

# The Friends of Epping Forest *Newsletter*



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

Summer 2008

*Dear Friend,*



*Cuckoo Brook (photo: Ken Hoy, April 2004)*

## CYCLE FORUM

The discussion about cycling gave rise to much the same range of views that were expressed at the recent **Cycle Forum** meeting called by the Conservators and presided over by Sally Hopper at the Warren. The difference is that at the Warren there was a large group of cyclists who put their points-of-view across fairly emphatically!

Among these was a plea to create more trails (as they describe them) and there was even a suggestion that some of the trails should be surfaced so that they would be more usable in winter without doing undue damage and where riders wouldn't get covered in mud. Some were very resentful of the enmity towards cyclists manifested by the practice of putting logs or branches across the trails. Others even suggested that in some cases wire had been stretched across the

At our recent AGM in May, there was some discussion following the Chairman's Annual Report, which is reproduced elsewhere with this Newsletter. Ken pointed-out that your Committee was anxious to seek some indication from the meeting that in continuing to oppose conversion of much of the Forest to wood pasture and the associated major fencing installation, they have been carrying out the members wishes. This matter has featured in previous Newsletters when members were urged to inform us if they had any objections to the policy we have pursued. Ken emphasised to the AGM that an acceptance by the meeting of the Annual Report could be regarded as an indication of approval of the Committee's past action in continuing

to oppose wood pasture restoration and fencing. The Report was accepted nem con (without any votes in opposition).

After refreshments **Roger Tomlinson of the RSPB** gave an interesting and informative illustrated talk with an emphasis on the **Great Garden Bird-watch** scheme. The filmed sequences were absolutely stunning and Roger's sharp and witty commentary was very well received. Having observed that the RSPB was present a wood pigeon tried to get into the act by entering the hall and flying frantically up and down. Alas it miscalculated the capacity of glass to resist flying birds and was removed outside to an unknown fate.



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*Views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Friends of Epping Forest Committee.*



*Cycle damage to the Forest at Loughton Camp - Photo. Ron Andrews*

## HONEYBEES UNDER PRESSURE

There has been a fair amount of publicity recently about the problems confronting bees and bee-keepers emanating from bee diseases that are currently affecting colonies. These range from various types of foul brood to the little varroa mite which infects the colony's brood and which is becoming resistant to chemical treatment and the sinister CCD Colony Collapse Disorder, the causes of which are shrouded in mystery.

The publicity has largely centred around the alarming possible effects of the decline in the pollination of agricultural crops following a collapse in the bee population and the perceived need for DEFRA to be rather more generous in funding for research and support for the beekeeping industry.

However, it is not only agriculture that is affected. Twenty years ago the Forest had numerous wild honeybee colonies and they were part of the Forest ecology pollinating crab apples and other flora. Doubtless many of these sprang from swarms thrown off from amateur beekeepers colonies on the Forest outskirts. I suspect that colonies moved about in the woodland in the way that these wax and wane naturally. But I observed one massive colony over many years until it succumbed, probably to varroa, a few years ago. The huge beech tree in which the bees lived is still there. Look for it along the Green Ride around by Ambresbury Banks, standing on a bank to the west as the Ride rises following a dip. Perhaps one day they will return. If they don't bear in mind that someone (Einstein?) said that the extermination of bees would lead four years later to the extermination of the human race. There's worse to worry about than the credit crunch!

**STOP PRESS:** *Tricia Moxey tells me that she knows of two colonies in the Forest, so things might not be as bad as I thought.*

*Harry Bitten*

routes in attempts to inflict serious injury. There is no doubt that some exasperated walkers take the former action but whether there is any evidence of the latter is another matter. A representative of the British Naturalists Association produced and circulated a number of photographs showing examples of the damage done by bikes especially to the Forest floor and put forward the view that the natural history of the Forest had suffered as a consequence of increased use by bikers. A horse-rider complained that horses are restricted from entering some parts of the Forest in winter whereas no such restrictions apply to cyclists even though they do as much (in his view more) damage.

It was also pointed-out that bikers' trails weave about all over the place in order to prolong the ride since a competent cyclist could probably get through the entire Forest in an hour or two! In the Great Monk Wood area there was hardly a footpath ten years ago, walkers just made their own way through the woods. But now one is led all over the place by newly created trails!

It has to be said that the resentment often felt by Forest walkers when a rider or riders come flying up from behind and whiz past without any warning is not just anti-bike prejudice, there are far too many cases of this happening even when little toddlers are around. But what's to be done?

In many other places and in the wider countryside, cycling is only permitted on designated trails or on public bridleways. But the Epping

Forest Act 1878 does not say anything about cycling (bikes had scarcely been invented) so bikers are allowed to go anywhere in the Forest except those areas of special protection such as ancient monuments like Loughton Camp and Ambresbury Banks and easily damaged physical features like Staples Brook. Even these limited strictures are not always respected.

It took the Conservators ten years to obtain Parliamentary sanction to regulate horse-riding in the Forest. They would perhaps be fairly reluctant to embark on seeking similar approval in respect of cycling. Any attempt to do so would probably provoke furious reactions from Sustrans and all the other bodies who are seeking to promote and encourage cycling. More about cycling elsewhere in this Newsletter.

*Ed.*

## EAST OF ENGLAND PLAN

The final version of this baleful document has now been issued, but not yet (June 4th) in printed form. Apparently there are few changes since the last document which was open to public consultation, only that the huge figures allocated for housing (over 500,000) in the region are to be regarded as minimal. Lakeside, Thurrock, is to be regarded as a town centre, whatever that means. But I fear the worst.

*Harry Bitten*

## THE NATURAL ASPECT

"What do ants eat, Grandad?" Where do you start to answer that one? He was bored with his computer game – at the age of seven! ... and it was a lovely sunny day as he sat on the garden path. Grandad replied, "mostly sweet things".

That started it all!

There are so many distractions for kids these days, but when 'curiosity' takes over (and it is still there) it is the time to strike – I produced a hand-lens.

When I was his age it was the early thirties and little boys collected cigarette cards. Remember those? They had a great educational value.

I remember thinking... birds fly away, 'animals' (mammals) run away or are nocturnal, but insects, or mini-creatures are different, they are everywhere in front of your eyes and if you are careful you can watch them. That's where I started!

