of Forest Land to enable improvements to be made to the road junction Theydon Road/B1393 High Road at Bell Common, Epping.

The intention is to create an easier junction that will lessen traffic congestion but not lead to any significant increase in Traffic on the B1393. That this small amount of Forest Land will be lost to the Highways Authority will be borne in mind in respect of any future negotiation with E.F.D.C. in connection with Highways or other matters involving Epping Forest Land.

Harry Bitten

Football on former Nursery Land

The Forest Land behind Fairhead’s Nursery in Nursery Road, Loughton was used as cricket pitches for various schools until 1992. Since then the area has taken on a very attractive and natural appearance and looks to be part of the Forest.

The Colebrook Royals Football Club have asked permission to lay out two football pitches, one of 90 x 45 yards and one of 60 x 40 yards for 11 to 18 and 7 to 11 year olds respectively. No changing facilities will be

provided and the boys will be taken to the site via the use of shared transport. The pitches will be used for only a few hours on Sundays, at other times walkers can freely access the area.

The area is well used by dog walkers and some doubts were expressed about children using the pitches when contaminated by dog faeces. However the Club indicated that they would remove the offending material and dispose of it off the Forest!

Doubts were also expressed about the car parking associated with this usage. The Nursery Road car park is small and very heavily used even during the week. There is some parking in Connaught Road and we understand that there will be no visiting teams that involve coach transportation.

On balance the Conservators agreed to permit use of the area for the purpose required.

The permission will be monitored to ensure that it is properly managed.

It is rumoured that even in the case of small boys' football matches, parents have been known to vociferously urge their lads to do illegal and physically impossible things to the opposition. Perhaps a list of urgings permissible on Epping Forest could be posted by the pitches!

Harry Bitten

Dates for your Diary

November 12th Friday 1-30 p.m A walk for some late autumn colours in the Honey Lane Quarters area. Meet in the car park at the top of Claypit Hill, High Beach. Leader Sue McKinley GR. 414 987

November 26th Friday 7-30 p.m. FOREST SUPPER at the Hawkey Hall, Broomhill Rd. (off Broadmead Rd.) Woodford Green. Details in this Newsletter. GR.402 918

December 11th Saturday 1-30 p.m. (Please note change of day). A shorter winter walk in the Goldings Hill area, followed by drinks and mince pies. Meet in the Broadstrod car park on the left of the road from the Wake Arms roundabout to Loughton (A121, Goldings Hill)

Leader Ken Hoy. GR. 428 987

January 22nd Saturday, 10-30 a.m. A walk around Wanstead Park, its ornamental lakes, and its buffer land along the R. Roding (Kingfishers have been seen here!). Meet at the entrance to the Park in Warren Rd. (near Wanstead Golf Course)

Leader Harry Bitten. GR. 414 876

February 27th Sunday, 10-30 a.m. A walk in the Fairmead/Hill Wood area lead by Epping Forest's Forester/Works Manager,

Ian Cox. GR. 408 968

March 16th Thursday 10-30 a.m. An early spring walk touching the Greenwich Meridian line in the Lea Valley with a chance of seeing migrating waders and (depending on the weather) the earliest summer visitors. Meet in the Cornmill Meadows car park on the B194 (Crooked Mile) travelling north from Waltham Abbey roundabout. The car park the first on the left after about quarter mile.

Leader, Alan Everett GR. 384 017

April 14th Friday 1-30 a.m. A hilly walk from Earls Path Pond to Loughton Camp in the area bounded by four hills; Shelley's, Broom, Blackweir and Staples. Meet in

the car park halfway along the Forest part of Earls Path Rd. from the Robin Hood P.H. to Loughton (opposite the pond).

Leader, Irene Buchan GR. 416 968

Other Dates

Epping Forest Information and Museum Service

Lectures

Thursday 4 November

The Mackenzie Legacy in Epping Forest (1879-1949)
Tricia Moxey, Thursday 6 January 2000

Thursday 2 December

The Forest Green Belt, John Besent

This lecture is arranged in conjunction with the Friends of Epping Forest and will be held in the Hawkey Hall, Woodford Green

Thursday 6 January

Not With a Bang (the future of the Gunpowder Works in Waltham Abbey), Peter Adams

Thursday 3 February

The Diversity of Wildlife in Epping Forest.

Dr Jeremy Dagley

Thursday 2 March

Clues to past Lifestyles as Revealed in Ancient Timbers, Damien Goodburn

Please note that lectures, other than that on Dec 2, will take place in the Lecture Room at the Epping Forest Field Centre. All lectures start at 8.00 pm.

Cost £1.50 including tea/coffee.

