

# The Friends of Epping Forest Newsletter



FofEF web-site - [www.friendsofeppingforest.org.uk](http://www.friendsofeppingforest.org.uk)

Spring 2004

**Dear Friend,**

*And that will be England gone,  
The shadows, the meadows, the lanes,  
The guildhalls, the carved choirs.*

*There'll be books; it will linger on  
In galleries; but all that remains  
For us will be concrete and tyres.*

*(from Going, Going - Philip Larkin)*

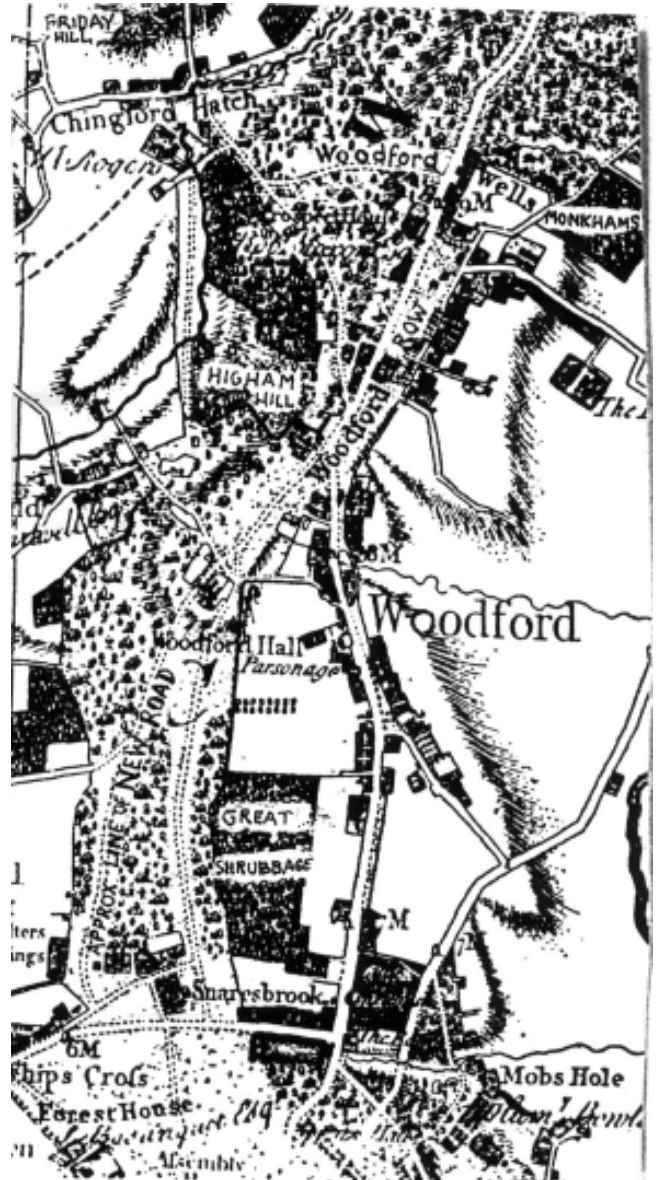
Elsewhere in the Newsletter you may read Peter Adams' account of the walk he led in January around 'Higham Bushes'. Of particular interest is his observations on the massive inroads into Woodford's forest by landed families/developers in the first part of the 19th century.

Reference to the Chapman and Andre map of 1777 shows that at that time on the western side of Woodford High Road (the Woodford New Road wasn't built until 1830) the Forest stretched northwards in a continuous widening belt from Whips Cross/Snaresbrook virtually without any significant development as far as Woodford Wells and beyond.

When the Epping Forest Act was made law in 1878 the Arbitrator, who was given the task of defining the area of the Forest, took the early 1850s as his yardstick and decided that any land enclosed from the Forest since then, that remained unbuilt-on, should be taken back into the Forest.

However, between 1777 and the 1850s things had been happening! The Courtney Warner Highams Estate had expanded further west into what had been the Forest and Tylney Long Wellesley, who styled himself Lord Warden of Epping Forest, enclosed much of his estate lands between the Castle and Woodford Wells.

By such means 400 acres, much of it built on later, disappeared from the Forest in Woodford to the west of the High Road.



from Chapman and Andre map of 1777

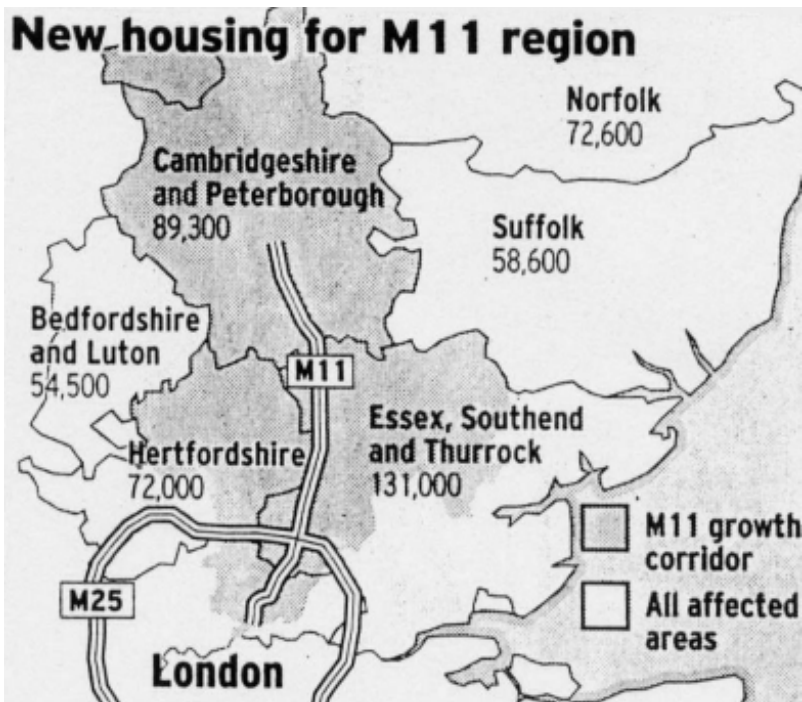
continued over...

## In this issue

<i>Top award for historic forest</i>	2	<i>Walks Reports</i>	6	<i>The Blasted Oak</i>	10
<i>The Natural Aspect</i>	3	<i>Bird Feeding Station</i>	7	<i>More Birds</i>	11
<i>Fishers Green</i>	4	<i>Mr. Fowler's Book Bequest</i>	7	<i>The Forest Supper 2003</i>	11
<i>Traffic Calming in the Forest (3)</i>	5	<i>Hornbeams</i>	8	<i>Pepys... again, &amp; Gilpin and the</i>	
<i>The Buried and Forgotten</i>		<i>Even Stevens - Probably Not!</i>	9	<i>Forest of Waltham</i>	12
<i>Saviours of Epping Forest</i>	5	<i>The High Beach Railway</i>	10	<i>FofEF Dates for Your Diary</i>	13

**Please send all letters to the Secretary and Editor:**  
The Friends is a Registered Charity. No: 299970

Mrs P Bitten, 9 Frederica Road, Chingford, E4 7AL  
Registered with The Civic Trust



If Government plans go ahead along the lines proposed as a result of dictats from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, we are due to lose a good deal more open land in this area than in the early years of the 19th century, to say nothing of the losses in the 20th.

Members will know of the devastating (and contradictory!) recommendations of the Harlow Options and M11/Stansted Studies but parallel figures for housing developments are another factor to take into account.

In order to accommodate the large increases in housing proposed by the O.D.P.M., Epping Forest District's share as originally accepted by the District Council was a reluctant 8000 by 2021. This irrespective of infrastructural aspects, roads, schools, industry, shops etc., must mean something like 400 acres will have to be found.

But, the East of England Regional Assembly (an unelected body) and GO East (I wish they would, the further the better!) the Government Office for the Eastern Region has insisted that the number needs increasing to 18,600. Thus, instead of 400 acres, the land take would be nearer, and probably over, 1000 acres. It is relevant to mention that there are presently around 51,000 houses in Epping Forest District so the notion of a one-third increase in the built up state of the District is being pressed upon us.

There is no way that this level of development can be accommodated without massive intrusion into the Green Belt between the Forest and Harlow. This, devastating in itself, will also

magnify the already difficult traffic congestion and pollution problems present in the area and particularly in the Forest.

These far-reaching and damaging proposals and others - which are opposed by every representative group we are in contact with - will be presented for consultation in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy in the near future. We can only hope our democratically representatives fight tooth-and-nail to resist these attempts to downgrade the Forest environment.

Successive governments, including the present one, have constantly assured us of their intention to preserve the Metropolitan Green Belts confirming that an essential feature of these areas is their permanence.

However, it is clear that the Government recognises that the policies they are pressing forward with will have the inevitable consequence of necessitating a review (i.e. a reduction in the extent) of the Green Belt.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has announced that a £10M green spaces fund is available following the publication of the Sustainable Communities Plan. But, don't get carried away with excitement, this sum is spread over the four areas concerned; Milton Keynes, Ashford, Thames Gateway and the M11 corridor. Moreover, the fund is expendable on consultancies, partnership building, woodland creation, enhancement of existing green spaces and management, as well as land purchase, so there is not going to be much to spare to off set the serious loss of Green Belt land.

Bearing in mind that the purchase in 1991 of 800 acres of the Copped Hall Estate cost the Corporation of London around £3M, the amount of public funds available for land purchase is insignificant, although firms of consultants will doubtless welcome the proposals.