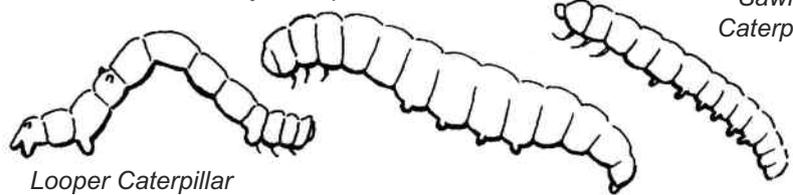
However eventually curiosity is only satisfied with information and that means books or now the internet. But for a modern seven year old "that's boring, boring". At that age then, perhaps it is up to parents and grandparents to encourage them to look at the real thing.

Although a garden may be available, we should realise just how valuable a resource is our Epping Forest.

Walking in the Forest this spring we found it difficult to avoid the dangling caterpillars and the question, "what are they doing Grandad?"

Well, what are they doing? The obvious answer that applies to most of the very small ones is... although they have been eating the new leaves and have fallen from high branches, they have been saved and can climb back up again by their silken safety line to carry on eating and growing. However some of the bigger ones do not want to climb up again. Most of these larger ones are fully-grown, they have eaten enough, and are of species that need to reach the ground in order to pupate in the leaf-mould (turn into a chrysalis). The following spring they emerge as the adult insects of the next generation. "What kind of insect will they be?" They are almost all the larvae of 3 or 4 species of small moth.

Moth and Butterfly Caterpillars



Looper Caterpillar

But one kind of caterpillar stays up in the foliage. The Oak Tortrix Moth, that used to be called the 'Leaf-roller Moth' because its caterpillar rolls a leaf into a tube and secured with silk then has a safe place in which to pupate.

If we look at these little caterpillars, that are so important as a source of food for many different birds – especially the Tit families – we will find they have six small jointed legs in the front and at the very rear end two pairs of claspers. They can rear-up on these and wave the front end around trying to find something else to cling on to. These are the 'Looper' caterpillars. They bring the two pairs of rear claspers up to the front legs by looping the middle part of the body before moving the front part forward again. In America they are called 'inch-worms' because they move about an inch at a time with each loop. (Danny Kaye wrote a song about them).

However, most other caterpillars are going to become larger moths or butterflies and unlike the looper caterpillars, they have only one pair of claspers at the rear end but four more pairs in the middle – and they still have the three pairs of joined legs right at the front.

Many children get to know that spiders have eight legs and insects only have six.

All beetles are insects (ladybirds are beetles) and they all have six legs. Their larvae also have six legs and it is

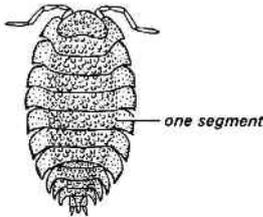
the larvae of the ladybird as well as the adult beetle that does such great work for gardeners by eating the sap-sucking greenfly and blackfly (aphids). The larval stage of several other insects, such as the lacewings and hover-flies also consume quantities of aphids. Ants don't! They play the role of shepherds or rather cowherds moving the aphids to fresh 'pastures' and 'milking' them of the sugary waste liquid, 'honey-dew', that they excrete. Wise motorists do not park their cars under lime or sycamore trees'. These trees are much favoured by aphids. Generations of the wingless forms of aphids are rapidly produced pathogenically (without a sexual process – no wonder it's rapid!) and only occasionally a winged generation. These are then able to fly off and start fresh colonies elsewhere.

There are many species of ant. The black Garden Ant is the one we most commonly see and is the one that enters houses and waste bins seeking some sugary food. These are the foraging worker ants. In late summer on hot thundery days all the colonies swarm. The large winged queens and winged males leave the nests and rise up into the air in great numbers to mate. At this time many birds, most noticeably Starlings, flutter about catching them in mid-air. The male ants will die and the queens manage to remove their wings and find nest sites to start new colonies. Incidentally it is mostly the chestnut brown Red Ant that can

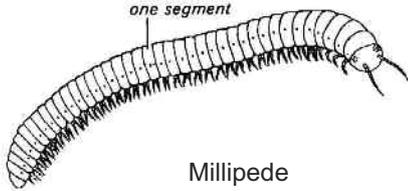


The garden black ant - winged queens and males with wingless workers  
Photo. - Ken Hoy

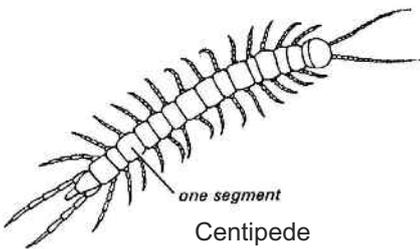
Wood Louse



one segment



Millipede



Centipede



Illustrations Derek Whitely OUP  
Photos. Ken Hoy

deliver a painful sting, although the large Wood Ant can also be a painful defender of the great pile of debris that is the colony's nest, if it is disturbed.

Children can often become absorbed in turning over logs and large stones. There they can find creatures besides the six legged insects – usually beetles. There are frequently wood lice. There are several species one of which, the Pill Wood Louse, can close itself up into a tight perfectly round ball when alarmed. Wood lice are also one of the few small creatures that look after their young and carry

them around in an egg-pouch. All species have more legs than beetles, at least some 8 pairs.

Faster moving are the Centipedes. They are carnivorous and have developed their front legs into poison delivering fangs. They, like the Wood Louse, must hide in damp places during daylight hours emerging at night to hunt any small creature. There are several species and the number of pairs of legs varies from 17 to 177 pairs. Several kinds can bite. One large long legged species in particular has a very painful bite.

The slower moving Millipedes are devourers of living or rotting vegetable matter, so they are both 'good news' and 'bad news' for gardeners. 'Good' because they recycle decaying matter, but 'bad' because they can eat young plants and living roots.

To distinguish a millipede from a centipede is easy if you look closely. Millipedes mostly have 2 pairs of legs to each segment of their body, while centipedes usually have only one pair to each segment. Being predators centipedes are generally speaking 'good guys'.

Kids are often more interested than we are – except when we're digging the garden?

