

Friends of Epping Forest



Summer 2010

www.friendsofeppingforest.org.uk

Dear Friend

Vote With Your Feet

As part of the Branching Out Project being part funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund the Conservators are planning to create 6 way-marked routes through the Forest.

Three routes have already been decided upon and the Conservators are mounting a public consultation to help decide where the other three should be.

They have asked us to help promote the consultation process and have sent us a 'Vote with your Feet – Walk Route Pack.'

Whilst the Friends welcome support for visitors in finding their way in the Forest, we want to discourage any signage within the Forest thereby ensuring the routes have minimal impact on the Forest and to preserve the natural aspect (our response to Interpretation Strategy 2004/5). Introducing way markers for walking routes could give rise to a demand for more marking for other Forest users. A Warren spokesperson said that the way marking will take the form of posts with signage on them.

In the past the Friends have been opposed to the notion of way-marking walking routes through the Forest itself and would prefer instead to see marking used at entry points and at road crossings only. Fifteen years ago

the London Walking Forum were allowed to so sign the London Loop in that way. So it can be done!

The voting pack has six pages of maps of the proposed routes and members are urged to get a copy of the pack and respond by **31st July**.

Copies of the pack are obtainable from the Visitors Centres at High Beech, the Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge and the Temple. Or the Warren (tel. 020 8532 1010) will post you a copy. Or it can be downloaded from www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eppingwalks.

The already selected walks are all in the central part of the Forest; at Bury Road car park, Connaught Water and Fairmead, and High Beach to Loughton Camp. The top three to be selected from six following the public consultation are in the northern and southern parts of the Forest.

They are:

- 1) Wanstead Park
- 2) Warlies/Claverhambury/ Copped Hall
- 3) Theydon Bois/Deer Sanctuary/Epping Thicks/ Great Gregories
- 4) Snaresbrook/ Hollow Ponds/Waterworks/ Gilberts Slade
- 5) Wanstead Flats
- 6) Epping/Wintry Wood/ Gernon Bushes/Stewards Green

We include the map and directions of the Theydon Bois one in case you want to try it out straight away:

Vote With Your Feet: Theydon Bois Route Description



The walk starts in the village of Theydon Bois with its distinctive village green, complete with duck pond and tree lined streets. The route then heads south passing the Deer Sanctuary where the Forest's black fallow deer may be spotted. Heading north, you pass through the typical habitats of Epping Forest – grand beech pollards and open heathland – before reaching the ancient earthworks of Ambresbury

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

Banks. The route then loops south with commanding views of the City of London before arriving back at Theydon Bois.

The guide also includes information on length of walk, duration, terrain, transport links, parking, facilities and suggested starting point.

You can join the Forest Keepers on a guided walk around the route Sunday 25 July, 10am at Theydon Bois Tube Station.

The ghost of Fred Matthews and *Short Walks in Epping Forest* seems to be lingering around somewhere!

Editor

EPPING FOREST CENTENARY WALK 2010 SUNDAY 19 SEPTEMBER – DON'T MISS IT!



The Epping Forest Centenary Walk from Manor Park to Epping will once again celebrate the passing of the Epping Forest Act 1878. This was an important piece of legislation for the area, requiring the Corporation of London to keep the Forest open and unenclosed and to maintain the natural aspect, a responsibility they take extremely seriously. We remain indebted to Queen Victoria for the part she played and to the Corporation of London who maintain the Forest to such a high standard.

The walk starts, as in previous years, at 9 o'clock at the junction of Forest Drive and Capel Road, near Manor Park 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 about 10.45 am where we will pause for coffee. The Butler's Retreat, next to the Royal Forest Hotel, Chingford will be reached at about 12.15 pm. Pressing on, we will take lunch at the Robin Hood pub on the Epping New Road at about 1.20 pm and restart after a 45 minute break. We expect to reach Bell Common Epping between 4.30 and 5.00 pm.

The walk is, of course, open to anyone who wishes to take part. It can be joined or left at any point on the walk during the day, and there will be pauses for brief talks on forest management, history and wildlife.