Lest there be any doubt about our target in these slightly critical observations we wish to make it clear that the Superintendent's responses on behalf of the Corporation of London last October to the M11/Stansted Study was trenchant, objective and totally defensive of the Epping Forest environment. It contained phrases emphasising that there was no acceptance of the assumptions behind the growth scenarios proposed, nor an acceptance of the significant dilution of Green Belt policy that would result from any of these growth scenarios.

A copy of this admirable document is available for inspection on request.

**Harry Bitten**  
(on behalf of the Editor)

## TOP AWARD FOR HISTORIC FOREST

In November last year, Epping Forest was officially acknowledged as one of the Country's premier natural heritage sites as it received a Green Heritage Site award. Promoted by English Heritage and the Civic Trust, this new award recognises that Forest has unique historical characteristics that are well cared for, well promoted and made accessible for the public to visit and enjoy.

It is one of only four sites in England to win this award in its first year of presentation. The others are Farthing Downs, Croydon; Dane John in Canterbury and Castle Park in Colchester.

Karen Lewis, award manager of the Trust said, "The Green Heritage Site awards were introduced to recognise the importance of green spaces as part of our heritage. Many of these sites have a historic value, both in their buildings, bandstands and monuments, and also in their landscape, tree and plant collections.

John Watkins, English Heritage's Head of Gardens and Landscapes said, "Investing in the historic environment, especially our parks and green spaces which are such valued parts of our heritage and culture, reinforces local identity and fosters civic pride." Today the Forest combines the roles of scenic open space, wildlife habitat and conservation areas.

## THE NATURAL ASPECT

As I write in mid-February a new year has really begun. From now on, Toad & Frog's spawn may be found in ponds... this may vary depending upon the depth and aspect of the pond and thus the temperature of the water.

Chaffinches and Great Tits have been singing on sunny days for a while now and I have just heard the first Blackbird of 2004 singing; they stop in late June or early July and begin again in February. When a hesitant dawn chorus begins and catkins wave in the hedgerows then Spring is really on the way. And, when the garden Robin begins to tolerate another close by his/her feeding area then they are a pair. My local bird, that flew into my kitchen last Autumn got a red-coloured ring placed on its right leg before being released. Thus, all winter I was able to see that this one was the completely dominant Robin at the bird table - driving all others away.

But now, 'he' allows another individual to feed nearby and even presents the newcomer with a morsel of food. They are a pair!

Each autumn Robin pairs break-up and occupy and viciously defend their separate territories - no season of 'peace and goodwill' for this Christmas-card emblem!

Unlike most other birds they hold territories all the year and this is why they are virtually the only birds that sing all the year; advertising their ownership.

Now, is the time to make sure you know the songs of your garden birds.

Only the Robin has been singing throughout the winter; a sweet liquid bubbling song that you need to know before the summer migrants arrive in April to confuse you.

The only other birds singing a recognisable song in March will be:- the two same insistently repeated notes of the Great Tit, the Song Thrush who repeats loudly, two or three times or more, a variety of different notes, the Chaffinch that repeats a chattering song phase with a chirrupy flourish at the end, the remarkably loud and rapid trills of the Wren, and the mellow, fruity warbling of the Blackbird that most people seem to know. Those are usually the only common songs you may hear around the time that you will be reading this Newsletter... if you don't already know them, this is the time to sort them out or refresh your memory.

Now is also the time to clean out, repair or make nest-boxes. The size of the hole is crucial... 25 mm for Blue Tits and 36 mm for Great Tits, any larger and House Sparrows can take over. March is getting a little late for this job - so first make sure existing boxes are not already in use! Setting-up a bird-bath, of varying depth up to some 75 mm (3") deep will be useful later. In last summer's dry conditions mine needed refilling daily and birds were literally queuing up to drink or splash about in it.

A bird-bath can be as rewarding as a bird-table - early on an October morning two beautiful Fieldfare bathed and drank in mine; possibly 'freshening-up' after an overnight flight from Scandinavia

As it is still the end of winter and if you are out in the open areas of the Forest or on buffer land footpaths you may still see some of those winter-visiting thrushes - the Fieldfare and also their smaller relatives the Redwing I think it has been a 'good year' for Fieldfare. I have seen quite a lot this winter. Last year's great berry crop has been appreciated by all the thrushes. And, the sunny summer will have created many fruiting buds to provide this spring's blossom.

Before March has gone, if you are walking under the Forest's Beeches and Hornbeams, lookout for small flocks of Chaffinches feeding on the ground. They will have flashes of white on the wings and tail. But also look carefully for any that have a white rump - a patch on the lower back just above the tail - they will be Bramblings; an uncommon winter visitor also from Scandinavia. This northern finch often seems to gather in the Forest in March.

During February and March it is also worth looking at the mosses and liverworts and lichens - the apparently insignificant plants growing on the ground, logs, stumps and tree trunks. This is the time of year, before the foliage appears on trees, when these plants put on a spurt of growth and 'flower'

Of course, they are not flowers - they do not reproduce by seeds but by microscopic spores. In most mosses and some liverworts the spores develop in capsules on slender stalks. The intricate detail of these primitive plants is worth stopping to look at with a lens when you are next out walking.



*A Liverwort (Pellia epiphylla) common in the Forest.  
Some spore capsules have burst open.  
(Both photos taken in the Bury Wood by Ken Hoy)*



*A Hair Moss (Polytrichum juniperinum) also common in the Forest. Often found on old bonfire sites. 2 capsules have shed their covering sheaths.*

In the past Epping Forest, being ancient woodland, was famous, especially in Victorian times, for the great number of species of these plants that could be found within the Forest. As they are particularly sensitive to atmospheric pollution, their numbers were drastically reduced first, with the increase of coal fires and then decades later by pollution from road traffic.

Being NE of London the Forest has always been more vulnerable than many other woods around the Metropolis because of the prevailing SW winds. The sensitivity of these primitive plants varies from species to species thus they are very good indicators of the degree of pollution - especially the Lichens. These are mostly scaly patches or tufts of grey-green growth on logs and stumps. Although generally the air has been cleaner since the late 1950's and lichens have appeared to be increasing again, Epping Forest has always suffered more than elsewhere, being mostly down-wind of London.

To ascertain the degree of damage

that the Forest is suffering from traffic pollution the Conservators have just commissioned Imperial College to undertake a 3 year monitoring programme.

I believe the threat from increasing traffic around the Forest arising from proposed development within the 'M11 corridor' and the Harlow/Stansted expansion is possibly now as grave for the future of the Forest as anything in the whole of the last century. The so-called 'need' to expand on such a scale which is driving the planning proposals, has merely been stated by the Government and not explained or justified at all

But it is too depressing to end thus. There have been some 'follow-ups' from the last issue of the Newsletter:

Peter Relph tells me that he remembers some years ago seeing mistletoe growing on an apple-tree in the garden of the old keeper's lodge at Broadstrod - the lodge is long gone and the garden now part of the Forest. The apple tree has gone too. I wonder if the

keeper 'planted' the seed and cultivated his own Christmas crop?

Also, remember Sue McKinlay's Migratory Locust found last summer in Upshire? As we suspected the hot dry period in the summer caused a northward expansion in range of several members of the grasshopper/cricket family. Not only migratory species appeared but also alien tropical species sold as pet food for lizards etc. escaped and in some places were able to establish 'wild' outdoor colonies for a while.

The journal *British Wildlife* reports: "Predictably it has been a good year for observing the arrival of Migratory Locusts (*Locusta migratoria*), with a spate of records ranging from the south coast to NW England". Sue's locust, flying to Upshire from southern or eastern Europe or maybe North Africa, is still alive - subjected to Sue's tender-loving-care. She has fed it lettuce and chinese cabbage!

**Ken Hoy**

## FISHERS GREEN

After our ramble through Epping Forest come with me to Fishers Green. Where is that you say? It is our local Lake District made from old disused gravel pits and dumping ground for everybody's rubbish both domestic and commercial. Once it was used by a few fishermen who fished in the River Lea which runs through it. We commence our journey on the 505 bus which runs past the historic Waltham Abbey founded by King Harold and where they say his head is buried. We alight at Fishers Green Lane and walk down to start our ramble. Growing by the wayside are cowslips which have got so rare and as we look round we marvel

at the beautiful countryside which seems so far from London and yet so near. We come to the first lake which is a refuge for water birds especially the migrants in winter. We spy mallard his metallic green blue head shining in the sun followed by his drab mate (why do all male birds have the most beautiful plumage) and their fast growing chicks. A golden eye joins them his eyes like gold coins. We make our way to the bittern hide, that rare shy bird which we may be lucky to see. We settle ourselves with our binoculars at the ready. We suddenly spot him in the reeds so well camouflaged is he that we have to look twice to be sure. We make our way to see the orchids, purple, spotted, red and white, not

showy like their exotic cousins. They grow there because industrial chemicals were dumped here on which they thrive. They started off as just a few and now they grow in their thousands, a rare sight indeed. We cross the Lea Navigation by Marsh Lock and listen to the willow warbler whose ascending song stops so abruptly. Blackbird and thrush join the chorus while overhead the gulls perform their aerial ballet in the sky. A graceful tern, his slanting wings glinting in the sun joins in. The path is edged with comfrey pink, mauve and white mixed with the pretty Indian balsam, a foreign interloper. We come to the river and the banks are lined with forget-me-not, burr marigolds and the wild mint while in places the water lilies bloom. Suddenly there is a flash of blue and a kingfisher darts across the river, his eye fixed on his next meal. A grebe floats by carrying her babies on her back and a graceful pair of swans followed by their half grown cygnets. We arrive at the weir and watch the sandpipers running along the top, while in the trees the cormorants sit, black and sinister with their wings hung out to dry. We turn for home and pass the scrape where curlews and shelduck look for food and a heron stands motionless. We walk along the river where the graceful willows bend to their reflections in the water. Truly, a magical place and so little known.