Ken Hoy

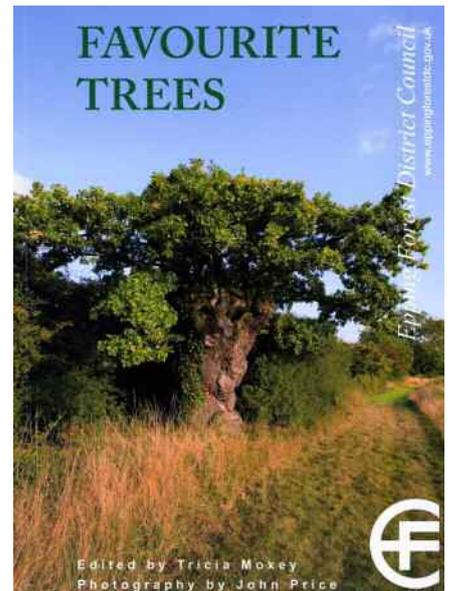
## ACCESS FOR WHAT PURPOSE

After our last Committee meeting someone said to me, "the expression 'forest user' really irritates me." Yes, it is rather an ugly expression and perhaps an ugly thought when applied to the Forest – that we make use of it. It suggests lack of appreciation, exploitation. Well, maybe it is worth thinking about! Is there a subtle difference among Forest visitors... users? Are we sometimes using the Forest for another separate purpose as distinct from visiting to enjoy, appreciate and value the Forest for itself as a forest... thankful that we have it. There is an increasing use of jargon, 'multi-purpose-use' Catch phrases like, 'Access for all to use'. Unfortunately we must constantly qualify that - to use for what purpose?

A purpose appropriate in a forest! Epping Forest is not a park! There is a subtle difference – and I think definitely worth thinking about?

Ken Hoy

## FAVOURITE TREES



Several of Epping Forest's cherished trees feature in a new publication about Favourite Trees. This beautifully illustrated book provides details about the special trees which were voted winners of a competition held last year to nominate the 50 favourite trees within the Epping Forest District. Sponsored by the Epping Forest District Council and GreenArc funds, the book was compiled to tell the stories associated with the winning trees, but also to highlight the value of the many trees within the local area.

The book was edited by Tricia Moxey and the stunning photographs were taken by John Price. Copies are available from the District Council's offices in Epping or from the Epping Forest District Museum in Waltham Abbey.

There is no charge for this book, but if you have enjoyed it, donations (of £5) for the EFDC Chairman's Charity 2007/08, The League of Friends for St Margaret's Hospital are most welcome. Please send cheques made payable to "The Chairman's Charity" to Countrycare, Directorate of Planning and Economic Development, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping, CM16 4BZ.

Tricia Moxey



## BRIMBLE – AN UNSUNG HERO?



“When the Romans came to Britain, they found that much of the country was covered with primeval forest. An ancient map shows East Anglia spread with virgin woods from the Thames to the Wash, from the valley of the Lea to the Essex coast. In fact, so thick was the forest, that it was said that a squirrel freed in the Thames valley could reach the Wash by travelling from tree to tree, without coming to the ground. All this huge forest has gone. The trees have been hewn down, the

had some significant part in proclaiming the Forest ‘open and dedicated to the delectation of the public for ever’. Lesser mortals had of course worked strenuously to see this happen.

But it seems that the majority of Londoners failed to appreciate the beauties of Epping Forest, assuming that beauty and relaxation were only to be found at greater distances from the Capital.

Brimble attempted to correct this illusion by publishing his book, which no doubt encouraged the faint-hearted to explore more vigorously the Forest that was already their own.

Less well-known, however, are a set of picture postcards that were published by Brimble from his shop in Station Road, Chingford. These, according to his daughter Wendy, were probably published a little after his book in early 1950’s. One in my possession was posted in 1964, a year before the book’s 3rd edition appeared.

Such postcards were immensely popular in the Victorian period, particularly 1900-1910 and saw something of a

continuous white surround, and one also sepia with a white band at the bottom with the picture legend. There are a few in black-and-white. They are nearly all numbered – from 1 to at least 130. Although I don’t have a complete set of the cards, they are mostly Forest scenes or associated buildings, such as the Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge (which occurs on at least four different cards; each view being slightly different). Each card in the second series advertises Brimble’s book on the reverse, although the photographs used in the cards and book are nearly all different. I have only traced one where the view is identical, Waltham Abbey, in book and card. My favourite card is the one showing Brimble’s own shop in Station Road (illustrated).

*Richard Brown*

## INSTINCTIVE PERSISTENCE

Late the other night the security light on my house kept lighting up my lawn every four or five minutes... ah I thought, perhaps its a rabbit, a fox, the farm cat from up the road, or even a badger or a Muntjac deer. No? Cars had not passed along the road. There was no wind to move foliage. A silent vigil beside the window of a darkened room was needed. But this produced no explanation.

Finally *intelligent* human persistence provided the answer. From behind the light came a very small spider that was trying to build a web across the front of the sensor. It didn’t like it when the light came on and retreated back into the darkness behind the light. However, its *instinctive* persistence to build itself a web had kept me from going the bed. Then, I thought about it. No doubt instinctive persistence in the face of recurring adversity has sometimes led to successful evolutionary survival... So what! In this case the spider was removed... I needed the sleep!

*Ken Hoy*

## FOREST GIANT FALLS

We’re told that the Italian Poplar in the Forest near Woodford New Road opposite St. Aubyn’s School, was blown down in the gales earlier this year. It was a massive tree that stood tall over its companions but had been damaged over the years by fires.



*Station Rd. Chingford, c1946-7 A postcard photograph by Brimble - his book shop is the second from right.*

roots grubbed up, the soil cultivated. Only fragments remain-one of them the few thousand acres of Epping Forest. “

Thus begins Brimble’s “London’s Epping Forest” first published by Country Life in 1950 and about the only reference to him in Ramsey & Fowkes epic tome “Epping Forest, Then and Now” (1986).

James Arthur Brimble is perhaps one of the unsung heroes of the Forest. Queen Victoria, it must be said,

revival in the 1960’s and 70’s. The time was therefore ripe for Brimble’s cards as a medium for advertising the Forest and its benefits. And due to their potential to be sent anywhere in the country or even abroad, they might well have had even more impact in promoting the Forest than his book.

