

The Friends of Epping Forest *Newsletter*



FofEF web-site - www.friendsofeppingforest.org.uk

Spring 2002

Dear Friend,

As foreshadowed in previous newsletters, the Conservators propose, in cooperation with local graziers, to reintroduce cattle onto the Forest. Detailed proposals have been put forward to commence this programme this year.

Three graziers have been identified, Mr Andrew Davies, Mr Graham Matthews and the Lea Valley Regional Park.

Mr Davies has a small herd of English Longhorn cattle that would be available during the summer months. The other two are not immediately in a position to release

cattle onto the Forest but hope to be able to do so at some time in the future.

The plan is for there to be a stockperson who will herd the animals during the day to encourage them to graze specific areas, in pursuit of management objectives. Additional inducement will be offered by the positioning of a water bowser.

Two permanent cattle pounds will be erected at Fairmead Bottom and Chingford Plain into which cattle will be driven at night.

continued over...



Cattle, Danmet's Hill Oct 1964

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Please send all letters to the Secretary and Editor:
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The Conservators would provide financial assistance to Mr Davies, initially to the extent of £25,000 per annum in respect of the employment of a stockperson who would also require accommodation. For this purpose, Woodredon Lodge has been made available at a nominal rent.

Despite the employment of a stockperson and locking-up the cattle at night, it is also proposed to erect what is described as a 'protective barrier' along the western side of the Epping New Road between Rangers Road and the Robin Hood Roundabout. Short extensions of the barrier (or fence) will be continued along Cross Road and Rangers Road.

The Conservators hope that the number of cattle to be released into the Forest will be increased as the three graziers develop the programme.

Cattle will be taken off the Forest during the winter months and parts of the buffer land could be used to accommodate them. At the moment, Raveners Farm is useable for this purpose and Birch Hall Meadows are being fenced in readiness.

Questions left unanswered are:

How far do the Conservators plan to extend grazing? In the 1970s hundreds of cattle roamed the Forest without totally arresting natural regeneration. Is it intended to return to these numbers? If so, after a suitable lapse of time and in the absence of anti-fencing riots will the conservators extend the fencing all along and to both sides of the Epping New Road? Or indeed to other roads such as Woodredon, Jack's or Goldings Hill? The inference is that very large parts of the Forest will be returned to woodland pasture management.

The Conservators are in discussion with local councils and others about the need for a traffic strategy for the Forest area. The obvious requirement is for speed reduction on the Epping Road. But if 'protective barriers' are in place the probability is that local councils will take the view, 'Where's the problem? Nothing can stray onto the road, you've solved it!' After all, every attempt over the years to get a lower speed limit on the short stretch of the Epping Road, from the Warren Wood public house to just beyond the dangerous junction with Rangers Road, have failed. Therefore, what chance would there be for restrictions along its whole length?

Great play is made extolling the public-spirited action of Mr George Burney and others in tearing down illegal fences in the 1880s and now we are being confronted by 'legal' fences. But legal or otherwise, a fence is a fence!

There are lots of other questions to ask but perhaps we will be able to get answers to these in time for the next Newsletter.

Editor

Natural Aspect

Most contributions to the Newsletter have to be written some four weeks before readers receive their copy. That means these notes are usually written during the first week of February when writing about the spring seems to be incongruous. However, this year it was the 21st January when I noticed on several hedgerows fully open Hazel catkins blowing in the gale and sheeting rain. Although Hazel is always the first to appear, this is earlier than usual ... and it seems to be only the other day when I was thinking to myself, "summer has really gone now!"

I came upon another sign of spring, also on the 21st, when I returned from our committee meeting the other night. At 11-30 pm. two foxes were trying to mate in the middle of the big Harlow roundabout. That too was early. Usually vixens come on heat for only 3 or 4 days during the first week of February, but the dog fox is optimistic for a considerably longer period. Maybe they are also recognising climate change and global warming! This is the time of year when they can be heard calling their screaming bark during the night.

This past autumn and winter there have been more reports of Fallow deer in the Forest and there have been clear signs of them browsing holly and ivy during the recent frosts. There are always greater movements of the deer during October and November as this is when the 'rut' takes place and young bucks, without a 'harem' of does, are wandering about hopefully. Recently one large buck was seen late at night standing beside the road near The Warren. At night the Superintendent regularly sees deer in the grounds of the Warren and has seen Fallow Deer 'slots' in Walthamstow Forest. You have more likelihood of seeing the 'slot' or hoof prints of the deer in the mud than you have of seeing the animals themselves. They tend to rest

up during the daytime so any fresh tracks are likely to have been made during the previous night. However, such signs can at least tell you where the deer have been - sometimes far south in the Forest.

The numbers of birds one sees in Forest is becoming less and less, especially during the hard weather when they frequent nearby gardens. However, the Conservators have sown narrow belts of bird-seed crops around the edges of some buffer land fields and as a result large flocks of Chaffinches, Greenfinches and even the rarer Bramblings have been feeding there.

The Bramblings, like the

Fieldfares and Redwing thrushes, are winter visitors to Britain from Scandinavia and northern Europe. When they are feeding on the ground with Chaffinches they are conspicuous as they fly up, showing flashes of white on the rump just above the tail - rather like a Bullfinch.

I was reading recently a comment that birds take a little while to learn to take unusual or 'unnatural' foods ...peanuts and sunflower seeds etc in feeders. Of course the common tits learned to do that years ago, but Long-tailed Tits have acquired the habit in the last decade or so, they are now regulars, and, I even have a Robin that has learned to cling on my peanut feeders. I am sure that when natural food is scarce, garden birds watch the movements of other birds (as vultures do) ... and come flying in from all directions as soon as fresh supplies are put out.



Male
BRAMBLING
(winter)

Male
CHAFFINCH

Both have similar white wing markings
Brambling has white rump patch

In the November Newsletter I mentioned that I had seen many parties of people out in the Forest collecting edible fungi, often to supply restaurants. As I said, this is a contravention of the Forest Byelaws and I understand the Conservators are reviewing the problem to assess what can be done. If fungi are collected on a large scale, usually before they are 'ripe' - that is before they are able to spread their spores - it could have a considerable effect in reducing the ancient populations of fungi for which Epping Forest is famous. Fungi are most important in maintaining the biological balance in woodland soils. Some scientists have even said it is doubtful if trees could grow without the symbiotic (mutually advantageous) relationship between microscopic tree roots and the masses of fungal threads growing below the surface of the woodland floor. Stop-press news: A report from the Superintendent has been accepted by the Conservators, and soon the collection of fungi in the Forest will be an offence unless prior permission has been granted.

The Forestry Commission produced some interesting figures recently. Estimates based on the Domesday Survey suggest that England's woodland cover in AD1086 was around 15%. The Commission estimates that by 1870 it had fallen below 5%. During the second half of the 20th century this increased to an estimated 8.4% of the land area. However this is still well below the EU average of 36%. In England 66% of the woodland that we have, is now broad-leaved or mixed woodland - with oak being the most common tree.

I hope by the time you read this you will be able to go out into a forest that is drier than it is at the moment and you will be able to enjoy those early signs of the coming season - the silvery catkins of the 'pussy' willow and the snowy masses of blossom on the dark Blackthorn bushes. And, the dawn chorus should have just begun too - I heard a Song Thrush singing this morning.

Ken Hoy

Do we need More Car Parks in the Forest!