**Joyce Richardson**



## TRAFFIC CALMING IN THE FOREST (3)

In their November 2003 meeting the Conservators approved the traffic proposals put forward by Essex County Council and spelt out in our note about traffic calming in the Autumn 2003 Newsletter.

We reported then that the ECC Highways Department was engaged on an exercise to evolve a traffic model for the Epping Forest area that would feed into the Local Transport Plan and that we were invited to submit our views on the subject. This has now been done in a letter of 30 December 2003 to Highways Head, Tony Ciabarro, which members may inspect (ring 8529 8954).

- Briefly we point out that the Forest is a special place where considerations other than traffic movement should be given greater importance.
- Signage should draw motorists' attention to the importance of the Forest they are entering and should be used to seek to deflect motorists onto routes round, rather than through, the Forest.
- In the longer term, all routes through the Forest should have a 30/40mph limit on them and perhaps later a 30 mph limit. This could be brought



about by lowering the hierarchy status of the A104, A121 and A1069.

- Major problems are caused by commuters and others using Forest roads when no Forest destination is involved. Parking and other restrictions in collaboration with London Boroughs and the GLA would be necessary here together with major improvements to the public transport network.
- There should be attention paid to creating much safer pedestrian/rider points across all road crossing-points. Woodredon Hill, A121, is so dangerous in this connection that the only realistic safe crossing is the construction of a tunnel under the road as in other parts of the Forest.
- The construction of north-facing slip-roads on the M11 at Debden would draw cross-Forest traffic onto the motorway.
- In view of the serious effect of car

pollution levels and road-kill on Forest wildlife, we support the closure of certain Forest roads thus creating larger blocks of Forest not subject to damaging traffic. The roads in question are Fairmead Road south of the car park, formal closure of Lodge Road, and closure of Claypit Hill or the Wake Road, preferably the latter.

- In the light of the build-up of traffic along Sewardstone Road, it is important to limit rat-running from there to the Forest ridge by quiet lane status for Avey Lane, Mott Street and Daws Hill. Similar measures are required at Crown Hill, Upshire and Piercing Hill Theydon Bois.

We await developments.

**Harry Bitten**

## THE BURIED AND FORGOTTEN SAVIOURS OF EPPING FOREST

During 1842 a report to 'The Select Committee on the improvement of health in towns' under the heading 'Effects of interment of bodies in towns' recorded that:

*'The Enon Street Chapel in Clements Lane, built in 1823, has a cellar measuring 59'x29' and between this cellar is a boarded floor without lath or plaster. Into this cellar, which contains a sewer, up to 1842, 12,000 bodies had been placed, an average of 30 a week.*

*Intolerable smells have arisen through the planks of the floor of the chapel and frequently four or five women have fainted during the services. Asked if the congregation was a crowded one, the witness replied; 'Not latterly, it fell off.*

A later report in 1850 stated that by 1847 rooms in the chapel had been let 'to lovers of terpsichore', that is, it was now a dancing academy!

Other reports noted that in Aldgate '17-18 bodies were at this time being placed in a grave with no earth between

the coffins'. In another City churchyard: 'In order to make room, corpses not buried a week, were taken up, chopped up and burnt, choppers and saws for this purpose being kept in the churchyard'.

Obviously action had to be taken as the populations of Victorian London and other cities were still growing, and to help solve the burial problem, in 1850 'The Metropolitan Interment Act' was passed which gave local Boards of Health powers to forbid further interments in churchyards and other burial grounds and acquire land for municipal cemeteries.

The City of London certainly had a major crisis to deal with. Unlike today, it then had quite a large residential population but it also had additional problems resulting from the disruption caused by the rebuilding of its ancient sewerage system and later the building of 'cut and cover' railways. These works often involved digging up graveyards of city churches, with the resulting duty to re-inter the remains. It was therefore vital that the City purchased a site for its own cemetery as quickly as it could, to both bury its present dead, but also to re-inter hundreds of remains from the ruined city churchyards.

Therefore just four years after the 1850 Act, the City purchased Aldersbrook Farm, now the City of London Cemetery and Crematorium at Ilford. Acquiring this land also made the Corporation 'commoners' of Epping Forest and eventually enabled it to lead the fight to save it.

Visitors to the cemetery today will find a whole avenue of memorials to those reinterred there from destroyed city churchyards. Names of now long lost city churches appear, a poignant reminder of the price of progress; something to ponder about when you next travel on the Hammersmith & City line!

I therefore feel we should include the dead of the Victorian City of London in the list of those who, albeit accidentally, helped to save Epping Forest whilst remembering such leading figures as George Palmer Jnr who tirelessly fought to save the Forest long before our local Willingales v Maitland cases caught the public imagination more widely.

**John Howes, May 2003**

*First published in the Loughton and District Historical Society Newsletter*

## WALKS REPORTS

### October 17th

This Friday's walk was interesting because it showed that our members do read the Friends Newsletter, which unusually I believe was the sole source of information for this walk. However some thirty people turned up on this very pleasant autumnal morning, including at times two barefoot walkers. We first headed to Rushey Plain where we stopped to check the progress of some of the earliest re-pollarding in the Forest since pollarding was stopped all those years ago.

We walked around the Bomb Hole Pond (a sign with this name on was recently recovered from the mud) and past the Wake Valley Pond into Monk Wood. This is an area which to me is the heart of the Forest and the most attractive, so I was surprised to find that only a very few had ever visited the area before, but from the comments made it seems they will soon revisit.

The Green Ride took us to the Lost Pond and the massive Beech behind it. Harry thinks it is a coppard (a pollarded coppice) but some others think differently, but whatever its origins it is a great big tree worthy of a visit. Along Debden Slade, which is always interesting we were soon approaching the main road again. Crossing to Paul's Nursery and the lawn, which is grazed so short by rabbits, past the old potting shed, we were back at High Beach.

A beer and sandwich followed... what a nice way to spend a morning!

*Derek Meakin*

### Christmas walk

What are we going to do with all these mince pies and the wine I thought when on the morning of Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December I looked out of the window onto the sodden, cold and rainy scene! There wont be anyone there! How wrong can you be? Thirty hardy and waterproofed souls assembled by the pillow mounds at High Beach ready for anything,

We trudged through the Wellington Hill woods past Arabin House, where Alfred Lord Tennyson wrote 'ring out wild bells' and onwards along Mott Street. Soon followed a left turn along Pepper Alley and eventual emergence out onto the Green at Lippitt's Hill. The Owl was inviting, but being made of stern stuff, we swung left and took the footpath alongside the caravan site resisting the temptation to peep.

After passing by Suntrap and along its namesake plain, we climbed up

through Hillwood over Cross Road and paused to look at the charming Garden House, wondering how all the Conservators party manage to squash in there for lunch. We then came to Pauls Nursery Green with its beautifully rabbit nibbled lawn.

By now the rain had eased to a steady drizzle, so things were looking up! We noted the huge beech pollards as we walked round the Conservation Centre before arriving back at High Beach.

The mince pies and wine went down very well and thankfully there was none left.

*Harry Bitten*

### Saturday 24th January - Woodford Wood and Higham Bushes

Until the 1880s the north-east corner of Walthamstow from Oak Hill to Woodford Green and Chingford Hatch had been a block of woodland called Higham Bushes. This was matched by Woodford

Wood which continued northwards to what we now know as the Greater London boundary. In the years up to the passing of the Epping Forest Act this area changed at an increasing rate as wealthy landowners encouraged by unscrupulous Governments cleared most of the tree cover and sold much of the land off for residential development!

The creation of Highams as the manor house for High Benstead Manor resulted in disafforestation, the clearing of trees to form a park and the damming of the River Ching to form a lake. A few pollarded hornbeams and some statuesque unpollarded oaks around the lake remain to give some idea as to what the area looked like before it was cleared. The housing development that was in later years intended to cover the whole of the park was fortunately of only a limited success and much of land is once again green, if a bit like a municipal park in places. This part of Walthamstow had been known as Hale End, but after the coming of the railway its station was



*Photo by Chris Jones*



*Photo by Robert Smith*

renamed for the first time as Highams Park and the name gradually spread embrace the surrounding community.

The part of Higham Bushes to the north of the Park had a distinctive character due in part, no doubt, to its gravelly soils. A map of 1641 refers to it as Allen's Lops and later maps show it as being wooded until the early nineteenth century at least. The shape and character of the old 'Blasted Oak' that blew down this winter after many years of vandals lighting fires in its base also clearly demonstrates that there was woodland cover in this area.

Many areas of the Forest were ravaged during the Napoleonic wars and one wonders whether this was what led to the removal of most of the woodland from The Lops in the succeeding years. By the 1840s the farms at Chingford Hatch had some of the land under the plough, and these areas can be seen today as the corrugated ('ridge and furrow') open grassland. I am surprised that the soil was of a good enough quality, especially after a few years, to produce satisfactory crops.