On a technical level, there seem to have been some 150 different cards published. There are at least two series: one coloured sepia with a

## NOTES FROM HERE & THERE

### Nightingales



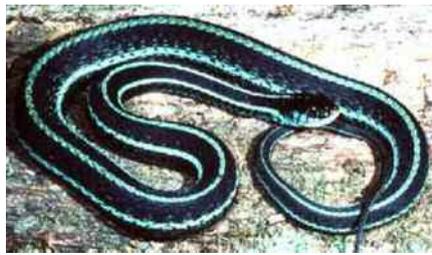
Sixty five years ago Nightingales were relatively common in the Forest. Less than 10 years ago they appeared to be extinct as a Forest breeding bird. Recently there have been hopeful signs of a recovery. There has again been at least one singing male in the Forest, two singing males near the River Roding at Chigwell and two more near the river at Buckhurst Hill. While in the well bird-watched Lee Valley Park, 16 singing males have been reported. A national survey has reported a total of over 4,400 singing males - the figure for Essex was just over 400. In the twenty years before 2000 there was an increase nationally of 8% and more than half of this increase appears to be in Essex. Good news, but they seem to be a little slower in reaching the Forest.

### Domestic Cats

Some recent surveys show three interesting statistics. Firstly that domestic cats are the largest cause of wild life death in gardens. And, strangely, out of some 900 pets in another survey, those whom the owners had equipped with bells on their collars were **more** successful in the number of kills made per year than those without bells. Does that mean bells don't work? (*No, the only explanation I can think of, is that they were all very good hunters anyway, that is why their owners provided them with bells*).

Secondly it appears that when cats go hunting from their home base (a small garden) they rarely penetrate more than 10 metres, on average, into the adjoining environment – should we apply this to cats living on the edge of Epping Forest?

### An Alien



Florida Garter Snake

A strange blue coloured snake, was found in early March in Hangboy Slade by the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers. The conditions were very cold and it was in a very weak state. It later died. Eventually it was identified as a Florida Garter Snake. Garter Snakes are common in North America. There are several species and also many races in different parts of that continent. They are frequently sold as pets. This individual may have been released and starved, or coming from Florida, could not survive in our cold spring weather. It is of course illegal to release such creatures into the Forest. The RSPCA are the proper people to contact for advice about unwanted pets.

### Suntrap Field Centre



1969 Summer camp

Now called the Forest Education Centre, recently celebrated its 40th year of receiving classes from the London Borough of Waltham Forest. In its heyday, in the 1970's & 80's, the Centre received five classes daily, as well as infant classes and camping classes in the summer when over twelve teaching staff were employed. Today, although the Government encourages and attaches great importance to teaching out-of-doors, the Centre is no longer centrally funded and financial cuts have restricted the numbers of schools making use of the facilities. Subsequently the number of teaching staff has been reduced to four. The Centre staff are endeavouring to increase the use of the Centre and are beginning to have some success. Requests for bookings from schools other than those from Waltham Forest will be welcomed.

Maybe as children from a Waltham Forest Schools some of you enjoyed days there in the distant past?

### Otters

This is an animal that had become very scarce and now appears to be making a recovery. After Otters were released in the upper part of the River Lea, and subsequently successfully bred, there were reports of individuals being seen in the Lee Valley Park and in the lower reaches of the Lea. Otters are known to cross over-land from one river system to another, and there have also been reports from the Roding Valley. All 'firm' sightings of Otters in the two valleys should be reported.

### Mink

The north American Mink, an alien that has spread disastrously in England killing our native Water Voles ('Ratty' of *Wind in the Willows*), has been reported breeding in the past near the River Roding at Abridge and also occurring in parts of the upper catchment area of the river. But in early May, Mike Smith a member of the 'Friends', reported seeing a Mink chasing a Mallard Duck with ducklings on the banks of the Roding near the Ornamental Water in Wanstead Park. Anyone seeing a Mink should report the sighting... a Mink is all black, slightly larger than a ferret, but smaller than an Otter.

### Sightings of Birds of Prey



Red Kite

Records of birds seen in an area often reflects the numbers of observers in a particular place rather than the frequency of birds. However the Lee Valley Park has recently produced some interesting occurrences. Although the Hobby, once very rare, has bred in the Valley for some years, exceptional numbers were seen during April & May.

This Kestrel-sized bird is a summer visitor and many of the large numbers that were seen were undoubtedly migrating. The Red Kite is another raptor that is likely to be increasing its distribution into our area - so watch out! It is a very large long-tailed hawk that is easily identified by the 'V' shaped end of its tail. Finally a rare vagrant has been seen several times recently in the Valley, a Red-footed Falcon. This bird is, like the Hobby which it resembles in size, a summer migrant to Europe. Its range is normally Eastern Europe, Russia and Asia. So it seems to be a little bit 'off-track'.

**P.S.** Its really amazing. I could not believe my eyes. Now, in mid-June, several weeks after I wrote Notes from Here & There - I was in my garden (on my birthday!) and there, circling just above me, was a great bird of prey with a V shaped end to its long tail... a Red Kite. It moved away to the west, found a thermal - rising warm air current - and then constantly rising drifted back and away to the east; mobbed by two crows. A great birthday present sight. The first I have seen in Essex. So, look up at the sky occasionally!

## Cycling in the Forest

Following the lively discussion at our AGM about cycling within the Forest it is interesting to read the words of the Chairman, Peter Lyons, of the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers, speaking to their recent AGM.

After quoting Jim Crumley's recent book, *Brother Nature*, where when commenting on National Parks says, their "*Management ideals should centre exclusively on the well being of the landscape and wildlife, not on the play-park 'needs' of the people that destroy these things*". Peter Lyons then says, "...much of Epping Forest has become badly degraded over recent decades. What were narrow grassy paths twenty years ago have become wide muddy tracks, impassable in winter, due to the activities of mountain bikers and increased numbers of walkers; much of the wildlife has suffered due to the disturbance from people and their dogs..." He goes on, "...Epping Forest is not a 'playpark', but an internationally important wildlife area. It is all very well attracting increased numbers of people and catering for their needs, but at the same time we must not lose the unique character and importance of the area in doing so."

He also mentions the need to reach

a conclusion to "*the long-drawn out*" negotiations to obtain closure of some of the minor Forest roads and speed limits through the Forest, and, the need "*to find some way of ameliorating the destructive effects of mountain biking.*"

Judging from discussion at our AGM, I think that probably the bulk of our members would agree with much of those sentiments. I believe the recent trend in the Conservator's Public Relations material to declare that the Forests is open to all users to come and make use of it - the '*playpark*' attitude... is an emphasis that needs reversing. When trying to balance the interests of the many users of the Forest we should always qualify our attitude to **the extent** of a particular use by the qualification, **is it appropriate for a forest?** Epping Forest is a Forest - not a park.