Walks

Sunday 14 November, 10.30am

Chingford Hills

Meet in car park opposite Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, Ranger's Rd., Chingford.

Leader: Peter Adams [GR 397 946]

Thursday 25 November, 1.30 pm

An Ancient Trackway

Meet by The Travellers' Friend, Epping Long Green

Leader: Tricia Moxey [GR 435 055]

Sunday 12 December, 10.30am

Looking to The Future

Pre Christmas Walks round High Beach

Meet in the car park at the Epping Forest Information Centre, High Beach. [GR 412 982]

(This walk will end with mince pies and a hot drink.)

Bookings and further details via:

The Epping Forest Information Centre,
High Beach,

Loughton,
Essex, IG10 4AF
0181 508 0028

Lea Valley Regional Park

have a programme of walks and courses.

Tel: 01992 702200 for details.

Debden House, Loughton

Walking Discovery Weekends in EF and the Lee Valley

March 3rd, 2000,

Tutors: Judy and Peter Adams

Exploring the Wider Countryside – a chance to explore

further afield and to see how the Forest wildlife links to the wider countryside.
Tel: 0181 508 3008

**Essex Wildlife Trust
(Epping Forest local group)**

Thursday 18 November

Colours in Nature

A slide show by Tricia Moxey (Epping Forest Information Officer)

Loughton Methodist Church Hall, 8.00pm

Tuesday 30 November 1.30pm

Fishers Green

An easy stroll looking at wildlife in different parts of River Lee County Park. Meet River Lee Country Park, Fishers Green car park, Stubbings Hall Lane, north of Waltham Abbey on B194

Leader: Alan Everett

**FOREST SUPPER – NOVEMBER 26TH 1999
Hawkey Hall, Woodford Green (7.30 for 8pm)**

We are trying a new caterer for our Supper this year – 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 mugs, Christmas cards, greetings cards, and sweatshirts, 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 may others connected with the management of E.F. Hopefully there will be opportunities to meet and chat with them and other Friends.

Entry price has been kept to £10 for the third year running and hopefully you will think this is still good value. The big difference this year is that we have decided to make it a ticket only event so we will not be able to issue tickets at the door. 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 Nov 22nd. Please complete the booking form on the back page of the newsletter and send with your payment and s.a.e. to:

Mr & Mrs W Humphreys, 33 Forest Way, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0QB.

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 again.

REMEMBER – ADMISSION BY TICKETS ONLY

Hope to see you there! – Peggy Bitten

CHRISTMAS CARDS OF EPPING FOREST



Church Road, High Beach

We have 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 26th November or arrange to pick up supplies by phoning Seymour Moss, on 0181 529 0620, at 47 Long Deacon Road, Chingford, E4 6EG, or, Peg Bitten, 0181 529 8594. If you wish packs to be sent by post please send a cheque for £3.50 per pack to Seymour.

WE NEED HELP

Can you help us? The Friends of Epping Forest Committee has a problem - a problem of 'age'! Haven't we all you say? Yes, the whole membership has this problem (I'm sure you don't mind my saying so). We are getting older and so are you. Also the membership is not growing, in fact over two decades it has shrunk slightly. We have discussed what we should do about it and one suggestion arose from a general debate about a question we were asked, "What do the Friends do?" and without going into that debate (although you are welcome to write in and tell us what you think we do and *don't do!*) the need to recruit members, younger members, is obvious. A review of publicity is needed - so! Do you think you can contribute something, advice, help, action or know a man (or woman) who does, can and will? And, perhaps with two or three more people you can get together and do something to help in the field of 'publicity'?

If you are interested, please phone Peggy on: 0181 529 8594. Please Help!

CAN YOU HELP ?

We need volunteers for door-to-door deliveries of the Newsletters in the following areas:

WALTHAMSTOW: Grove Road/Third Avenue area, Hoe Street/Church Hill area, Wood Street/Greenway Avenue area, Hale End Road/Forest Road/N.Circular triangle.

LEYTONSTONE: Bushwood area

CHINGFORD: The Avenue/Chingford Lane area

SOUTH WOODFORD: The Churchfields Estate area

WANSTEAD: Overton Drive/Wanstead Park Avenue area.

ILFORD: Clayhall Avenue area

SOUTH LOUGHTON: Roding Road area

There would be 10 to 20 Newsletters to deliver 3 times a year to houses within walking distance of your home. If you can help please ring Jim Gimson (0181)989 3282 for further information.

Forest Supper Booking Form

Please provide me with tickets for the Forest Supper @ £10.00 each (please list all names):

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

I enclose my payment for £..... **together with stamped, self addressed envelope.**
(cheques/postal orders should be made payable to the Friends of Epping Forest)

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

Address -----