Despite the ignominious sale of the Wanstead House estate William Tylney Long Pole Wellesley still retained ownership of the manors of Wanstead and Woodford. Not having lost his interest in spending money the remaining lands were steadily sold off including a great deal of Woodford Wood in the 1850s. The City Corporation purchased The Lops and what remained of the Wood leaving us with the Forest we see today.

Part of the area was laid out as a golf course from 1890, and the greensmen, rabbits and Commoners' cattle from the farms in Woodford and Chingford Hatch were enough to keep much of the new, open character for many years. All this was to change. The disappearance of the farms and hence the cattle after the Second World War and the dramatic decline in rabbits due to myxomatosis both played their part. However, the single, most dramatic factor was the fires during the long hot summers of 1975 and 1976 when huge areas of turf were burnt off. This enabled seed from woody species such as trees and shrubs to at last take root in the soil as the woodland started to re-establish itself.

The changes these areas have seen over the last 200 years have been quite dramatic, but they are in essence similar to those that were experienced in many parts of the Forest. One hopes that future generations will look back at the intervening years and say that we learnt from the mistakes of the past.

**Peter Adams**

## BIRD FEEDING STATION

Most observers of the scene are becoming increasingly concerned about the reduction in the species and sometimes the sheer numbers of the birds in the Forest. Treecreepers, nuthatches, lesser-spotted woodpeckers etc. that were common ten years ago are now hardly ever seen.

No one seems to be able to identify the cause, magpie, jay and squirrel predation contribute no doubt, and pollution levels are such that insect numbers, a vital food source especially for young birds, are drastically down. A few years ago car windscreens were a mass of dead insects after a summer evening's drive, it doesn't seem to happen to anywhere near the same extent now.

Anyway, whatever the cause, the Friends Committee decided in the Summer 2003 (see Summer Newsletter) to offer to provide the Conservators with a bird feeding station to be placed in the garden at the Epping Forest Information Centre at High Beach. The offer was gladly accepted and in due course a RSPB purpose-built station complete with sacks of peanuts, 'no mess' seed and nyjer seed, storage tubs and scoops were installed in a position where visitors to the Centre could watch the birds.

However, we hadn't reckoned on the capacity of the squirrels to exploit the resultant opportunity. They scaled the central pole without any bother at all and attacked the peanut dispenser with frenzied enthusiasm and in so doing broke some of the wire mesh. This enabled the rapid removal of whole peanuts and the generous cascade on the ground below, much to the pleasure of numerous squirrels, rabbits, blackbirds, jays and sparrows. All very well and we don't wish to be scrooge-like but 20 kilos of peanuts disappeared in no time at all and we were beginning to require a hot-line to the bird-feed company and our treasurer was looking serious!

Fortunately some loose wire repaired the torn peanut feeder and an inverted bucket put an end to the squirrels' climbing activities. Hopefully matters will settle down now and the station will be a real contribution to the Centre's facilities and interest.

Great, blue and coal tits, chaffinches, great spotted woodpeckers and robins are regular visitors, and we have just had nuthatches reported which is really good news. We now await news of the arrival of goldfinches when they find the nyjer seed.

Tricia Moxey has told us that the sight of the incessant avian visitors to the station is very appealing, especially to groups of youngsters, thus justifying this provision.

Now that the squirrels have been frustrated, supplies needed of peanuts and seed will drop to a more realistic level, but the more birds that come the more supplies will be needed QED!

We are confident that our members will support this initiative and not balk at the cost. But do visit the Centre with children and grandchildren and be delighted by the bird show.

Many thanks are due to the Centre staff who, braving the weather and the ravenous birds, squirrels and rabbits, look after the station and keep everything topped up.

You may have also seen the nice appreciative mention in Forest Focus.

**Stop Press:** *Tricia has just reported that four siskins have found the nyjer seed!*

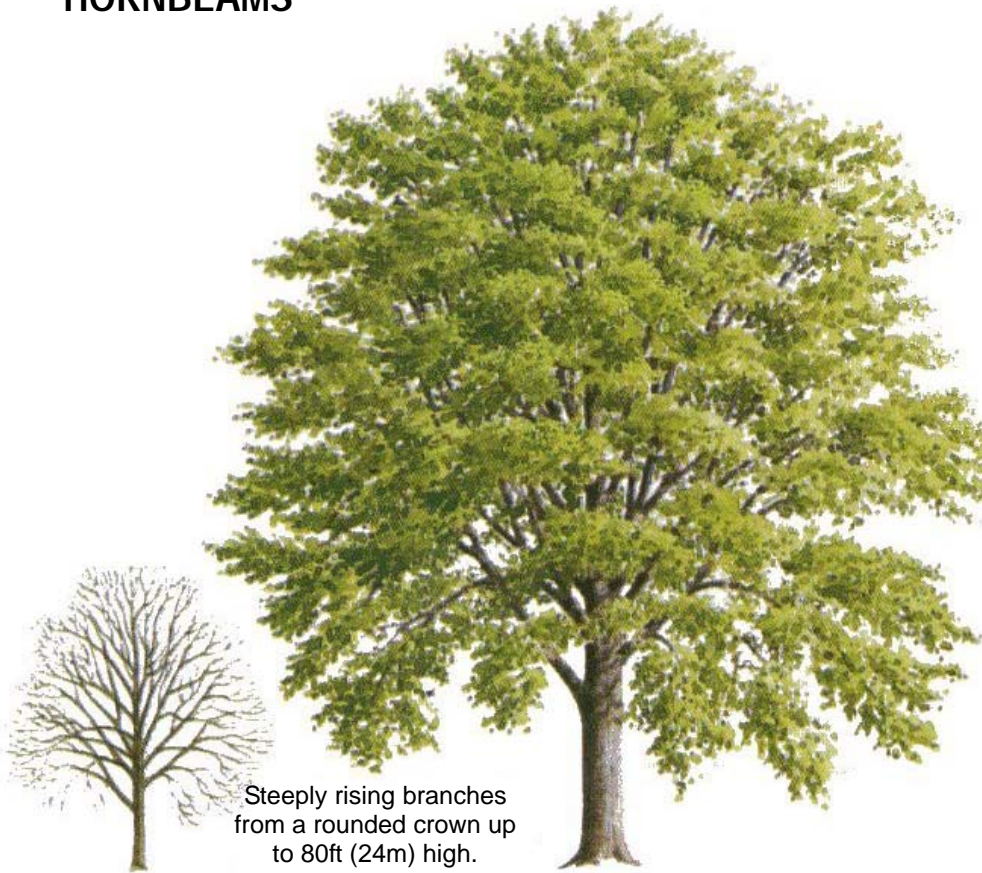
**Harry Bitten**

## MR. FOWLER'S BOOK BEQUEST

Sadly member Mr Fowler died at the end of last year and his brother kindly brought along to us the valuable and much appreciated books he had left to the Friends. We list below the titles concerned and our assessment of the guide price to members. Please contact us on 8529 8594 if you are interested in viewing/buying any of this nice collection. We are open to offers (good offers!). Any remaining will be on sale at the AGM.

Portrait of Epping Forest, Sir Wm Addison £5.  
Epping Forest: Figures in a Landscape, Sir Wm Addison £5.  
Literary and Historical Ass. Of E F, Sir Wm Addison £5.  
Epping Forest through the Ages, Georgina Green £3.  
Epping Forest through Eye of a Naturalist, Mark Hansen £10.  
Bob Mitchell's Epping Forest Companion, Robert Mitchell £5.  
Epping Forest then and Now, Ramsey and Fowkes £25.  
Meetings with Remarkable Trees, Thomas Pakenham £15.  
Forests of Britain, Thomas Hinde £5.  
The Parks and Woodlands of London, Andrew Crowe £5.  
Wild Essex, Tony Gunton £10.  
Epping Forest, Alfred Qvist £1.  
The Natural History of an English Forest, Norman Hickin £5.

# HORNBEAMS



Steeply rising branches from a rounded crown up to 80ft (24m) high.

**Extract from *The Complete Guide to Trees of Britain and NI* by Alan Mitchell**

Common hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) is a native tree which arrived late in Britain and did not spread far. The few woods of pure hornbeam are in Essex, notably in Epping, Hainault and Hatfield Forests, as well as in Hertfordshire and East Anglia. It also occurs in a more scattered form among other trees in Kent, Sussex and Surrey and beyond these areas is probably a planted tree, uncommon in Scotland. The name 'hornbeam' means 'hard wood'. It is one of the hardest and strongest of all timbers and is a good fuel-wood, also making high quality charcoal. It was grown for smallwood uses, and for charcoal, often where deer would prevent young trees from growing and so was 'lopped' or pollarded. The stem was cut as high as an axe could reach, about 2.5 m, and the sprouts were cut when of suitable size. Each cutting produced more new sprouts than the previous one until a broad-topped pollard resulted, like those in Essex. Hornbeam wood is still used today for piano hammers, and larger pieces form the centres of chopping-blocks. Before the invention of cast iron, hornbeam was the one wood strong and hard enough to take the strain of a watermill

wheel and the wear of its cog-teeth. It was also used for the hub of a cartwheel, which, being bored to take the axle and the spokes, requires extreme strength. Hornbeam grows better than all but a few trees on heavy clays, a useful feature for a tree whose main population is on the London clay of Essex and Hertfordshire. It needs some shelter in order to thrive and even some high shade when it is young. The male catkins, which are inside buds in the winter are very prolific every year and expand before the leaves over several weeks in March and April.