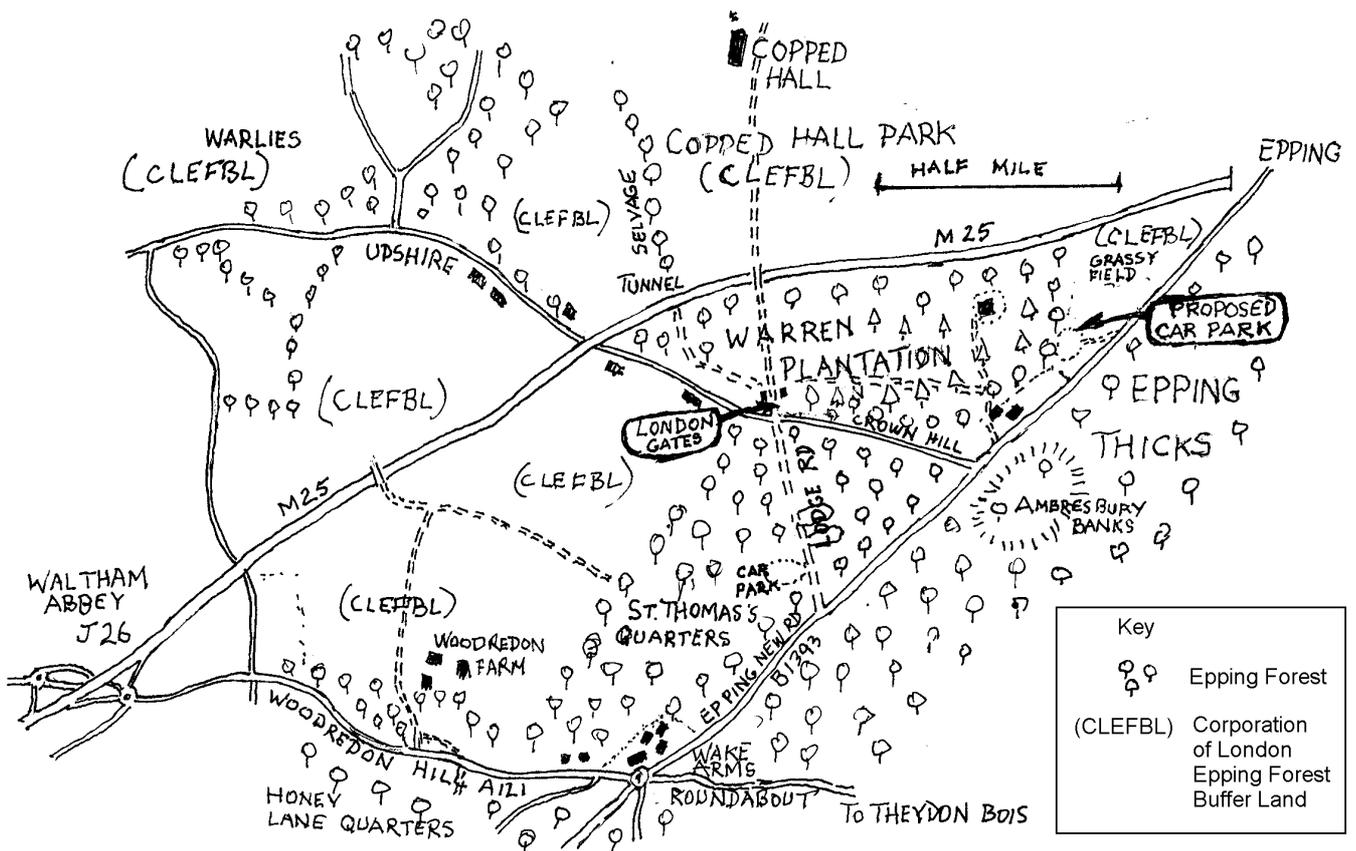
Somewhere within the Forest Management there appears to exist a desire to see the creation of a new car park. The site proposed is the field on the left of the Epping New Road (B1393) overlooking the M25 and the Copped Hall Estate (see map).

The proposal was first put to the Epping Forest and Open Spaces Committee in 1998 and considered in the private part of the agenda when the public is excluded. The proposal was given the go-ahead and planning permission was applied for. EFDC initially, were apparently, opposed to it on the grounds of hazards caused by accessing the car park from a narrow road with fast moving traffic. However, the objection was later withdrawn.

At the time we wrote to the Conservators conveying our objections to the car park, and as the months passed we had the impression that enthusiasm for it had reduced.

Alas, in January, painted lines appeared on the pavement near the proposed car park delineating the bell-mouth entrance.

Since the Epping Forest Committee was meeting in three days time (on the following Monday) our Chairman despatched e-mails (hoorah for technology) to the Chairman of the Committee, Director of Open Spaces, Superintendent etc. etc. urging a reconsideration of the matter.



It is gratifying to report that notice was taken of our request and at the meeting the Superintendent pointed out that no public consultation had taken place at the time of the original approval and he proposed that this be remedied and that a committee visit to the site be arranged. The EF & OS Committee agreed and it is expected that a final decision seems likely in March or April.

It seems that one of the specific ideas behind the proposed car park is that it would provide access to the Warren Plantation. (Since the City Corporation acquired 800 acres of the Copped Hall Estate in the early 90s the Warren Plantation has been part of Epping Forest.) We have no objection to improving access but we believe that this should be via adjacent parts of the Forest, not via a specially constructed car park.

The field in which the car park is proposed is buffer-land and not part of the Forest and there is no public access to it. If improved access to the Warren Plantation is desired, either the field could be included within the Forest or the Conservators could grant permissive access on foot as they have done elsewhere on the buffer-land. This would have the further advantage of incurring virtually no cost.

If this were done, one could walk from Epping Thicks, across the B1393 (carefully!), over the grassy field into the Warren Plantation. Thereafter, one can proceed through to Copped Hall Park, or through the London Gates to return Epping Thicks via Lodge Road car park or just retrace steps.

Apart from traffic difficulties (and in the evening rush hours traffic often backs up as far as the proposed car park) our principal objection to the car park is that considerably increased access to the Plantation would have a serious effect on the deer population.

The Plantation and the field are a vital sanctuary and feeding ground south of the M25 for fallow deer, which can migrate there from the Copped Hall Estate via the bridge and the tunnel at the Selvage.

Once in the Plantation, deer can relatively safely move across Crown Hill into the comparatively quiet St. Thomas's Quarters, giving further access on Woodredon buffer-land - collectively a substantial sanctuary area.

Unhappily, this large area is, even so, hemmed in with roads heavily used by fast-moving traffic. But this is an unfortunate fact of life standing in the way throughout the Forest of the Conservators' policy of seeking to encourage the deer to spread south through the Forest. This policy is strongly supported by the Friends.

We see the establishment of a new car park near the Warren Plantation, which would encourage insensitive overuse of this fragile area, as working against the Conservators 'spread the deer' policy.

Harry Bitten

Lodge Road Gate

Members may have noticed that a gate has recently appeared at the junction of the Epping New Road and Lodge Road (first on the left going North from the Wake Arms Roundabout).

The gate is supposed to be open during the day to permit access to the car park for legitimate users, not tyre dumpers. There has been a problem of tyre and rubbish dumping with the Lodge Road car park, especially since the road was closed.

The Friends' committee is very anxious that the car park should continue to be open and used. We look upon Lodge Road as an important historic route to Copped Hall which, since the exclusion of cars, has been very attractive to walk. The road, or track as it has become, also provides access to (and is the cause) of the two bogs which research suggests are some 4000 years old. The road being of similar vintage.

We have considerable misgivings about the gate. It is occasionally left closed during the day which is pretty disastrous if an organised walk is due to start there.