Why not join us on this annual walk to celebrate Epping Forest! Walk the whole length of the Forest south to north, join us for part of the walk or this year, try out a new 1.5 hour circular walk from Butler's Retreat, setting off at 10:45 am and returning to meet up with the long walkers at 12:15 pm.

The walk will be led again by Mike Whiteley, from whom you can get further information. Telephone: 0208 524-2737.

Judy Adams

KEN HOY – CITIZEN OF LONDON



Ken was offered the 'right hand of fellowship' and greeted as a Citizen of London.

Ken Hoy was admitted as a Freeman of the City of London on May 18, 2010 at Guildhall, and it was a great pleasure for Peter and I to be present.

Sponsored by Barbara Newman CBE CC and Wendy Mead CC, who had earlier certified that in their opinion, 'Ken was a fit and proper person for admission to the freedom', his application was formally approved by the Court of Common Council.

Upon its approval, Ken was invited to make his appointment for his Ceremony. Escorted by the Beadle to the Chamberlain's Court Room with his sponsors and ourselves, he made his declaration in the presence of the Clerk of the Chamberlain's Court, signed the Letter Book, (Freemans Declaration) and received a book given to all freeman entitled 'Rules for the Conduct of Life'. Ken was then offered the 'right hand of fellowship' and greeted as a Citizen of London.

It was splendid that Ken's commitment and work over the years to introduce school children to Epping Forest and to work for its protection and enjoyment through the Friends of Epping Forest was acknowledged through such a fitting tribute.

Judy Adams



Sponsored by Barbara Newman CBE CC and Wendy Mead CC, who had earlier certified that in their opinion, 'Ken was a fit and proper person for admission to the freedom'.

THE NATURAL ASPECT

Did you notice the swarms of large hairy black flies that were prevalent this spring? These flies hover up and down, rather slowly in dancing columns near the foliage of trees and bushes. They are the males; the females are far below in the grass. When they fly up they are seized by the males and mating takes place in the air. They are called St. Mark's Flies because they are supposed to appear around about St. Mark's Day, April 25th. However this does not always happen as the 'timing-of-spring' varies each year. Normally they appear in late April or early May. They are late this year ...as I write in the third week of May they are very noticeable in the Forest. Birds are feasting on them and the cold weather has lengthened the period of the fly's activity'.

But, what about global warming and climate change you may say. Well, each season will vary considerably according to the weather. And, we had cold weather, snow and frosts unusually late, then sunny weather but very cold north winds – remember?

This spring (the weather) was late. However, climate change is about trends in the yearly weather; the average of changes in weather over many years. The study of these average changes, trends, is the current buzz word ... called Phenology.

If you can remember the coming of spring this year (although you may be reading this in July), the Blackthorn bushes that normally burst into snowy blossom at least in mid-March, did not do so this year until almost mid April. The may-blossom (Hawthorn) usually begins to break out during the end of April; this year it is not quite fully out even now (mid-May). May-day came without may-blossom! So, this spring was very late.

There are many signs of spring you can notice, apart from the Blackthorn and Hawthorn. For example, the appearance from hibernation of the first queen Bumble bee; she is usually hovering around looking for a nest site in March. Other signs we may notice in March are the first Brimstone or Peacock butterflies (they hibernate too). Later, the appearance of Bluebells, Primroses and Cowslips; Horse Chestnut 'candles', and, Daffodils or apple blossom in your



An iconic signal quite early in spring is the breaking open of the sticky Horse Chestnut buds.



When the blossom is fully out, spring is rapidly passing.



The male Orange-tip butterfly must mate with the female during early May when she has the opportunity to lay her eggs on the caterpillar's food plant, 'Jack-by-the-hedge'.



The camouflaged wings of both sexes when closed, will perform a beautiful disappearing trick.

gardens. Obviously the timing of one occurrence is linked to another. Survival involves great interdependence between different forms of life that is vital. For instance Hedge garlic or 'Jack-by-the-hedge' appearing in the hedgerows should always signal the appearance of the little Orange-tip white butterfly; this is the food plant of its caterpillars when its eggs hatch.