**Extract from *Reader's Digest Field Guide to Trees and Shrubs of Britain***

The hedges forming the maze at Hampton Court are said to have been originally of hornbeam, though they were replaced later by yew and holly. Hornbeam is suitable for hedges, as it is easily clipped, becomes very dense and retains some of its dead leaves in winter. It occurs in oak and beech woods, surviving among beeches because it will tolerate deep shade. Only in the south east is hornbeam a native tree; elsewhere it has been planted.

Hornbeam seldom grows to its full stature of 80 ft (24 m) or more, and until

the end of the last century hornbeams were frequently coppiced or pollarded. Trees that were coppiced were cut almost to the ground to make fresh shoots grow from side-buds just above ground level; the shoots were used to provide faggots, charcoal and beansticks. Pollarded trees were cut at head height, above the reach of grazing animals which would otherwise have eaten the young shoots.

Pollarded hornbeams in Epping Forest were a source of fuel and beansticks for London until early this century.

The name of hornbeam refers to the tree's tough wood, 'horn' meaning hard and 'beam' a tree in Old English. As it resists heavy blows the wood is used for making butchers' chopping blocks, mallets, balls and skittles. Before the days of cheap steel it was fashioned into spokes and cogwheels.

**Extract from *Alan Mitchell's Field Guide to the Trees of Britain and Northern Europe***

Native to S.E. England with isolated areas in Somerset and Monmouth. Europe from Pyrenees to S. Sweden, east to Asia Minor. Common in S.E. England mainly as hedgerow tree, pure woods in parts of Epping, Hatfield and Hainault Forests (Essex) and in Herts. and a component of many woods. Planted north to Sutherland. Frequent, parks, roadsides, gardens and as a hedge, retaining dead leaves all winter.

**Bark.** Pale silvery-grey finely striped pale brown and paler grey. Smooth patches with fine network patterns of grey, separated by deep, black, irregular fissures. Old trees with raised network of flat ridges. Boles deeply fluted and usually eccentric, oval.





**Crown.** Irregular ovoid or broadly conic, old trees reversed-conic spreading to a high dome; bole *sinuous* and deeply fluted and holed; branches ascending and sinuous, shoots very fine and straight.

**Foliage.** Shoot dark brownish-grey with sparse long hairs, slender, slightly zigzag, seen close to. Bud very slender, sharp-pointed, appressed closely, 6-7 mm. Leaves alternate, oblong-ovate, about 15 pairs of *parallel veins*; finely and sharply *double toothed*, sometimes



almost lobulate, very dark green above, yellower beneath with small white tufts in vein-axils. Good yellow then old-gold in autumn.

**Flowers and fruit.** Abundant male catkins expand in March to 2.5-5 cm, bright yellow-green near-to, brownish in the mass, from reddish outer scales. Fruit cluster 6 cm long with about eight pairs of nutlets, 6-8 mm, each pair near the base of a green bract, 3.5 cm long, with a small lobe spreading each side near the base.

## EVEN STEVENS - PROBABLY NOT!

A little booklet was sent to us recently by Peter Butt who found it in the papers of Miss K Wildman (deceased) entitled, "A Corner of Epping Forest and the Origins of the Penny Post" by H V Wiles - a post-WW2 publication from The Walthamstow Press.

The 'corner' about which he writes is mostly the Albion Hill, Warren Hill, Staples Hill area which he half refers to as little Switzerland. However, it is the Penny Post section of the booklet that strikes a chord!

He describes how William Addison, through research he had done, had gathered some information about a connection between Loughton and the Penny Post. Addison, busy with his own heavy burden of literary work, had passed the information over to Wiles inviting him to pursue it.

The resulting story is as follows:

Albion Hall, subsequently Drummaids Lodge had been a school Albion House conducted by one Stevens who in 1827 handed over the school to his son Francis Worrell Stevens.

Young Stevens was also an inventor and had patented improvements to the propulsion units of boats, but his great enthusiasm was his scheme for an adhesive stamp and a Penny post.

Postage at that time was very expensive, 6d from and to Brighton, 20d to Birmingham and so on. The system was complicated because the postman had to collect the postage costs.

Around 1833, Stevens had a correspondence with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Althorp (afterwards Earl Spencer, one of Lady Di's forebears) about his proposal for a universal adhesive stamp and Penny Postage. For the design of his first

stamp Stevens drew a likeness of King William IV, although he later changed this to the Royal Arms.

Around this time, Stevens found the need for an assistant master competent in French and advertised accordingly. The resulting applicants were interviewed at the Three Nuns at Aldgate, at that time, Wiles points out, a very respectable inn. Mr Rowland Hill, some 10 years older than Stevens, was appointed. He had been recuperating in France from an illness and had learned the language.

Hill lived in and after lessons he and Stevens spent much companionable time in the evenings, and after a month or so the correspondence and proposals re the Penny Post was shown to Hill.

Hill, who made a little money from writing the occasional article for magazines, asked to borrow the papers in order to put together an article to submit for publication. Stevens thought that he himself was perfectly capable of doing this when required, and refused. Hill was said to have made the same request a couple more times and eventually said he would be glad to draft something for approval, and to this Stevens agreed and passed over the papers.

Hill had taught for less than six months when the pupils departed on vacation, as did he. He never returned to Albion House and never returned the correspondence. Apart from one brief chance meeting, Hill and Stevens never saw one another again.

Stevens tried his hand as a stockbroker in the City, lost his money and emigrated to New Zealand. These preoccupations and distance meant that he failed to hear of Hill's pamphlet entitled, "Penny Post Reform" published in 1837 which established his reputation.

It was not until 1840 that Stevens

learned that the Penny Post was to be adopted, and later that Rowland Hill had been rewarded as the originator. A letter to Hill demanding to know how he could make this claim was never answered.

In 1877, Stevens petitioned Queen Victoria seeking to have the records searched so that his claims could be substantiated, but to no avail. By 1889 he had returned to the UK and lived in Brixton, whose MP he interested in presenting another petition to Parliament in July of the same year. This stated the case in full and referred to his correspondence with the Chancellor of the Exchequer of 1833 and prayed that this could be produced which would confirm that Stevens was the real originator and that Rowland Hill was an impostor.

Unfortunately for Stevens it is standard practice for holders of certain senior government posts to remove their private papers and records on leaving office, and it appears that is what happened to the relevant papers.

In between his job preoccupations and move to and from New Zealand Stevens lost his own copies of the correspondence. Maybe he did not value them highly in the first place. It was only when the Penny Post had been established and attributed to Rowland Hill's 1837 pamphlet that he reacted.

In 1860 Rowland Hill's services were rewarded with a knighthood. Illness forced his resignation from his post as Chief Secretary to the Postmaster General in 1864. However, in recognition of his outstanding services, Parliament made him a grant of £20,000 and continued his full salary of £2000 a year as a pension.

His statue still stands in Kidderminster, his birth place.

A great injustice, or much ado about nothing. Who knows?

**Harry Bitten**



*Photo by Ken Hoy*

## THE BLASTED OAK

The Blasted oak on Woodford Golf Course has been a notable landmark especially since it was struck by lightning early in the 1900's. Unfortunately it blew down this winter. Does anyone know when exactly it fell?

**Peggy Bitten**



*Photo by Robert Smith*

## THE HIGH BEACH RAILWAY

In our Newsletter over a year ago Edgar Brown wrote a very detailed and interesting account of the proposals to build a railway from Chingford through the Forest to High Beach. Just after the Newsletter was issued he led a walk along the routes through the Forest that were proposed for the railway in 1863 and 1873; Edgar also mentions there was yet another proposal in 1883. Over 60 of you will remember that walk on 25th April 2003 when Edgar provided you with maps showing the line of the tracks that would have cut right through the Forest and then lead us through the thickets to trace that line.

We tend to think that after the Epping Forest Act of 1878 everything was fine, the Forest was safe and there was no further cause for public concern!

However as Edgar tells us, just two years later in 1880 the Great Eastern Railway proposed another scheme (part of a package) in a Bill to Parliament. The Bill was passed but due to strong opposition the High Beach section was withdrawn. But in 1883 Great Eastern Railway tried yet again to seek permission but this time in a separate Bill. The proposed route was not straight through the Forest as a decade earlier, but by a more circuitous route - along the Bury Road to Carroll's farm, down The Green Lane and along the Blind lane, across Lippitts Hill, Mott Street,

Avey Lane and parallel with Pynest Green Lane to the High Beach golf course near Comical Corner. And, this time the proposal, although still taking some Forest land, was supported by the Forest Conservators, the Corporation of London.

Edgar, who clearly researched the matter very thoroughly, referred to an article in the Essex Review about the proposed railway, written almost twenty years ago by Ron Layton. At the time he was a Senior Lecturer at the Conservation Centre, High Beach (now the Epping Forest Field Centre).

In view of the current threats to the Forest from the proposed southward development of Harlow, I recently re-read it and was struck by how familiar and still topical, were the arguments for and against such a proposal although they were made 120 years ago. I hope neither Edgar nor Ron will mind if I refer to the question of the railway again.

Many different Groups and Institutions supported each side of the debate. It was said that the Corporation was divided on the matter, but; - "Whatever the truth the City Solicitor and the Forest Superintendent made a report on the scheme and... the Epping Forest Committee resolved unanimously that the proposed extension to High Beach was desirable in the public interest and authorised the City Solicitor to prepare a formal agreement... with the Railway Company".