Moreover, during the spring and summer, is someone really prepared to visit the gate and close it when night falls at 8, 9 or 10pm? I doubt it!

It would surely be far better to put a height restriction barrier close to the Epping Road to stop lorries entering. We gather that EFDC is planning to close Lodge Road permanently to traffic and grade it as a bridle way.

The story is that in these circumstances a height restriction barrier would be inappropriate since a galloping horse could unseat the rider. In any case, I can't remember ever seeing a horse rider clip-clopping along the Epping Road in order to access Lodge Road.

To satisfy political correctness, or slavish adherence to regulations, it should be easy enough to make a little slip route for horses around the height barrier. We await the arrival of some more logical solution to the Lodge Road car park problem. Another way around the problem could be to close Lodge road and give EFDC an unequivocal undertaking to retain it as a Forest horse ride.

Harry Bitten

London Gates to Copped Hall

We seem to be focusing a bit on the north-west Forest area in this issue! In doing so we are reminded to mention (just in case there are those unaware of the fact) that, in relation to the London Gates in Grown Hill, a public-right-of-way exists through the smaller gate to the left of the main gates. These main gates are now used regularly by residents of the houses that have recently been built around the Hall.

We wouldn't need to mention this if the public footpath notice indicating a right-of-way via the gate had not been smashed or removed time after time by person or persons unknown, as they say.

The track through to Copped Hall is, of course, a public footpath and has hard surface and would make a pleasant route for people in wheelchairs to visit the Hall and view the landscape of Copped Hall Park. Unfortunately the smaller gate has a restricted access caused by the placement of an upright stone set in the ground limiting the opening of the gate which precludes access by wheelchair. We have requested the removal of the stone and have recently written to the EFDC on the subject and await a response.

Harry Bitten

Letters from Members

The Forest is an Inspiration: an event at the Epping Forest District Museum

Ever since a friend sent our elder daughter a little hard-back picture book in 1980 called *Summer Story* I have been a fan of Jill Barkiem's exquisite drawings inspired by the flora and fauna of Epping Forest.

It was fascinating to see the original watercolours at various stages of completion exhibited in the museum at Waltham Abbey and to hear her husband David and former editors recall how her hugely successful career developed. The world of *Brambly Hedge* continues to delight children and adults world-wide. I look forward to taking my grandson on the *Brambly Hedge* trail at High Beech, devised by the Conservation Centre to coincide with the exhibition.

At the same event, Tricia Moxey showed slides and read from other writers inspired by Epping Forest: William Morris, Tennyson, John Clare. She also spoke about Epstein, Edward Thomas, Fred Speakman and Sir William Addison, whose poems will be made available shortly.

The forest continues to be an inspiration: long may it remain so.

Penny Freeston

My Favourite Place

from WF U3A Newsletter, January 2002 Number 69

I have travelled to some of the most beautiful and exotic places in the world but the one that is always closest to my heart is Epping Forest. I have walked the forest since I could put one foot in front of another, first with my parents and brother, then with groups of teenage friends, then with my husband, and now with my older friends. So come with me for a ramble through the forest.

It is springtime and we visit first Connaught Waters, where swan, coot and moorhen are sitting on their nests while their mates stand guard; and then into the trees where blackbird, thrush and warblers are singing and the cuckoo's note echoes through the awakening woods. Hornbeam, beech and oak have a film of green as the buds unfold while the silver birch shakes its catkins in the breeze, and willows wait to burst into balls of fluff. Blackthorn, and then hawthorn cover the hedgerow with filmy white, like bridal veils. Cuckoo Brook and Loughton Brook are starred with the gold of celandine, and the wood anemones unfold their fragile petals. As spring moves on, sheets of azure bluebells spread a carpet in the hidden places.

We move on into high summer and as we wander, we remember the people who have trod these paths before us: The ancient ones who built Ambresbury Bank and Loughton Camp; the legends of Boadicea; Dick Turpin and footpads who preyed on unwary travellers; the people of the eighteen hundreds who fought to save the forest for us.

It is now summer and the trees are in their full, lush green. Rosebay blooms in the open spaces, while the meadow buttercups, moon daisies and scabius stretch to the wood, and wild roses cover the hedgerows with their delicate blooms. The eggs on Connaught Waters have hatched and tiny fluffy chicks swim after their mothers. Butterflies; red admiral, tortoiseshell, and holly blue flit from flower to flower, and the bees are humming. An adder basks in the sunshine beside the pile of brushwood where he has spent the winter.

Then to autumn. The hornbeam dangles its golden lanterns, and the seeds spiral their way to the brilliant carpet of leaves, and squirrels scurry to gather acorns for the winter. The hedgerows are now covered with hips, haws, sloes and blackberries that shine like jewels in the sun. A spider spins his web across our path, and dewdrops glisten like diamonds caught in the delicate silk. Fungi;

honey gold amethyst and the red of fly agaric, gleam against the bright green of the moss, and the early morning sunbeams slant through the firs that stand like pillars in a cathedral.

Winter has come and frost outlines each leaf and blade of grass with silver. The snow falls silently and we see the tracks of deer and birds. A fox slinks silently across our path in search of his supper, and it is time to wend our way home. The age-old forest sleeps to awaken to another spring.

Joyce Richardson (WF U3A)

Millennium Wood

Following the planting last October in the Millennium Wood at Coopersale Fields, we wrote to the Woodyard to thank them for the provision of extra car parking for cars and school coaches. Mr Hopping the owner of the Woodyard writes:

We are always happy to help local schools, we're convinced that a wide understanding of Forests and the issues involved is important both to ourselves and to the whole community.

A local resource of which you may already be aware is the Forest Education Initiative. It is a joint venture between local companies and educational interests with the involvement of the forestry commission. Locally the main point of contact is Steve Bunce at the High Beach field center. They've got a lot of relevant information and resources for schools. If you or any of the schools need more details please contact them or let me know.

I'm pleased we were able to help on this occasion, if we can be of help in the future please let us know.

Kind Regards, Charles Hopping

Horse Riding in Epping Forest

Letter to the Editor:

Dear Madam,

I refer to Mr Hoy's article in the November issue of the Newsletter concerning horse riding in the Forest.

Mr Hoy's stated information is some 20 years old. Whilst many Forests do control horse riders by restricting their access to designated tracks only a very small number either licence or charge for that access. The Forestry Commission along with Essex County Council stopped licensing and charging some years ago. Likewise the Local Authorities around Epping Forest and the Royal Parks make no charge for providing horse paths in their public open spaces. Additionally the proposed Thames Chase Forest will be providing horse routes which will likewise not be charged or licensed.

Unfortunately many people seem to think that the proposed byelaws will be the be-all and end-all to the many problems that face the Forest today. Quite simply they won't. I do wonder, though, whether Mr Hoy has actually read the byelaws in detail. He would find that they are badly drafted, vague, confusing and will neither raise much revenue nor control any horse riders who might cause 'danger and damage'. A phrase much quoted by the Conservators who have yet, despite repeated requests, to provide facts and figures to prove their claims of this so-called 'danger and damage'.

The problems facing the Forest are now many and varied and were certainly not foreseen by the writers of

the original Epping Forest Act. How could they know that the Forest would become a haven for the likes of fly-tippers, flashers and others of unsavoury character, to mention a few. I do, however, applaud the Conservators for wanting to increase the number of keepers in order to try and control these problems, but expecting a small minority group to finance them is neither fair nor just and are also, according to DEFRA, unlawful.