Ken Hoy

## STOP STANSTED EXPANSION

The Friends supports the SSE campaign because of the general environmental upheaval it would cause and because of the increase in traffic through the Forest that it would bring about. Mr. Eyre, the Inspector at the original public enquiry that eventually recommended that Stansted should be developed as London's 3rd Airport emphatically declared that no further expansion be permitted because of the sensitive nature of the countryside environment. Currently the result of the public enquiry into the proposal to maximise use of the existing runway is awaited. But meantime the Spanish owned British Airports Authority is seeking, from Uttlesford District Council, permission to establish a second runway. The Friends will be objecting to this planning application by the due date of 24 June. It is said by SSE that BAA Stansted makes no profit from the actual aircraft operations and makes up for this by income from commercial/retail charges at the Terminal and by charges for car parking. Perhaps the latter explains why around 77,000 (not a misprint) car parking places are planned for the expanded Airport!

We have been urged by the SSE Committee to encourage as many personal responses as we can to BAA's proposal for a second runway at Stansted. At the AGM leaflets were distributed calling on those present to

write on a personal basis indicating their objections to the proposal. We now extend that invitation those not present at the AGM.

Your letter doesn't have to be a comprehensive response to the application! You need only to say that you are opposed to the development of a second runway because of the increased traffic it will bring to Epping Forest (the 77,000 cars in the car park must come from somewhere!) and the generally destructive effect it will cause to the quality of life in this part of Essex/London. Write to The Director of Development, Uttlesford District Council, Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4ER.

The following appears in the West Essex Ramblers programme. They would welcome attendance by Friends of Epping Forest members. Put it in your diary now.

## Stop Stansted Expansion Campaign

The Stop Stansted Expansion Team will hold a meeting at the United Reform Church, Buxton Road, Chingford, on the 3rd October 2008, starting at 7.30pm. The purpose of the meeting is to explain the outcome of the recent Public Enquiry and raise awareness of what the Campaign Team is doing to counter the threat to our countryside arising from BAA's plans. The meeting will be led by Peter Saunders, Chairman of the Campaign team.

Please come along to the meeting to support the Campaign. Buxton Road runs off Station Road, Chingford and is close to a number of bus routes. Chingford NR Station is a few minutes walk from the church.



Land wanted by BAA for the north-eastern end of an expanded airfield

**STOP PRESS:** We've now been given an extra three months in which to respond, recognising the complicated nature of the documents.

Harry Bitten



*Thames Gateway Treatment Plant - Beckton to Woodford Pipeline. Work in progress at junction of Woodford New Road and Forest Rise*

## WATER PIPELINE UNDER THE FOREST

Members may have noticed major earthworks contained within a line of wire fence on Leyton Flats alongside Whipps Cross Road. These activities are part of the plan by Thames Water to put a pipeline by way of a mainly bored route from Beckton to the underground reservoir at the Waterworks at Walthamstow. This will take water from the Thames via a treatment plant at Beckton (next to the sewage works but the engineers and chemists are bound to have sorted that out) alongside the Roding then up through the Forest at Wanstead, Bush Wood, under Hollow Ponds and then by the Rising Sun area, Canada Plain and on to the Reservoir. The treatment plant was originally rejected by the GLA for environmental reasons and the amount of electricity it would require, but those objections seem to have been overcome, or perhaps over-ridden!

## T E LAWRENCE COMMEMORATED

Waltham Forest Council has erected a plaque to commemorate the life of the legendary T E Lawrence, 73 years after he died in a motorcycle accident.

The heritage plaque to commemorate the famous writer, scholar and soldier, Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Edward Lawrence, or Lawrence of Arabia as he was better known, has been placed on Pole Hill, Chingford with the agreement of the conservators of Epping Forest. Lawrence is famous for fighting alongside Arab troops against the Ottoman Empire during World War One.



He owned 18 acres of land on Pole Hill until September 1930 and frequently camped on the site with his Oxford University friend Vyvyan Richards, a teacher at Bancroft's School, who also lived there in a hut called Cloisters. Together Lawrence and Richards planned to build a house on the site and print fine books, including Lawrence's famous 'Seven Pillars of Wisdom'.

After his death in 1935 it was proposed that the Conservators of Epping Forest be asked for permission to erect a memorial to him on Pole Hill.

## SENIOR STAFF-HELLOS AND GOODBYES

**Mat Roberts** appointed Superintendent of Epping Forest in June 2006, left to face new challenges, having brought about various organisational changes at the Warren and overseen the bid to the Heritage Lottery. A new Superintendent has been appointed and is due to take up the post later this year.

**Jennifer Adams**, who has been the City's Director of Open Spaces for the last seven years, retired in April 2008. Her replacement is **Sue Ireland** who was previously with Chelmsford Borough Council where she was Director of Parks and Heritage Services and responsible for parks, open spaces, allotments, sports pitches, play areas and grounds maintenance. She graduated in geography from University College, Aberystwyth and subsequently took a Masters degree in landscape ecology, design and maintenance at Wye College.



*Sue Ireland*

We look forward to having a friendly and productive relationship with both these new appointees.

This never happened and it was only earlier this year, that Chingford Historical Society and Waltham Forest Council arranged plaque to be placed on the obelisk at Pole Hill.



## WALK REPORTS

### Bluebell Walk in Wanstead Park April 20

28 people joined Tricia Moxey for a spring walk in Wanstead Park to share in the delight of seeing the bluebells in full bloom. It is becoming increasingly difficult to predict when spring flowers are at their peak as many are responding to increased spring temperatures by flowering earlier, but a few cool wet days in early April had ensured that the bluebells were looking really great in Chalet Wood, but in other parts of the Park, the encroaching brambles were smothering many others. Other indications of spring were that chiffchaffs and blackcaps were singing.

In recent months, engineers employed by Thames Water have been installing a new pipeline to carry water from a bore hole to the Redbridge pumping station. It was possible to see some of the superficial signs of these works, but it is reassuring to know that in time the disturbed ground will become covered in new growth.

The group were also given an update on the interesting geophysical investigations to search for location of Roman buildings close to the Perch Pond which are being carried out by an enthusiastic team of archaeologists working with WEAG and the Wanstead Parkland Community Project. (An article on this work will feature in a future edition of the Friends Newsletter).