However, this is not as strange as it may seem to us today.

The debate had become very heated and the Conservators involvement in itself became an issue as the interpretation of the Epping Forest Act varied between the two sides. The Conservators (including E.N.Buxton) saw it as their duty to provide increased access for the enjoyment of the Forest. Buxton argued that, "the Forest was for the masses and not for the exclusive benefit of those who seek seclusion". It was also argued that "the artisan and family" should be brought with the "least expenditure of time, trouble and expense to an area of beautiful scenery and fresh air"; and that, "the poorer classes of London", by lack of appropriate transport services, were denied access to the greater part of the Forest. This was the view supported by such people and bodies as Dr Barnardo, The Suffragan Bishop of East London, 2000 ministers, managers of Sunday Schools, The Band of Hope, and other educational and social agencies.

The arguments against the scheme were that there were already thirteen railway Stations within a mile of the Forest and that no part of the Forest was more than 2 miles from a station. 'The Echo' even asked, "whether the people of the East End had grown so effeminate that a three mile walk filled them with dismay".

It was also pointed out that, "the raison d'etre of a forest as distinct from

a park lay in its wildness, solitude and comparative remoteness". Others saw potential dangers from a possible continuation of the railway line to Harlow. There were 'social' arguments - all the residents of High Beach, except the publicans, strongly opposed the scheme as they saw "a social deterioration similar to the scenes of vice and rowdyism enacted at Chingford"...and, "High Beach is the rendezvous of a better class of visitors".

Edward N Buxton argued against this saying that although much had been made of the evils occurring around the Hotel at Chingford, the reason for extending the line further was so that people were not compelled to congregate at one spot. And that not to allow, "the masses to High Beach was selfish and typical of the comfortable and well-to-do..." resisting when threatened by attempts "to occasionally bring poor folk a little nearer to them"

The environmental arguments, were that the scheme "was a continuation of a policy by the Conservators of turning the Forest into a Park". Professor Meldola in a paper given to the Essex Field Club stated that "the public wants, as interpreted by the Conservators, were made to take the form of clearing of underwood, deep drainage, and road-making... in the name of fictitious philanthropy"

Of the Railway itself, there were arguments about the size of the embankments and viaducts, about intrusion into the landscape and the destruction of admired views. Counter arguments were that the scheme would be landscaped with ornamental trees.

A financial issue was also raised. Obviously the Railway Company was motivated by profit and it was even alleged that the Corporation had bought land at Chingford and the Kings Oak pub at High Beach, where a hotel was planned with 200 rooms if the Bill was passed. The City wrote that the Hotel was purchased in order that the Conservators might have control of the accommodation for the public.

The second reading of the Bill took place on the 12th March 1883. Opening the debate Lord Claud Hamilton, Conservative MP for Liverpool & Deputy Chairman of Great Eastern Railway, claimed that a rejection of the Bill would be an infringement of the intentions of the Epping Forest Act. The public who he saw as, "the poorer classes of London who would be unable to... have any real enjoyment of the greater part of the Forest; it was not solely for the use of a few interested people".

In opposing the Bill, Mr Bryce, Liberal MP for Tower Hamlets, moved a resolution which in essence disapproved of any scheme, that involved using land for the purpose of a railway on any part of the surface of Epping Forest, which by the Epping Forest Act, 1878, was directed to be 'kept at all times unenclosed and unbuilt on as an open space for the enjoyment of the public'

When the House divided the Bill was lost by 82 votes to 230, a majority of 148.

The next day the Daily Chronicle proclaimed "The condemnation of the project was so emphatic that we imagine it will be a long time before any further efforts are made to violate the provisions and spirit of the Act of 1878"

It seems most of the Press from The Times to Punch were to varying degrees against the Bill. Interestingly the familiar arguments still echo down the 120 years, although the terms 'PC' (political correctness) and 'nimbyism' (not-in-my-back-yard) were not yet in vogue and since then the roles of the players have obviously changed around.

If it was said the Epping Forest Committee was divided, I am tempted to wonder (once again) about the attitude and role of John T Bedford in such a controversy.

We might consider the following juxtaposition of dates;- John Bedford was the first Chairman of the Epping Forest Committee from (1878 to 1880)... Sometime after 1878 the 'Cuckoo Oak' was renamed the 'Bedford Oak' in honour of the part he played in saving the Forest; the Railway controversy, revised again in 1880, culminated in 1883 - just after Queen Victoria had declared the Forest open to the public in May 1882. And, as I have quoted before, it was just two months later in the July of 1882 that the Essex Field Club commented upon the Queen's visit by saying, "and it was a matter of surprise and comment... that the men who had done battle for the Forest for years, including even Mr John T Bedford, were utterly ignored and neglected".

Perhaps significantly, it seems at this time John Bedford, under the pseudonym 'Robert the Waiter', also wrote/drew for 'Punch'.

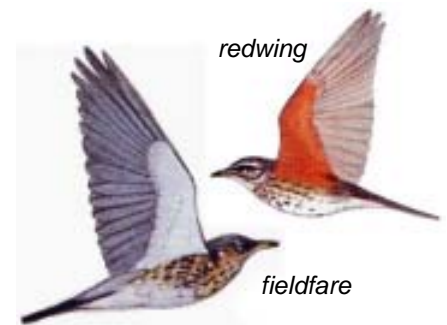
And then finally, before 1885, when Buxton's book was first published, we find the Bedford Oak had been renamed Grimston's Oak!

It was all a long time ago... but some arguments still relevant today and certainly very intriguing?

**Ken Hoy**

## MORE BIRDS

Maybe I haven't noticed in other years but there seems more fieldfares and redwings about this year than before. In early February Peg and I noticed a flock of more than 50 of these winter visitors from the north.



The flock was moving steadily down Chingford Golf Course with the occasional flash of their light coloured underwings when they were disturbed by golfer or walker. They were there on several late afternoon walks!

**Harry Bitten**

## THE FOREST SUPPER 2003

The Forest Supper again proved to be an enjoyable evening despite the fiendish quizzes.

Our sincere thanks go to Hazel and David Shukla for the efficient and friendly booking system and the excellent alphabetical list - we didn't lose a single person! And to Denis Chesney for providing the cutlery again.

Also thanks to Dennis Moss for organising the raffle once again (and without the benefit of supper!) We made a small profit of £75.31 on the night, which would have been a hefty loss without the raffle sales of over £600. And so, a big thank you to all those who donated raffle prizes. I am sure this list is not complete!

Hilda and Vera Anslow, Pat Bishop, Barbara Blossom, Wendy Boardman, Irene Breame, Irene Buchan, Stella and Gerald Butler, Maggie Charles, Ron Clayton, Joan and Harry Edler, Lady John Ellis, Miss Fearn, Carole Francis, Monica Frost, Jim Gimson, Harts House Nursing Home, Jean Hill, Yvonne Hinton, Sheila Hobbs, John Holtom, Joan Humphreys, Erica Jackson, Jackie Johnson, Marilyn Kramer, Alan Levene, John Leyton, Sue and Reg Miller, Jean and Dennis Moss, Lord and Lady Murray, Jan Page, Ann and John Pearsn, Eileen Pugh, Maureen and Peter Read, Hazel and David Shukla, Jean Smith, Joy Smith, Iris Sylvester, Norman Taylor, and Maureen Tribe.

## PEPYS... AGAIN, & GILPIN AND THE FOREST OF WALTHAM



The item about Samuel Pepys in the last newsletter has produced a correction and some comment.

Seymour Moss corrects my mistake when describing Pepys' journey to Ware as being along the route of the A10. As Seymour says, the modern A10 leaves the old route in Tottenham and is now along the 'Cambridge Arterial Road', built in the 1920's, and then along the even later extensions. Pepys, after leaving the City and passing through Shoreditch & Stoke Newington, would have followed the old road from Tottenham on through Edmonton, Waltham Cross, Cheshunt and Hoddesden to Ware.

This reminds me (from school-days) that this was also the high road taken by John Gilpin in William Cowper's comic poem and ballad written some 120 years later than Pepys and published with great and lasting popularity in 1782. There is supposed to be some truth in this tale as it was related to Cowper by Lady Austin.

"John Gilpin's Ride" tells how, on his 20th wedding anniversary, he is to dine with his wife at the "Bell" Edmonton. Disastrously his horse bolts with Gilpin clinging on, past the Angel and on through Edmonton all the way to Ware... hence the familiar lines:

Said John:

*"It is my wedding day,  
And all the world would stare,  
If wife should dine at Edmonton  
And I should dine at Ware."*

I am amazed to find that this poem has gone into over 100 editions since 1782 and has been translated into several languages (including Persian!)

But, back to Pepys. Norman Gunby writes to remind us what a remarkably man Pepys was! (in spite of being trivialised by the BBC a few months ago)

He sat in Parliament for Castle Rising and subsequently, in 1685 when 52, represented the borough of Harwich although he was defeated in a Parliamentary election four years later.

Norman goes on to say, "presuming that he visited Harwich during that time he must have travelled along the Great Essex Road (the Romford Road and the route of the old A12, through Chelmsford and Colchester), unless, of course, he went by sea".

The latter possibility is not so unlikely given the difficult and dangerous road conditions in those days and thus the time it would have taken him. Harwich was of course a major port as it is today.