Yours faithfully, Adrian Liddle
Joint Chairman of Epping Forest Riders Association

Ken has made the following comments:

I would like to comment upon Mr Liddle's letter by considering some simple basic facts.

Like many horse riders he refuses to accept that horse riding in Epping Forest causes damage. As long ago as 1978 the Eastern Sports Council at a meeting with The British Horse Society and EFRA said that there is no doubt that horse riding causes damage to the Forest and "we are here to discuss what should be done about it". One of their recommendations was the introduction of licensing. Since then Parliament has granted the Conservators the power to do that. As the number of riders increases the problem gets worse. About the damage there can be no argument. Anyone who walks in the Forest knows that.

I do wonder, though, whether horse riders ever look behind their horse as they ride along the Forest footpaths. Mr Liddle asks for "facts and figures" about "the danger and damage". The evidence is there for all to see, or should we count the hoof prints! The other day I saw three riders leave a ride and proceed along a narrow path one behind the other. The statistics (facts & figures) involved were 12 hooves that in 2 or 3 minutes broke up the surface of the path and the natural soil drainage, exposing the clay sub-soil. It will be years, literally, before that path is restored to its former condition. Furthermore, had the Licensing Scheme been in operation those riders would have been identifiable by their numbered discs.

The "fly tippers, flashers and others of unsavoury character" that Mr Liddle mentions are breaking the byelaws and therefore, although deplorable, in this matter are an irrelevant 'red-herring'. But horse riding is a *legitimate* use of the Forest that causes damage to the Forest. Over 56 miles of rides have been provided to lessen that damage. As is often said, horse riding has major facilities provided to allow it to take place with less impact on other Forest users or damage to the Forest floor. Other groups of users who have facilities provided - footballers, golfers etc. pay a small charge. Why not horse riders? It is as simple as that!



Green Ride 1880

Epping Forest has comparably far greater pressure of use from horse riding and is therefore subjected to greater damage, than any of the other forests. Consequently, far from complaining we think the members of the Epping Forest Rider's Assoc. should consider themselves lucky and thank the Conservators of Epping Forest for proposing such a cheap and reasonable scheme.

PS. On a lighter note whilst thinking about horses, we came across this amusing comment from a farm worker who had in his lifetime worked with both horses and tractors. Having nostalgically extolled the virtues of working with horses, he said that only with the tractor does the exhaust point away from the driver.

Ken Hoy

Editor's Footnote

As a result of Adrian Liddle's letter I rechecked as many as I could of the main forests included in our previous survey where horse-riding is permitted. The results are as follows: (all charges are per annum)

Ashdown Forest: (which I think is the nearest forest comparable to Epping Forest) 6,400 acres in size - riding confined to rides. Less than 600 permits issued. Horse Boxes limited.

Riding charges: Individuals, £56.50 per horse (£29.50 children). Livery Yards: £36.50 per yard, plus the individual charge per horse. Riding Schools: four only permitted, £81.50 each school, plus the individual charge per horse - each school is limited to only 5 horses on the Forest at any one time.

Hatfield Forest: 1,060 acres - Riding limited to 150 who must be members of the H.F. riding association. Riding charges £50 per horse.

Clumber Park: 3,800 acres. Charge £50 per horse or £6 per day.

Windsor Great Park: 5,000 acres - 500 permits only, £145 per horse. A higher charge for commercial users.

East Anglian Farm Riders: 30 miles of farm tracks. Charge £110 per horse

Forestry Commission Forests:

Some FC forests including **Cannock Chase, Ludlow, Wyre & Delamere** do make a charge (contrary to Mr Liddle's claim). Charges: £20 per horse, £70 per riding school horse

Thetford Forest: is the forest that no longer charges.

Compare all the above information, where most riding is confined to rides, with the facts and proposals for:

Epping Forest: 6,000 acres, has some 2000 riders, including many riding schools, livery yards and unlimited horse boxes. There are 56 miles of rides, plus a considerable area of free range riding (we can find this nowhere else). Charges: £40 per individual horse, £50 per riding school horse. £5 per day

Editor

Parliamentary Question

Date: 25 October 2001

Harry Cohen: (Leyton & Wanstead):

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent information she has collated about the spread of diseases, viruses or bacteria adversely affecting (a) oak and (b) horse chestnut trees; what her assessment is of the risk they pose to those trees; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Morley:

We have collected information about two diseases that affect oak trees, neither of which is thought to pose a significant risk to trees in Britain.

The first is known as Oak Dieback. The Forestry Commission has been investigating this over the last decade, and a similar decline in the health of oak trees has been reported from many other countries in Europe. The cause remains unclear but our experts consider that a strain of fungus may be thriving as a result of climate change. Drought and insect defoliation are also thought to be playing a part. The species affected is the Common oak (*Quercus robur*) while our other native the Sessile oak (*Q. petraea*) appears to be immune.

The second is known as Sudden Oak Death. This new disease, recently named *Phytophthora ramorum*, was identified in parts of California last year. The principal host is Tanoak (*Lithocarpus densiflorus*) although some species of true oak (*Quercus* spp.), which do not occur in Europe, and certain other plants including rhododendron and viburnum have also been affected. Similar symptoms were recorded on rhododendron and viburnum plants in Germany and the Netherlands as long ago as 1993 although it was only earlier this year that it was established that *P. ramorum* was the causal agent. The Forestry Commission and DEFRA are working together to establish whether any British oak trees have been affected or are, indeed, even susceptible to this disease. Early indications are that European oaks may not be susceptible. Current quarantine controls on plants exported from the USA, aimed at other pests and diseases, are considered sufficient to provide protection against accidental import of the disease. This disease and controls against it are being considered by the EU Standing Committee on Plant Health.

There are no specific pests or diseases affecting Horse chestnut trees in Britain, although we are monitoring the progress of the Horse Chestnut Leaf Miner (*Cameraria ohridella*) in continental Europe. This pest was first detected in Austria in 1989 and has since spread to many parts of Central and Eastern Europe. It is only found in leaves and leaf litter, and is dispersed when leaves are moved to new areas. Unfortunately, cars, lorries and trains often carry leaves long distances, and this is probably how it has spread across Europe. Leaves are, of course, also dispersed by the wind. Attacks are not fatal and trees may survive repeated attacks by successive generations of larvae. Our scientists are closely involved in research into control methods. The Forestry Commission is also planning to publish an illustrated leaflet describing the biology and symptoms of infestation of the moth next spring, to coincide with the period of the moth's activity.

Highwheeling thro' Epping Forest:

Today Epping Forest is threatened by traffic, roads, motorways and the effects of related developments. However before the full transition from horse to motor vehicle there was apparently a short period of years when some rather strange sights were to be seen on our local roads.

Most of us have heard of the Woodford Cycle Meets that occurred around the turn of the century and earlier - however there is a less well known story that really begins before then. In an issue of the Essex Journal (Winter 1973/4), I recently read an article by D.E. Twitchett, entitled 'High Wheeling in Essex' and I am indebted to that for much of the following information.



Robert Cook, captain of the West Essex Bicycle Club, astride an Ariel 'Penny Farthing' bicycle

Apparently in the late 1860's, out of the old iron 'boneshaker', evolved the 'High Bicycle' - that was to become known as the 'penny farthing', although apparently this was a term of abuse originally. In America they were called 'High Wheelers'. In the 'penny farthing' the front wheel was enlarged to 44 inches and then 58 inches - thus giving greater speed for each revolution of the fixed pedals. The small rear wheel provided stability and reduced the weight of the machine.