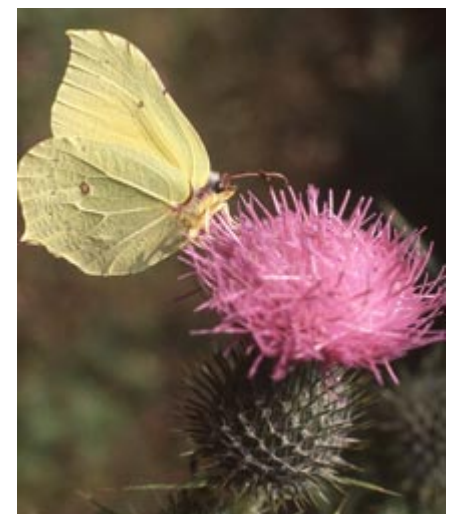
In the past a traditional sign of spring was the calling of the Cuckoo; alas that is all too rare now, but the arrival of Swifts during the first week of May is still something you can notice in the sky, and they are usually quite regular, arriving and then departing again in early August. However this year they were late!

In the past I have written in Natural Aspect, about the importance of the synchronisation of tree-buds opening, with the appearance of defoliating caterpillars and Blue and Great Tits feeding their young, this too is happening as I write, all later than usual!

These variations also occur at the other end of the year. We notice the changing colour of the Beech trees in early November, a late Swallow or House Martin, a late butterfly or the last Dragonfly, the sudden stripping of tree leaves by the first winter gale or frost – all are occurrences that will vary from year to year.

To notice and be aware of all these changes as the year passes, can enormously enrich our enjoyment of the environment and the seasons. So, go out in the Forest and enjoy the second half of 2010!

Ken Hoy



This male Brimstone butterfly is the second generation in September that must survive in hibernation until the first sunny spring day next March.

NIGHTINGALES

I have heard no reports of Nightingales in the Forest again this year.

But, I understand they finally arrived in places in the Roding Valley exactly where they have been in previous years. Four separate singing males have been reported – usually a sign of a settled territory.

Reports from the Lea Valley are not quite so good as last year, but 9 to 10 singing males is still comparatively good compared with elsewhere.

This makes me wonder whether we might conclude that Nightingales are particularly faithful in returning to the sites where they are born ...that, no matter how suitable an area or habitat may be, once a population dwindles and dies out, the species is slow re-establishing itself. Could this be the case?

Whilst looking back in old Newsletters I see that in July 1984 I wrote, "This year has been a good year for birds in the Forest. Most notable has been an increase in the number of Nightingales. For example at least six separate individuals have been heard singing in the Connaught Water area".

Reports from the Lea Valley of interesting increases this year feature Cetti's Warbler (a bird that has colonised Britain during the last two or three decades) And, another regular seasonal visitor is the Hobby, a small falcon. Peregrine falcons are also present in the Valley. They are a recent coloniser in the Greater London area as you may know from the media and are a major predator of pigeons.



Nightingale - from 'The Birdlife of Britain' by Peter Hayman

Ken Hoy

NIGHTINGALES 2

A nightingale may – or indeed may not – have sung in Berkeley Square, but its song can now no longer be heard in many of its former haunts. According to the latest figures from the British Trust for Ornithology, Britain's nightingale population has plunged by more than 90% in just 40 years.

Nightingales have never been common in Britain. They are here for just a few months, and only sing for a few weeks, from late April to early June. They are also confined to southern Britain, roughly south and east of a line between the Severn and the Wash, with strongholds in East Anglia and Kent.

But now numbers are falling even here. Nightingales are birds of the undergrowth, nesting in dense, inaccessible scrub. This is one reason why their song is so celebrated – for actually seeing this skulking songster is often virtually impossible. Recently, however, this habitat has been under threat from the boom in deer numbers especially an alien incomer, the muntjac. Muntjacs feed by browsing – and their insatiable appetite has destroyed much of the nightingale's scrubby home.

The nightingale's problems don't stop there. Like other migrant birds that spend the winter in west Africa, its numbers have been dropping like a stone – probably due to the southward extension of the Sahara desert.

If you want to hear the nightingale's song – and, believe me, it's worth it – you're too late this year. I'd advise putting it in next year's diary – it may be one of the last springs this extraordinary sound can still be heard in the British countryside.