Norman provides more interesting quotes from Pepys Diaries (not in my edition) that illustrate Pepys' responsibilities when he was Secretary to the Navy and on an inspection in the Forest of Waltham - Epping & Hainault Forests.

He acquired quite a reputation as a conscientious civil servant intolerant of the widespread corruption of the time. The diary entry illustrates his ability to summon Forest officials and his concern that the King is being cheated in the measurement of timber. This is shown in the following quote included in Norman's book, 'A Potted History of Ilford' (Alas now out of print, but available in local libraries).

18th August 1662: "So about 7 o'clock took horse and rode to Bowe, and there stayed at the King's Head and eat a breakfast of eggs till Mr Deane of Woolwich came to me; and he and I rid into Waltham Forest and there we saw many trees of the King's a-hewing and he showed me the whole mystery of off-square, wherein the King is abused in the timber that he buys, that I shall with much pleasure be able to correct. After we had been a good time in the wood, we rode to Ilford; and there while dinner was getting ready, he and I practising measuring of the table and other things till I did understand the measure of timber and board very well.

So to dinner, and by and by, being sent for, comes Mr Cooper, our officer in the forest, and did give me an

account of things there, and how the country is backward to come in with their carts... By and by I got a-horse-back again and rode to Barking, and there saw the place where they ship this timber for Woolwich (dockyards); and so Deane and I home again... Whiled away the evening at my office, trying to repeat my rules of measuring learnt this day; and so to bed - my mind very well pleased with this day's work.

An interesting point here is the King owned the timber only in the Hainault part of the Forest of Waltham. Pepys writes of the King buying timber thus it may have been timber from Epping Forest.

Norman also reminds us that, "At the time of Pepys' visits the forest extended from the River Lea at Bow along the main road past Forest Gate and through Ilford and Chadwell Heath - a distance of over seven miles. It then went northwards to Harlow and Roydon - just over thirteen miles - covering 60,000 acres (nearly 94 sq. miles) approximately ten times the size of Epping Forest today."

However we should remember that this was the 'legal forest' of Waltham. Today a false impression is gained if we think of that area of 'forest' as woodland; 'forest' was just a legal definition! Of the 60,000 acres of legal forest - over which the 'forest law' applied - only 12,000 acres remained as commons and 'waste', that is open land and wooded forest as we think of it today. The rest was 48,000 acres of enclosed farmland and some privately owned woods over which the King had the right to hunt under the 'forest law'. The owners of any private woods were required to appoint an officer - a woodward - to see that the woods were maintained properly under the forest law. And, it was the landowners and farmers of this 48,000 acres who complained so loudly in the first half of the 19th century; crying out for the 'disafforestation' of Epping & Hainault Forests, i.e. the removal of the forest law and enclosure of the remaining 12,000 acres. They alleged that the damage and losses caused them by the deer was greater than what they gained by their rights to 'the waste' as commoners. This may well have been true, but of course there were others with commoner's rights - as Tom Willingale and his neighbours proved.

**Ken Hoy**

## FofEF DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### March 28, Sunday, 10.30am

From Queen Elizabeth to Sylvia Pankhurst. A walk from the Hunting Lodge to Whitehall and Hatch Plains, taking in a visit to a memorial connected with the Pankhurst family. Meet in the car park opposite the Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge, Rangers Road, Chingford (5 mins. walk from Chingford Railway and Bus Station).

**Leaders: Sylvia Ayling and Harry Bitten. GR 397 947**

### 26th April (Monday) FofEF AGM

See Agenda for details. Meeting to be held in the Woodford County High School for Girls, High Road, Woodford Green. It stands on the southern corner where Chingford Lane A1009 meets the Woodford High Road. Access is through entrance halfway between the traffic lights at that junction and the triangle at the top of Salway Hill.

**GR 399 916**

### April 30<sup>th</sup>, Friday, 1.30pm. Along the River Ching.

A walk following the Ching southward, as far as we can get in the time. Meet in the car park at Connaught Water (Chingford Station is about 10 mins. walk away.)

**Leader: Irene Buchan GR 405 951**

### May 14, Friday 10.30am In search of a Fair Maid

A circular walk through Long Hills and Bury Wood. Meet in the Fairmead Road car-park. From the Robin Hood roundabout on the Epping New Road, take the little road north-west to the junction with green tea-hut, where turn left and travel downhill to the Fairmead car-park on the right,

**Leader: Ken Hoy GR 408 967**

### June 19, Saturday 7.30pm Woods, Fields and Ponds

A midsummer evening walk in Chingford woods. Meet in Hornbeam Lane, which is the first turning on the right along Bury Road from Chingford (10 minute walk from Chingford bus and rail station).

**Leader: Peter Read GR 393 957**

### June 26 Saturday, 12noon - 5pm.

Visit the FofEF stall at Chingford Village Festival.

### July 17, Saturday 10.30am King Harold's Park

A walk along green lanes, which are

detached parts of Epping Forest, with wide, open views. Lunch available at the nearby King Harold's Head PH. Meet at Bumbles Green, which is on the B194 between Waltham Abbey and Broadley Common. Car parking is on a turning just off the roundabout.

**Leader: Bill Dexter, GR 408 049**

### Advance Notice:

**Centenary Walk Sept 19th.**

**Forest Supper November 25th  
Thursday (not Friday)**

## OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### EF Conservation Volunteers

Meet at The Warren at 9:30 and aim to leave by 9:45. Wear sturdy working clothes and boots and carry waterproofs. Bring food and drink if you are staying all day. Finish about 3.30 Sundays, weekdays a little earlier. We provide tools, gloves and safety equipment. Help with cleaning tools and putting them away is always appreciated.

Contact: Peter Lyons 020 8529 3060  
Sunday 7 March - Rushey Plain  
Parking: Rushey Plain

**GR: 414 985**

Tuesday 16 March - Fairmead  
Parking: Fairmead Road

**GR: 408 967**

Sunday 21 March - Barn Hoppit  
Parking: Opposite the Hunting lodge, Rangers Road.

**GR: 397 947**

Sunday 28 March - Jacks Hill / Hatgate Plain. Parking: Jacks Hill

**GR: 435 996**

Tuesday 6 April - Hangboy Slade  
Parking: Golding's Hill

**GR: 428 986**

Sunday 11 April (Easter) - Sunshine Plain/Wake Plain. Parking: Wake Valley

**GR: 423 988**

Sunday 18 April - Paul's Nursery  
Parking: Information Centre

**GR: 413 982**

Sunday 25 April - Long Running/ Conservation Path. Parking: Lodge Road Car Park.

**GR: 432 998**

Sunday 2 May - Gilbert's Slade  
Parking: High View Road

**GR: 396 898**

Tuesday 11 May - "Balsam Bash"  
Contact Peter Lyons for details.

Sunday 16 May - Strawberry Hill  
Parking: between the Warren and Robin Hood P.H.

**GR: 411 965**

Sunday 23 May - Lords Bushes  
Parking: Probably Knighton Lane (to be confirmed)

**GR: 407 936**

### Epping Forest Local Group

Thursday March 25 2004

WILDLIFE PATROL

Find out about the work of the Wildlife Police Officers, from PC Rob Harris

Meet: Methodist Church Hall, Loughton at 8:00 PM. AGM at 7:45pm.

All meetings are open to non-members as well as members. Donations appreciated (suggested £2.00). Outdoor meetings last about 2 hours unless otherwise stated. Shared transport available. Ring for assistance.

### Friends of Suntrap

Sunday 14th March 3.pm AGM

To be held at Suntrap with refreshments after the meeting. Children's activities and a quiz for adults will be arranged.

Saturday 12th June evening BBQ with a theme.

Saturday 2nd Oct Suntrap Open Day.

### EF Information Centre

Please note that all events are free unless otherwise stated

Hills and Plains, Sunday 14 March 10.30am - 12.30pm

A guided walk led by Verderer Richard Morris. Meet at Fairmead Car Park, Fairmead Rd, Loughton. (GR 408 967).

Spring Clean! Sunday 14 March 10.30am - 12.30pm

Help the Forest Keepers to clean up Wanstead Flats. All equipment will be provided. Meet in Alexandra Lake Car Park, Aldersbrook Road (GR 41/5 86/5). Family activity.

Posies for Mothering Sunday. Saturday 20 March, 130pm - 3.30pm.

At the Temple in Wanstead Park, Make a posy using fresh flowers. No need to book, just drop in.

Cost £2.00 per posy. Creative Collage. Thursday 8 April

1.00pm - 4.00pm at Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, Chingford Make a collage picture showing Queen Elizabeth I riding her horse up the stairs of the Hunting Lodge. No need to book, just drop in. Activity takes up to one hour.

Birds, Bees and Blossoms. Sunday 11 April, 10.30am - 12.30pm

A guided walk led by Tricia Moxey. Meet by the pond on the Green, Theydon Bois. (GR 454 989)

Follow a Family Easter Trail. Sunday 11 & Monday 12 April. Join in any time between 11.00am and 3.00pm A self guided trail round High Beach

in search of Easter clues, starting at the Information Centre. £1.50 per child - come and solve the clues and win a prize!

Gilberts Stade in Spring. Saturday 24 April 12.30am - 2.30pm  
A guided walk led by Forest Keeper Ian Kolade. Meet in the car park at Snaresbrook Road, E1 1 (GR 396 8~)

Bluebells in the Park. Tuesday 27 April 12.30pm - 2.30pm  
A guided walk led by Forest Keeper Brian Gillam and Lucy Crispin in Wanstead Park to see the bluebells at their best! Meet at the end of Warren Road, Wanstead. (GR 875).