Considering this development had begun by 1870 it is surprising that these machines with iron rims and solid tyres quickly become so popular when one considers the condition of the roads at that time. In winter they would have been laced with deep muddy ruts from wagons and carriages, and in summer, hard and dry with dust and animal dung. Also this new High Bicycle was expensive, at £12 to £18 each they were the equivalent of several months of a working man's wage - but rapidly, they were to become very popular with the sons of the middle classes.

By 1870 cycling clubs were forming, Romford and Ilford being early ones and by the mid-1870's there were many throughout Essex. They were run very much on military lines. Each club had its own distinctive uniform, and its Captain as leader. He had his bugler who accompanied him and conveyed the Captains orders to, mount, dismount, single-up, and turn left or right etc. Military spit and polish applied to the machines as well as the members. Prominent people - M.Ps, Mayors and local dignitaries became Presidents of the clubs. Edward North Buxton was President for several years of the 'Kestrel Bicycle Club' of Buckhurst Hill (formed in 1879). Membership varied and could be expensive, some clubs being more elitist than others. The Buckhurst Hill 'Kestrel Bicycle Club' was one where the membership fee was very high at half a guinea p.a.

There were well organised races and championships, but often there were accidents and serious injuries, as apart from the road conditions and straying animals, the cyclists were not always very popular. To some the cyclists were a menace, being silent they could frighten horses and then whips became a hazard for the cyclist. Other hazards arose from 'village louts' having fun by throwing their caps into the spokes of the wheels, which would jam and send the rider 'over the top'! Cyclists were unpopular with pedestrians too, as to avoid the mud and ruts they rode on the smoother footpaths and pavements. By 1880 Essex introduced byelaws. Riding on the pavement was prohibited, bells were required to be rung or whistles blown when overtaking and riding two-abreast was not allowed when overtaking. Lights had to be shown at night, and if a horse or other animal became restive, alarmed or out of control, the cyclist was required, on request, to dismount. Contravention of the byelaws incurred a fine of £2, (2 week's wages).

The regular 'meets' of these High Bicycle clubs were usually based at a roadside Inn, large numbers were often involved, for instance in 1880 there were 150 at the annual meet of the Chelmsford club. Locally the 'Eagle' and the 'Roebuck' Inns were popular meeting places. The descent of Buckhurst Hill by groups of smartly uniformed young men, with the Captain and bugler at the front must have been a strange sight on a Forest road. When descending hills legs were looped over the handlebars to allow the pedals to revolve freely! Apparently the greatest crime was to overtake the Captain who was leader (Ramblers note!)

They would end at a hostelry that provided a dinner and this could be followed by a moonlight ride home.

The gregarious nature of the clubs led to the development of a cycling press, in which the quality of the welcome and food of the various Inns would be publicised. It soon became an advantage to be included on the 'recommended list'. For example, apparently 'The Fountain' at Chingford was not recommended but 'The George' at Harlow was.

For some 20 years the High Bicycle was the fastest vehicle on the road. However, it was virtually obsolete by 1890 and the smaller so-called 'safety bicycle' replaced the 'ordinary' bicycle, as the 'High Bicycle' was called. By 1892 the pneumatic tyre had been invented, thus combining comfort with safety.

Before the end of the 19th century the annual Woodford Meet had become a charitable fancy dress parade. It continued until the beginning of the First World War. My Mother once recalled the event from the early part of the

century; "it started at Forest Gate and went to Riggs Retreat in Brook Road. It was run by the Woodford Cycle club as a charity for local hospitals. All the riders had decorated bikes... 3-4 bikes would often be joined together as a float. Collectors, with boxes, were dressed up - some had black faces etc. On the return journey the bikes were prettily lit up with Chinese lanterns." And, my Father referring to the period around the turn of the century added, "at Buckhurst Hill, at Colliers the harness makers - next to William Kett's livery stables, now Askews - we would hire bicycles for 6d. an hour."

This was about the time of the well-known photograph of a crowd of cyclists around the road junction by the Robin Hood PH.

Within a few years this more familiar 'safety' bicycle had become cheaper and was produced in great numbers by small engineering companies some of which later became well known motor car manufacturers.

Although apparently at first many in 'the upper classes' felt that cycling 'it was not quite the thing', it became very popular with the 'lower classes' - later however, tricycles became more acceptable, especially with ladies and the elderly.

Of course the Cycling Clubs continued to be numerous and bicycles became a most popular means of recreation and personal transport until car ownership became more widespread. I am sure many readers will remember between the wars, when on Sunday evenings in springtime the main roads were full of cyclists with great drooping bunches of bluebells tied behind their saddles.

Ken Hoy

Walk Reports

Friday 19 October - Walk from the Crooked Mile

Some 12 hardy souls met at the at Cornmill Meadow car park on the Crooked Mile near Waltham Abbey. The weather was overcast but we were hopeful that it might lift. Those present were advised that the lanes were very muddy in parts but nobody was put off. After crossing the main road we entered Clapgate Lane and the mud, which continued intermittently for most of the way. New fence posts were being fitted on the east side of the lane by the fish farm, which has a frontage at Aimes Green, out of keeping with the area, also being visited by heavy lorries.

We continued along Puck lane which though less muddy, the places that were~being worse than experienced previously. Comment was made of the height and density of the elm trees, having grown from old roots, which it would appear is now about the right height to be re infected. The return was via the stiles and drive path alongside Monkams Hall to the trig point and wartime gun position on the top of the hill. The cloud was heavy and it looked like rain, the view over London which on a clear day is usually good, on this occasion the tower blocks at Ponders End were only just visible. Despite the mud and a first time walker all appeared to have enjoyed themselves.

Seymour Moss

Christmas Walk 16 December 2001

The behind the scenes problem started when Ken Hoy advised about 2 days beforehand that he was not well enough to lead as planned. The normal first reserve Harry Bitten was to be away owing to an additional grandchild expected any moment. So my name appeared on the panic list as I had said that I'll take the pies and drinks. Various

phone calls and help in the form of Peter Adams was offered.

On the day, being dry and quite warm 52 people turned up following the success of Robert Levene getting it in the local paper and on Essex Radio. I led the walk along with the assistance of a multitude of committee members but with special thanks to Sue Mckinley and Judy Adams who was volunteered by Peter in his absence. They were able to add many details on various areas of interest that we either passed or stopped at.

The walk started at Earles Path Pond, the first place of interest was the dam of Loughton Brook near Staples Road, then keeping on the east side whilst going up stream past its bends to Baidwins Pond. The intention was to go up Baidwins Hill but a suggestion to visit the Lost Pond was made by a committee member and that's where we went. Stopped at the old pollarded and coppiced old oak tree nearby, returning to the ride at the top of the hill. Here again a committee member suggested visiting Loughton Camp, which is what happened. Who said committees don't work?

A return to the car park just under two hours later, where drinks and mince pies were devoured, Christmas cards sold and membership forms handed to the many non-members present who all said that it was an enjoyable walk

Seymour Moss

Walk from Lodge Road Car Park – Jan 2002

We refer elsewhere to the fact that the entrance to Lodge Road now has a gate across it. The meeting venue for this walk was decided before the installation of the gate. Because of the somewhat random nature of the gate opening and closing, it was with some trepidation that I drove to the start half-an-hour early. This was to forestall a situation where the gate was still closed and umpteen cars were jostling for position on the Epping Road and unable to get into the car park!

Luckily it didn't happen, and 20 plus embarked on a southward stroll along the horse-ride that skirts the back of the Wake Arms and riding stables. We were delighted when, a little later, we observed a largeish herd of fallow deer on Woodredon fields between The Forest and Stable Shaw.