Stephen Moss

Article reprinted from the Guardian newspaper. Stephen Moss is a naturalist, writer and broadcaster, based at the BBC Natural History Unit.

THE COACH HOUSE AT CHINGFORD

**Extract from
Forest Focus
Summer 2010**

Look out for development work starting this summer as part of our Heritage Lottery funded Branching Out project. The coach house and stable buildings between Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge and the Royal Forest Hotel will be transformed with a glass link designed by architects Freeland Rees Roberts. The new building will house displays and a shop. There will also be a community room for use by school parties and local groups.



East view



North view

Nearby, Gibberd architects are refurbishing Butler's Retreat as a café, due to open in Spring 2011. Butler's Retreat is a Grade II Listed Essex barn where, during the 19th Century, tea and cakes were served to Victorians escaping the smog of London.

Landscaping will also make it easier to move between the visitor attractions, and car parking at Barn Hoppitt and Bury Road will be improved. Don't worry, Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge will remain open during the building works, so why not pop in there sometime to find out what's going on.

**Catherine Cavanagh Branching Out
Project Manager**

EPPING FOREST MATTERS

Vehicle counters

You may have noticed a new species in Epping Forest over the last few weeks! Vehicle counters have been placed on virtually all of the Forest roads in Epping Forest District. Placed by Essex County Council, the counters remained for 2-3 weeks around the May Bank Holiday. The data forms an intrinsic part of the background research required to support Traffic Orders for Speed and Cattle Grids.

As you know, the Friends have been working to secure slower traffic speeds and this first step is a welcome sign of some progress. Hopefully we will see these proposals come forward in the not too distance future.

Judy Adams

Cattle Grids



On the 22nd June a Redbridge Council meeting considered a report on the proposals by the Conservators of Epping Forest to construct 2 cattle grids along Brook Road Buckhurst Hill (the short but busy road that runs between Whitehall Road and the Epping New Road). This report was effectively for information because the Chief Highways and Engineering Service Officer has delegated authority under the Highways Act 1980 to construct cattle grids in any highway maintainable at public expense.

We understand that a number of questions both by councillors and members of the public, including the Epping Forest Riders Association, were raised as to the associated fencing that would be installed and also the safety angles involved with cattle grids.

The position is that there is a requirement that the proposed cattle grid installation be advertised in the local papers for 2 weeks running and that if substantial objections are made to the proposal then a local public enquiry has to be held. It is believed that this advert is likely to appear in July.

It hardly needs saying that in most respects the Friends are fully supportive of the Conservators policies in preserving the natural aspect and in keeping the Forest open and unenclosed for the recreation and enjoyment of the people.

However in the matter of their plans to fence in a major part of the Forest and install a large number of cattle grids throughout the Forest we have to take issue with them.

In the papers before the Redbridge Committee claims are made that the cattle grids are part of an overall Forest Transport Strategy, they will improve road safety, improve accessibility to the Forest for all users, reduce visual impact of roads and fragmentation of the Forest landscape. It is only in the 2 remaining points that the real reason is revealed viz to protect the commoners ancient grazing rights and to support the conservation requirement of the Forest (i.e. to extend woodland pasture throughout the Forest).

Since the purpose of the exercise was simply the cattle grids issue, no mention in the papers is made of the associated fencing that will be required. Indeed as the fences will be on Forest land they are no concern of Redbridge Council but we think that they are legitimately a concern for us and all Forest users. However one thing is clear and that is that each cattle grid will have 4 road signs warning of approaching grids. So much for improving visual impact on the Forest!

We have no objections to cattle grazing per se. The present regime of grazing on Chingford Plain, Fairmead, Sunshine Plain and Deershelter Plain within electric fences (although not ideal) could quite easily be applied to Whitehall Plain. What we object to are the plans to extend grazing throughout the Forest, which necessitates the removal of a huge number of mature trees, miles of permanent fencing and innumerable numbers of cattle grids on all Forest roads, all of which will transform the Forest as we know it.