Wildlife Rescue. Saturday 1 May 11.00am - 2.00pm  
Epping Forest Information Centre. Drop in between 11.00am and 2.00pm and meet some of the rescued animals cared for by the Enfield Wildlife Rescue Animal Service.

Bluebells and Buggies/ Thursday 6 May, 1.00pm - 2.30pm  
A guided stroll around the bluebells in Wanstead Park. Suitable for the under 5's, babes in buggies and their carers. Meet at the end of Warren Road, Wanstead. (GR 414 876)

A Tudor Festival of Flowers. Friday 7, Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 May 10.00am - 5.00pm at Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, Chingford  
The Hunting Lodge will be bursting with flowers.

Wanstead Flats, Then and Now. Saturday 8 May, 1.00pm - 2.00pm  
A guided walk led by Forest Keeper Alison O'Connor.  
Meet in Centre Road Car Park, Centre Road. (GR 405 863)

Pole Hill to Yates Meadow, Sunday 9 May, 10.30am - 12.30pm  
A guided walk led by Forest Keeper Philip Murfin and Sophie Lillington to find the site of Lawrence of Arabia's hut on Pole Hill. Meet at Bury Road car park, Chingford, E4. (GR 395 949)

'Business as Usual' Tuesday 11 May 7.45pm - 9.15pm at Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, Chingford  
An illustrated talk by Malcolm Dick The Story of the City Guilds in Tudor London. Price £3.00. Booking essential.

A stroll and picnic on Leyton Flats/ Canada Plain Saturday 15 May, 10.00am - 2.00pm  
A guided walk led by Forest Keeper Ian Kolade. Meet in the summer car park opposite the Hitchcock Pub, Whipps Cross Road, Eli. (GR 395 885) Please bring a packed lunch.

Looking at Trees. Thursday 20 May 1.30pm - 3.30pm  
A guided walk with Tncia Moxey and Pat Osborne to look at some of the Forest's special trees. Meet in the car park opposite Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, Ranger's Rd. Chingford, E4. (GR 397 947)

Tudor Topknots! Thursday 3 June 1.00pm to 4.00pm at Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, Chingford  
Make an elegant girl's headress or a rakish boys hat.

In Buxton's Garden. Sunday 13 June 10.30am - 12.30pm.  
A guided walk led by Verderer Peter Adams to see this special part of the Forest. Meet in the Car Park off Knighton Lane, Buckhurst Hill. (GR 409 935)

Wanstead Wildlife Weekend. Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 June.  
Centred around the Temple in Wanstead Park, there will be a variety of fun and educational events for all the family, as well as a chance to meet Corporation of London staff and local volunteer groups who help look after the Forest's wildlife.

Midsummer Flowers. Thursday 24 June, 1.30pm - 3.30pm  
A guided walk led by Tricia Moxey to see what is in flower at this time of the year. Meet in Fairmead car park, Fairmead Rd., Loughton. (GR 408 967)

Pond Dipping! Saturday 3 July

*Please note that children should be accompanied by an adult on all events.*

*For further information:  
phone 020 8508 0028*

---

## ITEMS FOR SALE

We now have a stock of lots of new sale items, which will be on sale at the AGM. They are also available from Seymour Moss on 020 8529 0620.

Mugs	£4	Fleeces	from £15
Pens	50p - £1	Sweat Shirts	from £15
Greetings Cards (pack of 5 (L) or 8 (S))	£2.50	Caps	£5
Tree Poster	£1	Tea Towels	£3
Torch Key Rings	£2	Epping Forest Maps	£1.50
Fridge Magnets	£2	Books:	
Metal Lapel Badges	£2	Getting to Know Epping Forest	£6.95
Spy Scopes (Monocular)	£3.50	Short Walks in Epping Forest	£2.40

## REMEMBER

Members wishing to receive the Newsletter by e-mail should contact Seymour Moss at [seymour@moss40.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:seymour@moss40.freeserve.co.uk).

Please send your request by e-mail to ensure we get your address correct

## F of EF E-MAIL AND WEB ADDRESSES

Ken Hoy: [kenhoy@care4free.net](mailto:kenhoy@care4free.net)

Membership Secretary (Seymour Moss):  
[seymour@moss40.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:seymour@moss40.freeserve.co.uk)

FofEF web-site: [www.friendsofepppingforest.org.uk](http://www.friendsofepppingforest.org.uk)  
or <http://members.aol.com/friendsef/foef.htm>

# 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 26th April 2004

at the WOODFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL, Woodford Green at 7.30pm

\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE\*\*\*

### Agenda for A.G.M

1. Minutes of the last AGM held on 28th April, 2003
2. Matters Arising
3. Chairman's Report 2003/2004
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of the Vice Chairman and Hon. Membership Sec.
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 a talk by Georgina Green, author of Epping Forest Through the Ages.

### Officers at present are:

**Chairman:** Ken Hoy due for re-election in 2006

**Vice-Chairman:** Sue McKinley due for re-election this year

**Hon. General Sec:** Mrs. Peggy Bitten due for re-election in 2005

**Hon. Treasurer:** Tony Sheppard due for re-election in 2005

**Hon. Membership Sec:** Seymour Moss due for re-election this year

**Existing Committee members willing to stand are:** Judy Adams, Harry Bitten, Irene Buchan, Alan Curran, Bill Dexter, Robin Gaine, Jim Gimson, Robert Levene, Sue McKinley, Derek Meakin, and Peter Read.

Committee members are re-elected each year and those listed above have agreed to stand together with Gareth Browne who was recently co-opted. If you wish to submit nominations for the post of Vice Chairman, Hon. Membership Sec. or Committee members, please complete the form below and send it to: Mrs. P. Bitten, 9 Frederica Road, Chingford E4 7AL by 5th April 2004.

## THE FRIENDS OF EPPING FOREST - NOMINATION FORM

I nominate for the office of Vice Chairman, Hon. Membership Sec., or Committee member  
(Please delete as appropriate):

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Tel: .....

Signature of Candidate .....

Signature of Proposer ..... Tel: .....

Name In Capitals .....

Signature of Seconder ..... 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 2003 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF EPPING FOREST HELD AT THE SIR JAMES HAWKEY HALL ON MONDAY 28 APRIL 2003 AT 7.30PM

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

APOLOGIES: Mrs J Adams (Committee), Mr & Mrs Besent, B Dexter (Committee) N Gunby, J Huber, K Pritchard, D Stothard, H Wenzel,

1. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on Monday 29 April 2002 were approved and signed.
2. MATTERS ARISING: There were none.
3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: 2002-2003 – Copy of the Chairman's report to be enclosed with the Summer 2003 Newsletter.

*Adoption of the Report was proposed by S Moss and seconded by J Miller.*

4. TREASURER'S REPORT:

T Sheppard explained the Receipts and Payments Account from 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003 and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 March 2003, copies of both were distributed.

He informed the meeting that Ken Hoy's book on Epping Forest has sold well and will make a good profit and that Ken is donating all profits to the Friends. Many thanks were extended to Ken for his hard work and generosity. Thanks were also extended to Robert Levene for retrieval of gift aid tax monies amounting, so far, to £1958.

5. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:

K Hoy was re-elected. *Proposed by Lord Murray and Seconded by Norman Gunby and unanimously accepted.*

6. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

These were introduced to the meeting and unanimously elected, including co-opted Mrs J Adams and A Curran. *Proposed by Alan Everitt and Seconded by Hilary Kunzru.*

7. ELECTION OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER:

Mr Peter Gotham was thanked for his work and unanimously re-elected for the current year. *Proposed by Mary Porter and Seconded by Ron Wortley.*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Volunteers were requested to help on stalls on 13/14 May, 21 June, 7, 13 & 21 September. Many thanks to those who volunteered. Your help was greatly appreciated.

After closure of the meeting and a break for coffee, the speaker was, Lady Suzanne Walker, Chairman of the CPRESsex (now Campaign for the Protection of Rural Essex). Suzanne is heavily involved in the Stop Stansted Expansion campaign and spoke of the threat to rural Essex and Forest posed by the published 'consultation' plans to develop Stansted into an airport bigger than the present Heathrow.

She pointed out the way the failure of the airlines industry to be charged tax on fuel and VAT on spares and maintenance distorts the economics of the industry and enables airlines to charge much lower fares than the true costs. In addition, no consideration is given to the disbenefits imposed by the industry on the environment.

---

## CURRENT FRIENDS OF EPPING FOREST COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Judy Adams	Loughton	020 8418 0730	Ken Hoy (Chairman)	Pleshey	012 4523 1839
Peggy Bitten (Sec.)	Chingford	020 8529 8594	Robert Levene	Snaresbrook	020 8989 0884
Harry Bitten	Chingford	020 8529 8594	Sue McKinley (Dep.-Chair)	Upshire	019 9271 2014
Irene Buchan	Chingford	020 8529 6423	Derek Meakin	Chigwell	020 8500 1571
Alan Curran	Buckhurst Hill	020 8504 8720	Seymour Moss (Memb. Sec.)	Chingford	020 8529 0620
Bill Dexter	Chingford	020 8529 1427	Peter Read	Chingford	020 8524 1659
Robin Gaine	Chingford	020 8529 8890	Tony Sheppard (Treas.)	Woodford Grn	020 8504 8288
Jim Gimson	S. Woodford	020 8989 3282			