We proceeded along Woodredon Farm Lane and at its T junction, turned right past the Japanese elms gifted to the Greater London Council by the Tokyo Council, and down The Green (and muddy) Lane and so into St. Thomas's Quarters. The plan was to observe and admire the giant beech coppard which, after a little delving around, we found and duly admired. In the immediate vicinity we put up another herd of fallow deer. Thereafter, we did a bit of a circuit during which we put up another, probably the same, herd of deer.

We crossed Crown Hill and turned right up the Selvage and over the Copped Hall track into the Warren Plantation where we followed the attractive green path through the Rhododendrons. On our return through the small access gate to Copped Hall we put up yet another small herd of fallow deer. We paused to look at the Lodge Road bogs, into which research suggests that the road/track itself is over 4000 years old.

From the point of view of interaction with deer it was a very good walk, especially as the rain came on after the walk.

Harry Bitten

Northern Gateway Access Road (NGAR)

As indicated in the previous newsletter, we duly presented our evidence - opposing Enfield Council Plans - at the Public Enquiry into the proposed NGAR.

In our view the enquiry was unsatisfactory because of, among other things, the inadequacy of traffic analyses and predictions. To give an example, the predictions in relation to A121 Woodredon Hill indicated that if NGAR was built, at certain peak times traffic would back up from J26, M25, virtually to the Wake Arms Roundabout. In such circumstances the analysis asserted that remedial measures would be justified at the southern roundabout of J26. It then went on to suggest a number of alternative configurations to the roundabout that could be adopted. However, no quantification was attempted of the effect that these might have on the increased traffic flows.

Perhaps more importantly, no predictions were made of the traffic effects on any forest roads (except Woodredon Hill) including such potential rat-runs as Crown Hill, Avey Lane, Mott Street, Daws Hill etc. All the indications were that until the Enquiry (when the matter was raised by the objectors) no consideration had been given to the matter of the potential effect of NGAR upon forest roads, and therefore The Forest.

We hope that these and other shortcomings will be given due weight by the Inspector whose report to the Secretary of State is expected in the summer.

In the light of the frequently claimed value, particularly in planning terms, of the Forest's SSSI and candidate Special Area of Conservation status, it is a great pity that English Nature were not represented in person at the Enquiry. Written submissions are all very well but it really looks as though you mean it if you are prepared to appear and make yourself available for questioning.

It must be reported that Dr Jeremy Dagley and John Holtom both made excellent submissions on behalf of the Conservators, as did Terry Calaghan, Chairman of CPR Essex local group.

Hale Brinks Site

'Opportunity Missed'

This is a small triangle of land once worked as allotments that was subsequently used as a plant depot in connection with slip road building on the North Circular Road (A406). The site is bounded by the A406, Sky Peals Road and Walthamstow Forest. When the plant depot role was relinquished the site came up for sale and, we believe, could have been bought by the Conservators for a few thousand pounds. Unfortunately they were not keen to do this and it was acquired by a gipsy family. Various caravans appeared on the site and Waltham Forest Council issued enforcement orders to remove them. An appeal against this led to the holding of a public enquiry. The Inspector ruled that although the development infringed Green Belt regulations he was, nevertheless, going to uphold the appeal, partly on grounds of the fragile health of the owner and the need to continue the local education of three of his nine children.

Forest Supper, November 2001

The Forest Supper went off very well, if the amount of chatter was anything to go by. The Hawkey Hall was filled to its full capacity of 260. 'The Magpie's Nest' Epping, did an excellent job of catering and Harry confused us with his quizzes. Although the cost of the food and wine was up on last year we pegged our ticket charges to last

year's price of £11, and still made a (smaller) profit of £200. Thanks to Dennis Moss and his helpers - the raffle was again a great hit and ensured that we made a profit; for this we must thank all those who contributed the prizes. The new Christmas cards were popular and the sale of goods raised another £520... so the evening was a social AND a financial success. Finally thanks must also go to David and Hazel Shukla for organising the sale of tickets.

Editor

Donations to Raffle

Vera & Hilda Anslow, Chester Barwick, Barbara Blossom, Wendy Boardman, Jose Boulton, Kenneth Bray, Mrs Breame, Stella & Gerald Butler, Maggie Charles, Dennis Chasney, Jean & Ian Cox, Evelyn & Jack Davis, Eric Dormer, Mr & Mrs Edler, Pat Fearne, Carol Francies, Iris Gillett, Pat Gunn, Irene & Len Harris, Jean Hill, S Hobbs, Joan Humphreys, Marilyn Kramer, Anthea Levene, Rusty & Mac McIntee, Jean & Dennis Moss, Tricia Moxey, Lord & Lady Murray, Ann & John Pearson, Mrs Rolfe, Sylvia Round, Mr & Mrs Harry Royds, Hazel & David Shukla, Jean Smith, Joan Stowers, I Sylvester, Mr & Mrs Norman Taylor, Vera Templeman, Mrs Thurgood, Mrs Tull, Margaret & Ted Willett. (Apologies to those whose names may have been missed off the list)

NB - In the raffle, someone won a Bach CD. Unfortunately, they only took the box! I have the CD if they would like to contact me.

Peg Bitten

Work on the Forest

The work of managing the Forest follows the policies and guidelines set out in the Management Plan approved by the Epping Forest Committee of the Corporation of

London (The Conservators) in April 1998. Although much of the Plan is long-sighted, it is a plan that covers a five years period and therefore by March 2003 a review will take place and a new plan approved for the next period. Additionally every year a Works Programme is published - the Committee has just approved that for 2002-3.

Some matters are to be reviewed during the next few months, such as some of the Forest Car Parks, and are dealt with elsewhere in this Newsletter. One of the main objectives of the Plan, the reintroduction of grazing on the Forest, will start to operate during the coming year. Cattle have been absent from the Forest since 1996. The area involved first will be the woodlands and plains north of Rangers Road as far as High Beach Church. Initially there will be just a few animals - 12 English Longhorns (a docile breed) - but in Fairmead Bottom a fence will be placed along the west side of the main Epping Road - at the bottom of the bank to prevent the cattle from getting on to the road. Thickets will be encouraged to grow along the barrier to lessen the intrusive effect of the fence.

Pedestrian and horse access points will be provided at various places. Initially it is intended to employ a herdsman and to impound the cattle at night.

Controlled grazing is considered the best form of management to keep a necessary balance between woodland and grassland (preventing the encroachment of scrub on to the open plains) and at the same time ensuring a rich diversity of habitats and species. The grazing question is also dealt with elsewhere.

Another major initiative is to develop what are called 'integrated site plans'(ISP's) These are going to be comprehensive management plans for selected popular areas about which there will be consultation with local



Woodman's Glade, pollarded in 1954

people and those who regularly use the areas. Among the first places to be considered in this overall way are Connaught Water, Knighton Wood & Lords Bushes and Woodford & Chingford Golf Courses. During the coming year the following places will also be considered :- Wanstead Flats and Bush Wood, Highams Park and Pauls Nursery, High Beach.

In the woodlands work is to continue as in previous years. Although there will be some re-pollarding of patches of old 19th century Hornbeam pollards, (Lower Forest, Bury Wood & Hawk Wood, and Canada Plain - Walthamstow) It is also intended to undertake some careful crown reduction of veteran Oak and Beech pollards to prolong their life (Honey Lane Quarters, Staples Hill and Loughton Brook). But the main hope is to create new pollards - 'maiden pollards' - by 'be-heading' younger trees so that they will produce a crown of branches in the future, (Kate's Cellar, The Green Ride Fairmead Thicket, Honey Lane Quarters & other places). The development of trees where the creation of 'maidens' was undertaken some years ago can be seen beside the 'Ditches Ride' which runs south from the Jack's Hill car park.