This Redbridge/Brook Road issue is the first of many applications that will be made by the Conservators and will set the tone for all subsequent attempts to install grids. It is therefore absolutely vital that members watch for the adverts appearing in the local press and make their opinions known. It is no good just leaving the Friends committee to make your objections known; we know from experience that any comments we make (even though on behalf of 2000 members) will be regarded as 1 letter.

So it is therefore absolutely up to you to take action if you want to protect the Forest from miles of fencing and the removal of huge numbers of trees.

Harry Bitten

FRIENDS' MATTERS

Report on our AGM

Howard Vaughan, Information Officer for the RSPB's Rainham Marshes, gave a very interesting illustrated talk about the history and development of the site, its wildlife interest and its links through wildlife with the Lea Valley and Epping Forest.

One of very few ancient landscapes remaining in London, these medieval marshes right next to the River Thames were closed to the public for over 100 years and used as a military firing range. Now bursting with wildlife all year round, the bird life is impressive, as is the water vole population, dragonflies and much more. It is well worth a visit!

Membership subscriptions

And of the AGM itself! It was pleasing to see more than 50 members on the evening. Both the Annual Report and Financial Report for 2009/10 were well received. The proposed increases in membership subscriptions were also endorsed.

From April 1, 2011, the annual membership fees will be as follows:

Single	£8
Joint/family	£12
Life Membership – single	£50
Life Membership – joint	£80

These increases should enable us to meet our annual costs and enable a small resource to accumulate to develop projects to support Epping Forest.

Meetings with the Verderers and Superintendent

Your Executive Officers met with the Verderers in April. It provided a good opportunity to develop our relationship with them and consider how we can better communicate and support each others' ambitions, where that is relevant. Whilst it was very much to re-open the lines of communication, it was a necessary and valuable first step and I look forward to working more with the Verderers, particularly in light of the new Forest Management Plan to be prepared.

I also met informally with the Superintendent and we plan to organise a meeting with him and your Officers in the near future. It has been difficult this year to work with the City of London, given their changes in staff and knowledge of our activities, but this too is improving.

Getting to Know Epping Forest

Since the earlier version in 2002, a lot has happened in the Forest and fortunately Ken has reviewed, updated and considerably expanded his earlier version. We are hoping that it will be available in early July and we very much hope that you will place your order for the pre-publication offer! At only £7.50 a copy, rather than £8.95 when it is printed, it is fantastic value. It is nearly double the size, has many more pictures and is increasingly becoming a good reference book on the Forest's history.

Please place your order now! You can either pay for postage and packaging, or we will give you a ring when it is available and you can collect. This pre-publication offer is for a maximum number of two copies per member, to ensure we have enough for the future!

History of the Friends

I also want to make a further plug for the History of the Friends of Epping

Forest. Whilst the title may imply that it is just about us (and that is pretty interesting!), it provides a good insight into the happenings in the Forest over the last 40 years and well worth a read!

Judy Adams, Chairman

HORSE CHESTNUT ALIEN MOTH SURVEY

For the past ten or so years, the leaves of our local Horse chestnut trees have been infested with the caterpillars of a tiny 'alien' moth.

There is national concern about the future well being of these graceful trees and a survey has been set up to help investigate the spread of moth and its parasite, inviting the public to help with their observations. Conker Tree Science is the largest project of its kind in the UK and is funded by the Natural Environment Research Council. To find out more and to take part in this experiment visit the project's website www.ourweboflife.org.uk

BADGER CULL?



An interesting point was raised by member Stan Newens at our recent AGM. He asked whether there was a possibility that the presence of cattle on the Forest could lead to the cull of badgers in the area on the grounds that they might be carrying TB. The immediate response was that the present conservation herd animals do not enter the human food chain and therefore the fact that the cattle might contract TB should not be deployed as a reason for a badger cull.

However, with the proposed expansion of grazing and the consequent increase in the number of cattle on the Forest it cannot be assumed that all animals will not be destined for the human food chain. The Conservators have always maintained that they have an obligation under the 1878 Epping Forest Act to ensure that grazing opportunities are provided for the Commoners. It is not difficult to envisage a situation where a commoner asks for his cattle to be protected from the danger of TB as a condition of putting his beasts on the Forest.