*Tricia Moxey*

### A Jog in the Forest, May 12

It sounded unlikely... instead of a 'normal' walk in Epping Forest, the Friends would have a jog, a run, indeed! Interest in this outing was muted – a single caller asked if it would be suitable for children, but who, in the event, failed to show.

Peggy and ex-Orion Harrier Harry were there first ... but simply for a tour of Orion Clubhouse and to see some of its history. Orion Harriers have been running from their base behind the Royal Forest Hotel since 1911 - and there are pics to prove it! A few Harriers were founder members of the Friends back in the 60s for the successful fight against the M25 carving up the Forest. Then it was time to run. So Harry made an excuse and left with Peggy, while seven fledgling runners cantered down



*North American alien - Azolla Filiculoides - Photo. Roddy MacLennan*

Dannett's Hill, past QE Lodge and Butler's Retreat, accompanied by two Orionites (and Friends) Bob Jousiffe and Roddy MacLennan on a gentle May evening.

There were myriad stops to talk of Forest ponds, plants, history, tree husbandry, fauna, films, the meaning of life and... well.. anything that let Bob and Roddy get their breath back!

We circled Connaught Water admiring posing Heron, Mandarin Ducks and other usual birdy suspects, (no Smew today) and, after bare-leggedly avoiding the nettles thronging the meagre gap in that foul fence, crossed Epping New Road to run up heathery Warren Hill. This run-date had been set way back in Autumn, but as we skirted a series of faded daffodils and primroses, bluebell swathes of dowdy blooms past their best and patches of violets swallowed by other growth, the seven runners were blamed cos they hadn't run fast enough! Maybe three weeks faster would have seen better blooms.

While viewing the Obelisk below Warren House, the runners heard how this 'folly' was erected in commemoration (and on top) of a horse that had borne its grateful master safely on Waterloo's battlefield, and how it had lived out happy retirement in this very paddock, before they learnt this lovely tale was now known to be false! The runners disliked the prosaic truth, so we ran up round Strawberry Hill pond then down to view 'enclosure' attempts

(ditch, mound and trees) visible near the car park re-crossing of the road to Fairmead.

Pauses to re-enact a scene from Stanley Kubrick's Full Metal Jacket at the spot where it was filmed on Fairmead Lane, then a chat about fresh coppicing near the Ash Ride led to one runner asking, how Orion learnt Forest Trails? This provoked a few hundred metres of TUF (Typical Unplanned Fun Exploration) through thick forest, and landed us near Cuckoo Pits.

The most Easterly of these ponds is infested with a beautiful, invasive North American alien – Azolla Filiculoides, which flourishes in static water. Our winters can kill this off, but it must be cold. Usually green through summer, in winter it covers ponds in a red matting, but like the Bluebells, the Azolla (a water fern, unusually) was past its red best when we arrived. Must run quicker!

A leap over the mighty River Ching (ok – mere Cuckoo Brook at that point) to see the 'newly' pollarded trees in Bury Wood, then a rambling return to Orion HQ. We'd meandered just over 4 miles but broke no records doing so. It was the furthest one participant had ever ran – yet hadn't noticed!

I think it was fun. And we may try it again...

*Roddy MacLennan*

## Day Return to High Beach, 24 May



*Edgar Brown*

A fine sunny day for a railway excursion. 25 members and friends (including a leavening of Transport Enthusiasts) met to explore one of the possible routes of the 19th century railway which might have run across the Forest.

We set off from Bury Road in sight of Chingford Station; from here the line would have followed a straight course of over one and a half miles to a terminus at the foot of the hill leading up to High Beach village. The straight course would lead us well away from established tracks, taking us through parts of the Forest seldom visited. Naturally, some ingenuity was needed to keep us close to the projected route - mature trees and innumerable holly bushes seemed to get in the way at every turn! But there was the occasional clearing which seemed to give a tantalising glimpse of a sight-line left by a 19th century surveyor - and, of course, today we have GPS to keep us on track.

Away from the start we soon crossed Jubilee Ride and, entering Essex, found ourselves in Woodman's Glade. The railway was planned to rise on a moderate gradient over its whole length; we could see where the undulating Forest land would have required low embankments and shallow cuttings. Descending across the glade and then more steeply into the valley of the Cuckoo Brook we saw where a much larger embankment would have risen higher and higher, reaching 30 feet at the point where the brook was crossed. (We could speculate on what the Forest trees

would look like from the vantage point of a train crossing this embankment; but, of course, had the railway arrived, the view might have been of roofs rather than trees!)

Climbing steeply out of the valley, we soon arrived at a well-marked path which allowed a short deviation around some impenetrable jungle. Another stretch of woodland with some GPS-confirmed way-marks led us to Almshouse Plain. A conspicuous oak alongside the ride ahead confirmed the point at which we should enter the Round Thicket. Although this is quite a small wood, it seems enormous when inside! Its Tardis-like proportions hide a sizeable hillock through which the railway would have cut. Emerging on the other side we were on Whitehouse Plain, not far from Catacombs Corner; it's often boggy here, showing the need for a firm embankment - but it was very dry today. We avoided the holly-infested woodland beyond via a parallel path, emerging opposite Suntrap Field-Study Centre having crossed the course of the railway on the way. From here it was a short step to "High Beach Station" - adjoining Church Road and not far south of the site of the first High Beach church. The steepness of the road ahead showed clearly why the railway could go no nearer to the village. Here was the terminus; we paused for a short while in the pleasant wooded glade where there might have been a "mini-Chingford" - red brick buildings, platforms, signal box, all the impedimenta of a country branch-line station.

Then it was time to return through the Forest. Pursuing the railway theme, I realised that the 'locomotive' rostered for the train (i.e. myself) wasn't 'steaming' very well and would have to be taken off. Fortunately an engine in



*Cuckoo Brook - without the 30ft railway embankment!*

better condition - of the "Harry" class, very familiar with all the forest routes - was available to take the train back to Chingford. (*Amazingly we saw three fallow deer between Woodman's Glade and Chingford Plain. HB*)

*Edgar Brown*

## June 6, Jack's Hill, Theydon Bois.



*Towards Little Gregories*



*Resting and admiring the view*

A select group assembled in the car-park on the way to the Sixteen String Jack and took the pleasant downhill track, past Genesis Slade and the buttercups-and-daisy strewn meadow towards Theydon Bois. Passing more buttercups and a good sprinkling of ladysmock on Theydon Green, we paused at the oak avenue, which is under pressure because of the impact of cars on the root system. Some trees are looking a bit stressed but there are plenty with full looking leaf cover. A decision is still awaited as to the strategy to deal with the problem. We gather that the local council favours closing the road to traffic. The Friends opted for the planting of a replacement avenue outside the present one.