Other clearances of scrub, bushes and some trees, to let in light will be along some paths, rides, roads and Forest boundaries with private properties. We always hope that this latter clearance work will not expose the houses to view from the Forest, but that they will remain screened. Additional clearance work will include the removal of 'alien' trees (Turkey Oaks) and invasive trees (Sycamores). Verge clearance and the creation of embayments (a 'scalloped' edge) along Rangers Road is intended to improve the sight-line and safety as cattle are returning to the Forest.

Project 'Nightingale' is to continue near Connaught water. This is periodic clearance of scrub trees and bushes to develop thickets of the 'right' age (in rotation) hopefully to encourage the return of Nightingales to nest in this... their favourite, part of the Forest in the past.

Policies of mowing some grasslands at varying times each year, to encourage the restoration of a diverse flora will continue. Clearance of Birch scrub on several heathland areas will also continue - much will be done by the volunteer labour of the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers (phone Pat Holder, 020 8505 4876, for more information if you wish to help)

Silt clearance of several Forest ponds will continue, Eagle Pond, Highams Park Lake, and Blackweir Pond (the 'Lost Pond'). Strawberry Hill Pond was cleared over a year ago and should be visited this summer to observe how it is improving.

Several rides and car parks are to be re-surfaced during the year.

Considerable further work will be involved to improve and resurface the relic of the old cattle drove road, Organ Lane, Chingford, that now runs between the back gardens of houses but is still an important pedestrian pathway.

Those of you who regularly walk in the Forest - and many who don't! - should visit the various sites that I have mentioned, where work is being undertaken, to see how the more positive policies of the Management Plan are progressing - sometimes what looks a mess on one occasion will be seen to have improved considerably if visited a year or eighteen months later. Go and see what you think!

Ken Hoy

Superintendent's Lecture

On Thursday 7th February Jeremy Wisenfeld, the Superintendent, delivered a lecture at the James Hawkey Hall, Woodford, posing the question 'Is the Forest safe in the City's hands?'

The Hall was packed with around 350 people; a testimony to the readiness of local people to come out on a not very pleasant evening to display their interest in the Forest.

The talk was excellent. It was an authoritative and wide-ranging exposition of the City's and others role in the saving of the Forest and from a management aspect the changing challenges that it faced. The Green Belt setting was under threat he declared, as pressure mounted from within both its urban boundaries and from the increasingly built up 'country' areas beyond. The Green Belt's protection could be enhanced by its use for more publicly oriented purposes. Valuable contributions in this direction are being made by the developing Thames Chase, Watling Chase, Hainault Forest and Lea Valley Park, and, of course, by Epping Forest and its buffer lands.

No one I think doubted that the Forest was safer in the City's hands than anyone else's! Questions came from the audience on such topics as, buffer land, golf, cattle, fencing, and disabled access etc.

It is not necessary for me to go into further detail about this important lecture since copies will shortly be made available on application to The Superintendent, Epping Forest, The Warren, Loughton, Essex IG10 4RW)

Harry Bitten

Forest Information Service Update

Various staff changes have occurred within the Information Service during the last few months. Rachael Boddie has been appointed as the Heritage Education Officer to develop a range of educational activities at Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge and the Temple in Wanstead Park. In her previous post as Education Officer at the Epping Forest District Museum in Waltham Abbey, Rachael worked with Tricia Moxey and the Information Team on various joint projects. Now she is really looking forward to organising a series of events to encourage a wide range of visitors to understand something of the special qualities of these historic buildings.

Clare Eastwood has been promoted to the post of Interpretation Officer. An important part of her new role will be the production of a series of leaflets about aspects of the Forest. Three Information Assistants have been recruited to welcome visitors to the Information Centre, the Hunting Lodge and on occasions, the Temple in Wanstead Park. The Department also welcomed Christa Perry as the latest addition to the Keeper team. She came from Thames Chase and will soon be riding out in the Forest

A number of volunteers already help the staff in various ways, but with an increasingly ambitious programme of activities, more assistance would be welcome. At one of the information points, volunteers can give invaluable guidance to visitors in telling them about their favourite walks, or they can attend "road shows" at local venues and help promote the Forest.

If you feel that you have some time to spare, have a love and knowledge of the Forest and like meeting people, please phone 020 8508 0028 to discuss how we could use your help.

Tricia Moxey
(Epping Forest Information Services Manager)

Annual General Meeting

Monday 29th April 2002

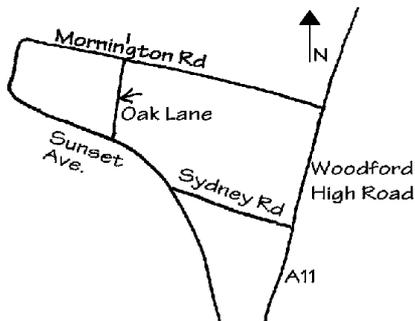
In the early 1990s twelve 'urban fringe' forests were created in various parts of the country together with one National Forest in the Midlands. The 'urban fringe' forests are all, as the name implies, located around large population centres. The two forests that are in 'our area' are Watling Chase to the west of Potters Bar, and the Thames Chase between Brentwood and Rainham. This runs to 26,000 acres and we are fortunate to have John Meehan it's Director to come and tell us about it. Please see *Dates for your Diary* for details.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Editor

Dates for your Diary 2002/03

March 22nd, Friday, 1pm.: Woodford's Heathlands. Meet in Oak Lane, off Mornington Road, Woodford Green.



Leader: Peter Adams, Verderer of Epping Forest
GR 399 928

April 25th, Thursday 2pm.: A walk around Hill Wood and Fairmead and Suntrap Plains. Meet at Fairmead Bottom car park. Take the High Beach Road from the Robin Hood Roundabout, turn left past the green tea hut and continue downhill to the car park on the right.

Leader: Irene Buchan

GR 408 968

April 29th, Monday, 7.30pm.: Annual General Meeting at St James Hawkey Hall, Broomhill Road, off Broadmead Road, Woodford Green. (details in newsletter)

GR 403 920

May 24th, Friday, 10.30am.: Walk in the Woods Month. A walk looking at the history and natural history of Knighton Wood and Lord's Bushes. Meet in the Knighton Lane car park. Knighton Lane is a turning off High Road, Buckhurst Hill, just south of Holly House Hospital.

Leader: Alan Everett

GR 407 936

June 22nd, Saturday, 7pm.: A mid-summer's evening walk in the Chingford woods. Meet in Hornbeam Lane, off Bury Road, Sewardstonebury, Chingford E4.

Leader: Peter Read

GR 393 957

July 12th Friday, 10am. A buffer-land walk, returning to Upshire in time for tea in the village church. Park in the Upshire Village Hall car park.

Leader: Sue McKinley

GR 416 011

Walks last about 2 hours, unless otherwise stated. Please come suitably dressed for the weather and Forest conditions. Public transport can sometimes be a problem on these walks. If you have such a problem please ring 020 8529 8594 for help. All grid references (GR) are taken from Ordinance Survey Explorer map 174 (E.F. & Lee Valley).

Advance Notice: Centenary Walk

September 22nd, Sunday, 9am – 5.30pm.