A short stroll through the pleasant streets of Theydon took us to the public footpath that leads at the back of houses up to Little Gregories. The 'buffer land' of Great Gregories was on our right and we congratulated the City Corporation on buying it some 15 years ago. We admired the new wood developing very nicely, then turned to the Purlieu Bank. Earlier this year that particular area was impassable because of the poaching effect of cattle but it has dried out a bit now. The



*Giant beech which used to be home to honeybees*

Purlieu Bank is a very ancient physical feature going back many hundreds of years and is the border between the Forest proper and the purlieus outside, over which some forest laws were relaxed. We marvelled that it had survived for so long.

We took the rather built-up path through to Great Gregories Farm, crossed Piercing Hill and then into the Forest again, to return to our cars by way of the Green Ride. We briefly paused to view the giant beech which used to be home to honeybees. (see the item on bees on page 2.)

*Harry Bitten*

## **EPPING FOREST CENTENARY WALK 2008 – SHAME TO MISS IT!**

This year the Epping Forest Centenary Walk from Manor Park to Epping will take place on Sunday 21 September, once again celebrating the passing of the Epping Forest Act 1878. If you are in any doubt about the importance of the Epping Forest Act, stand on Chingford Station and look in the direction of High Beach where the railway line was intended to go. Imagine how that would look now had the railway company not gone bankrupt. And then murmur your thanks to Queen Victoria and also to the Corporation of London, who maintain the Forest to such a high standard.

The walk will start, as in previous years, at 9 o'clock at the junction of Forest Drive and Capel Road, near Manor House Station, and should reach the centre of the Green Man roundabout, Leytonstone around 9.45 am. We expect to reach the County Hotel, Oak Hill at 10.45 am and the Warren Pond Car Park, Chingford at about mid-day. We will take lunch at the Robin Hood PH which we should reach around 1.30 pm and leave there at about 2.30 pm. We should arrive at Bell Common, Epping around 4.30 pm.

The walk is, of course, open to anyone who wishes to take part. It can be joined or left at any point during the day, and there will be pauses during the walk for brief talks on forest management, history and wildlife. Please join us on 21 September to celebrate our Forest. If you need any more information, please phone Mike Whiteley, who will lead the walk again this year, on 0208 524 2737.

*Mike Whiteley*

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

July 10, Thursday, 10.30am – 1.30pm  
**A NEW opportunity to learn about orienteering** If you wish to take part in the orienteering please bring your own compass or just enjoy the guided walk. Explore Hainault Forest, followed by optional pub lunch (well-behaved dogs, on leads, welcome).  
 Meet at: "telephone box car park" opposite Chigwell Row village school.

*Leaders: Ron & Pat Andrews  
 GR 471 936*

July 14, Monday, 10.00am – 12.00pm  
**See the Plains and open areas of the Forest** and the effects of cattle grazing and chance to discuss with a supporter of cattle grazing the benefits they bring. Meet at: Jack's Hill Car Park, on either side of the road.

*Leader: Michael Davis,  
 Verderer of Epping Forest  
 GR 435 995*

August 4, Monday, 2.00pm – 4.00pm  
**History/Natural History of the Forest and Lea Valley.** Meet at: The Corn Mill Meadows Car Park, off The Crooked Mile, North of Waltham Abbey.

*Leader: Irene Buchan GR 384 017*

## **Forest Festival 2008**

Sunday 7 September, 10.00am - 4.00pm, Chingford Plain. Forest Festival is our major event of the year where we have our stall. Please put the date in your diary and enjoy a day of free events including the ever popular Knights of Middle England and a field of Forest and other community stalls.

## **September 21, Sunday Centenary Walk from Manor Park to Epping**

A day's walk through Epping Forest from Wanstead Flats in the south to Epping in the north. Lots of stopping points with chances to join (or leave). Lunch stop at the Robin Hood PH.

See article on this page for further details .

*Leader: Mike Whiteley  
 (FofEF & Ramblers Assoc.)  
 GR 419 860*

September 25, Thursday, 10.30am – 12.30pm  
**Pram/Strollers Walk** (all welcome!) A chance to bring children and grandchildren for an interesting and fun guided walk. All welcome even if no children available! Meet at: Connaught Water Car Park, Ranger's Road, Chingford.

*Leader: Dr Joanna Thomas,  
 Verderer of Epping Forest  
 GR 405 952*

October 19, Sunday, 10.30am to 12.30pm or 1.30pm  
**Discover Nature's Recyclers** in Gernon Bushes, in conjunction with Essex Wildlife Trust. Optional extra walk afterwards to Coopersale Fields/Centenary Wood. Meet at: Gernon Bushes, Coopersale, Near Epping.

*Leaders: Tricia Moxey &  
 Robert Levene  
 GR 476 031*

## **ADVANCE NOTICE**

**Forest Supper 2008  
 Thursday November 20th.**

## **OTHER DATES**

### **Woodford Festival Walks.**

Thursday 9th October. Starts 10.30 a.m. from Salway Church, Forest Approach, Woodford Green. 2½ hours circular walk via Eagle Pond.

*cont.*

Sunday 12th October.  
Starts 11 a.m. from Salway Church.  
2 hours walk to Walthamstow Forest  
and return via Highams Park Lake.

**Leader: Ron Wortley-Millik**  
tel: 020 8505 9274.

### Epping Forest Visitor Centre

High Beach, IG10 4AE

Opening hours

Summer (April - September): 11.00am  
- 6.00pm 020 8508 0028

[www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/living\\_environment/open\\_spaces/EF\\_visitor\\_centre.htm](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/living_environment/open_spaces/EF_visitor_centre.htm)

### Epping Forest Centenary Trust

Saturday 12th July, 11:00 am to  
4:00 pm Tarzy Wood, High Road,  
Wanstead. Lots of stall and activities  
including a fair and face painting.