Other dates for your Diary

Epping Forest Information and Museum Service (For further information 020 8508 0028) Walks

Sunday 10th March 10.30am Walthamstow Forest. Meet end of Oakhill Gardens off New Road, Woodford. Leader Forest keeper Brian Gillam

GR 395908

Wed 20th March 1.30pm 'Meet the Keeper'. Head forest keeper Nick Eade will show you around his favorite part of the forest. Meet opp.the Foresters Arms, Baldwins Hill, Loughton.

GR 428975

In addition to the monthly series of Guided Walks several other activities have been arranged:

During the Easter Weekend, an Easter Egg hunt will start from the, Information Centre. From 1st April opening hours are Weekdays and Saturdays 10 - 5pm Sundays and Bank Holidays 11 - 5.

Saturday 4th May - there is Tudor Music at Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge.

Please phone 020 8529 6688 for details.

Tuesday 7th May, Meet the Keeper - An Historical Walk round Wanstead Park with F/K Brian Gillam and Tricia Moxey. Meet at the end of Warren Road Wanstead at 7.00 pm.

Friday 21st June: On the Longest Day - a guided walk led by F/K Nick Baker to see the views from FernHills. Meet at 7.00 pm in the Fairmead car park, in Fairmead Rd High Beach.

Advance Notice: 'The Forest Festival' will be held on Sunday 8th September 2002, from 12-00 noon to 4-00pm. in the grounds of Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge.

Epping Forest Field Centre, High Beach

16th and 17 March, Look out for Mammals - an identification workshop, £87.

23rd March British Amphibians, £25.

7th April Spring Walk, £10

28th April Birds of the North Kent Marshes, £25

12th May Minsmere Birds in May, £25

18th May British Reptiles, £30

19th May Discovering Bats, £25

7th July Dragonflies and Damselflies, £25

13th July Butterflies, identification and ecology, £25

21st July Discovering Wild Flowers, £25

Essex Wildlife Trust (EF Local Group)

March 21st Thur 8pm

Talk on nature reserves in Herts and Middx. by Judy Adams. Methodist Church Hall, Loughton

April 28th Sun 10.30am

A morning walk to look at spring flowers EWT nature reserve. Meet at Thachers Arms PH on the B186 GR 583906. Further info from Judy Adams 020 8418 0730

EF Conservation Volunteers

March 17th - Anniversary Task, Long Running

March 24th - Alms House Plain

April 28th - Oak Hill

May 15th - Bellringer's Hollow

May 19th - Gilbert Slade

May 26th - Dulsmead Bog

THE FRIENDS OF EPPING FOREST

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND FORM OF NOMINATION FOR OFFICE HOLDERS THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

will be held on **Monday 29th April 2002**
at the Sir James **Hawkey Hall, Woodford Green at 7.30pm**

Agenda for A.G.M

1. Minutes of the last AGM held on 30th April, 2001
2. Matters Arising
3. Chairman's Report 2001/2002
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of the Hon. Sec. and Hon. Treasurer.
6. Election of Committee Members
7. Election of Independent Examiner
8. Any Other Business

After the meeting and a break for coffee there will be an illustrated talk by the Director of Thames Chase, John Meehan on the work being done to establish an urban fringe forest.

Officers at present are:

Chairman: Ken Hoy due for re-election in 2003

Vice-Chairman: Sue McKinley due for re-election in 2004

Hon. General Sec: Mrs. Peggy Bitten due for re-election this year

Hon. Treasurer: Tony Sheppard due for re-election this year

Hon. Membership Sec: Seymour Moss due for re-election in 2004

Existing Committee members willing to stand are: Harry Bitten, Irene Buchan, John Buchan, Bill Dexter, Jim Gimson, Robert Levene, Sue McKinley, Derek Meakin, Peter Read and Judy Miller.

Committee members are re-elected each year and those listed above have agreed to stand together with Robin Gainie who was recently co-opted. If you wish to submit nominations for the post of Hon. Sec. and Hon. Treasurer or Committee members, please complete the form below and send it to: Mrs. P. Bitten, 9 Frederica Road, Chingford E4 7AL by 8th April 2002.

THE FRIENDS OF EPPING FOREST - NOMINATION FORM

I nominate for the office of Hon. Sec., Hon Treasurer or Committee member:

(Please delete as appropriate)

Name

Address

Tel:

Signature of Candidate

Signature of Proposer Tel:

Name In Capitals

Signature of Secunder Tel:

Name in capitals

If you wish to nominate for more than one office, please write details as above on a separate sheet.

MINUTES of the 2001 Annual General Meeting of The Friends of Epping Forest held at the Sir James Hawkey Hall on Monday 30th April 2001 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Committee Members. K Hoy Chairman, Mrs P Bitten Secretary, T Shepperd, Treasurer, S Moss Membership Secretary, H Bitten, Mrs I Buchan, J Buchan, C Gimson, R Levene (Co-opted) Mrs S McKinley, D Meakin, Mrs J Miller, P Read, Mrs J Smith

APOLOGIES were received from B Dexter, Mrs H Shukla and Lady Joan Ellis. 69 Members were present.

1. **THE MINUTES** of the last meeting held on Monday 22nd May 2000 were approved and signed.
Proposed C Gimson, Seconded H Bitten.
2. **MATTERS ARISING** there were none.
3. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2000/2001**
A copy of the Report will be enclosed with the July Newsletter.
Adoption of the Report was proposed by S Moss, seconded by P Read and carried unanimously.
4. **TREASURER'S REPORT**
Mr Sheppard explained his Receipts and Payments Account from 1 April 2000 to 31 March 2001 and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 March 2001, copies of both of which were distributed. The Gift Aid scheme which Mr Robert Levene had agreed to administrate, was explained and the fact that our insurance covered accidents to members when engaged on FOEF activities was confirmed.
5. **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN AND HON.MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**
There had been no other nominations and Mrs McKinley and Mr S Moss were re-elected unanimously.
Proposed T Sheppard and seconded D Meakin.
6. **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
Mr Cropper had resigned on leaving the area and the Chairman reported the sad death of Mr Humphreys. The rest of the Committee including co-opted Mr Levene were introduced to the meeting and unanimously re-elected.
Proposed P Adams Seconded H Kunzru
7. **ELECTION OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**
Mr Peter Gotham was thanked for his work and re-elected for the current year.
Proposed H Bitten Seconded P Read
8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

We are now able to send the Newsletter by E-mail and we have a web site.

In answer to questions re car and tyre dumping it was said the Conservators have agreement with local Councils that they will move cars to the roadside and the Councils will collect, tyre dumping is not such a problem as the person believed to be the main perpetrator is 'out of commission'.

The millennium wood will have the paths and glades mown and we will do more planting in October.

Regarding Forest access, the south has not been closed and the north will be opened for the holiday weekend (5th May).

The dates and venue for events at which we have stalls were read out and an appeal made for helpers.

After closure of the meeting and a coffee break Mr Peter Adams Verderer of Epping Forest and trustee of the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills gave an illustrated and much appreciated talk on the old mills and the site, which generated a lot of interest and a resolve by many to visit the site when it opens to the public.

NOTICE BOARD

SUPPORT THE FRIENDS

by purchasing goods for sale at the AGM - Fleece jackets, T-shirts, caps, mugs, pens and greetings cards or contact Seymour Moss on 020 85329 0620.

NOTE: The new Internet address for the Friends web site is:

FofEF web-site - www.friendsofepppingforest.org.uk

The old address is still valid and will continue to be so until further notice.

REMEMBER: Members wishing to receive the Newsletter by e-mail should contact Seymour Moss on seymour@moss40.freeserve.co.uk