Forest Hands Week: Sunday 10th to  
Friday 15th August, 10:30 am to  
2:30 pm each day. Open to anyone to  
come along and help.

Wednesday 13th August, 2:00 pm to  
4:00 pm, Nature Activity at Tarzy  
Wood. An activity for children (4-11),  
discover what animals live in Tarzy  
Wood. Tarzy Wood, High Road,  
Wanstead. Booking required.

For more details please contact us on  
020 8508 9061 or email us at  
[office@efct.info](mailto:office@efct.info)

### Conservation Volunteers

Sunday 6 July – Woodford Golf  
Course clearing invasive oak from the  
grassland. GR: TQ397927

Tuesday 15 July – Long Running  
Parking: Lodge Road CP GR:  
TQ432998

Sunday 27 July – Jack's Hill Bog on  
International Bog Day. Parking: Jack's  
Hill CP GR: TQ435996

Sunday 17 August – Wanstead Park  
& EFCV Summer Party. Parking: By  
the Temple. GR: TQ416874

Sunday 24 August – Golding's Hill  
Pond and Inner Pond. Parking:  
Golding's Hill CP (by the pond). GR:  
TQ394949

Sunday 7 September – Chingford  
Plain. Joining in with the festivities of  
the Forest Festival, working on scrub  
mosaic management. Parking: Bury  
Road CP. GR: TQ394949

Tuesday 16 September – Whitehall  
Plain North. Clearing invasive birch  
from the grassland. Parking: Opp. the  
QE Hunting Lodge, GR: TQ397947

Sunday 21 September – Thornwood  
Common. GR: TL470040 (approx)

Sunday 28 September – Lower Wake  
Pond. Parking: TBC (possibly Mount  
Pleasant CP). GR: TQ418982

020 8529 3060

### Epping Forest Field Centre

020 8508 7714

### BNA Epping Forest Branch

70th Anniversary Year of active  
Natural History in Epping Forest!

Saturday 19th July: Ash Valley and a  
visit to Amwell Reserve. Saturday 2nd  
August: A different aspect of  
Gunpowder Park.

Saturday 13th September Glen Faba

Saturday 27th September: Forty Hall

Saturday 25th October: A Fungus

Foray Morning walk in Hainault

Country Park

Monday 27th October: 2.30pm.

Chingford Parish Church hall Pharoes  
Birds by John Wyatt.

Saturday 1st November: Autumn Tints

Walk – Hollow Ponds and Gilberts

Slade White House Reserve

020 8529 7307

[www.bna-naturalists.org/branches/eppin/eppin.htm](http://www.bna-naturalists.org/branches/eppin/eppin.htm)

### Essex Wild Life Trust

(Epping Forest Group)

Sun 19 Oct Discover Nature's  
Recyclers. Join Warden, Brian  
McGhie, Tricia Moxey and Robert  
Levene for this annual walk in Gernon  
Bushes Nature Reserve. Joint  
meeting with Friends of Epping  
Forest. Meet: 10.30 am at Nature  
Reserve entrance: turn off B181  
Epping – North Weald into  
Coopersale Common Lane, then left  
into Garnon Mead.

Contact: Tricia Moxey on 01277  
364522

### Lee Valley Park

01992 702200 or see  
[www.leevalleypark.org.uk](http://www.leevalleypark.org.uk) for details.

### Copped Hall Trust

01992 571657

## DONATIONS 2007/08

We are grateful to the following for very  
valuable donations to the friends in the  
last year:

**APRIL:** G Watts, J Lycett, C Williams  
B Holmes,

**MAY:** G. Watts, J Lycett, C Williams  
Estate of the late Jim Gimson from  
sale of Epping Forest Then & Now.

**JUNE:** M Bradley, G Hollingshead.

**JULY:** B Hacks

**AUGUST:** J & P Lilly, L Allender

**SEPTEMBER:** Estate of the late  
Albert Henry George Turpin,  
composed of a bequest and  
donations from family and friends:  
Turpin Bequest, N P & L M Larkin,  
L M & J W de Courcy, Royal Epping  
Forest Golf Club, Mr & Mrs Part,  
E L Hood, R T Turney, F Cleeve,  
S C Palmer, J T Tatham,  
C W & P O Girling, Janice & Michael  
Gammie/ Paul & Stephanie Burden,  
I E Freeborn, R Logan & family,  
L D. Turpin, J V Diss, E G Rabey,  
G & J M Turpin, B T Clarke,  
Dr & Mrs McKeown

**OCTOBER:** E Boardman, R Wigg,  
R Gough, A Mosedale

**NOVEMBER:** J Sullivan, Hives

**DECEMBER:** Mr & Mrs Andrews

**JANUARY:** G Mitchell, J Hoy,

M Shadrack, C Redwood

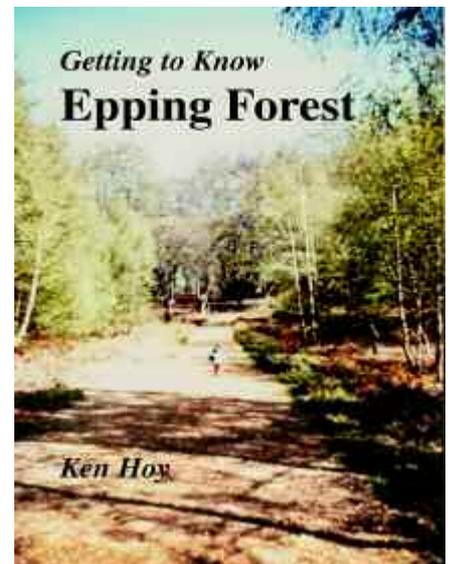
**FEBRUARY:** J Rainbird, W Cogan

**MARCH:** P Herring, W & V Worth

We like to keep our membership fees  
as low as possible to encourage more  
people to join us but the new colour  
version of the Newsletter costs more to  
produce, so all donations and legacies  
are much appreciated to keep our  
funds topped up. We would therefore  
welcome further donations!

**Have a good summer and visit our  
stall on Sept 7th for a chat and/or  
join us on our walks.**

*Ed.*



**Ken Hoy's book that names  
and describes the history of over  
200 Forest place names**

Copies are available from  
Seymour Moss on 020 8529 0620  
£6.00 to members (£7.00 inc. p&p).  
Otherwise available at the Epping  
Forest Information Centre, High  
Beach and in several local bookshops  
(£6.95).