There are badgers both in and around the Forest and although they are not seen very often it is good to know that they are there and contributing to the biodiversity of the Forest and the Country.

Caroline Spellman the new Minister at the Department of the Environment Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) is reported in the media as being in favour of badger culling in England and certainly many in the farming community have the same view, incidentally there has been a 14% drop in TB cases in cattle in England and Wales.

Clearly **the situation** has the potential for serious consequences for 'Old Brock' and needs careful watching.

Harry Bitten

Getting to Know Epping Forest Special Pre-publication offer

Over 220 pages of
Epping Forest information
Reference to over
300 place names
Over 200 pictures,
illustrations and
maps of the
Forest area
(mostly in colour)
dating from the
early 1800s to
the present.



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Please reserve copies of Getting to Know Epping Forest at the special price of £7.50 per copy (+ p & p of £1.75 per copy if you want it sent). Please send cheque (made out to Friends of Epping Forest) with order to: Judy Adams, 2 High View Close, Loughton Essex IG10 4EG

IN AN AREA OF FOREST NEAR YOU

An extract and precis of the Annual Work Programme for Epping Forest from April 2010 to 2011.

The projects are listed under the 3 habitat objectives in the Management Plan - **Trees, Open Land and Wetlands.**

Trees

We propose to carry out crown reductions on over 250 veteran pollards (mainly Beech and some Oak) in:

St Thomas Quarters	80 trees
Honey Lane Quarters	10 trees
Monks Wood and Deershelter Plain	60 trees
Hangboy Slade and Broadstrood	20 trees
High Beach	30 trees
Kate's Cellar and Loughton Camp	20 trees
Bury Wood	10 trees
Warren Hill	10 trees
Barn Hoppit	30 trees

Wood Pasture Restoration

Hornbeam crown reduction and re-pollarding will be carried out in groups in:

Honey Lane Quarters	20 trees
Hill Wood - Suntrap Stream	20 trees
North Long Hills	20 trees
Bury Wood - Cuckoo Pits and ANother	60 trees
Hawk Wood	30 trees
Walthamstow Forest	40 trees
Rising Sun Wood - Canada Plain	20 trees
Gilbert's Slade	30 trees

Also some individual Hornbeam pollards will have their crowns reduced to ensure longer term stability. Up to 50 trees will be worked on in Lord's Bushes, Lower Forest and the Wilderness.

Oak Pollards will have their crowns reduced in Ludgate Plain and Deershelter plain.

Halo clearance around veteran pollards and general wood-pasture restoration will take place in:

Lords Bushes, Barn Hoppitt, Hawk Wood, Honey Lane, Rushey Plain, Copley Plain, Hangboy Slade, Kate's Cellar and Debden Slade, Bury Wood, North Long Hills, Hatgate Plain, Old Church Plain and Hill Wood Deershelter Plain

Blocks of new pollards will be created in the following areas of wood-pasture restoration:

Barn Hoppitt, Deershelter Plain, Bury Wood and Lords Bushes.

Woodland Management

Removal of Sycamore/Turkey Oak/Norway Maple from: Barn Hoppitt, High Beach and Strawberry Hill.

Removal of Sycamore and Norway Maple from High Beach, Paul's Nursery near the Robin Hood (*see picture right*), Warren Hill, The Wilderness and Strawberry Hill.

Thinning of Secondary Woodland High Forest in Wanstead Park in Florries Hill and Chalet Wood to improve bluebell habitat, improve pathways and restore historic landscape features.

Open Land Grazing

The grazing rotations will be carried out similarly to 2009 using English Longhorn Cattle with a herdsman service. Sheppards Meadows will have a small amount of new fencing along the western boundary to allow conservation grazing of this important grassland. Local visitors and representatives will be informed and their views sought.

Copped Hall Deer Park will be grazed by sheep during the winter months.

Mowing and Cutting.

Grasslands will be mowed in rotation. Certain large sites, where generally hay can be harvested, will be cut by an external contractor again this year to allow the Epping Forest Grasslands Team to concentrate its work on key sites in less accessible locations, with more difficult terrain, scarcer flora or more complex prescriptions and rotations.

Scrub Management

Restoration work on overgrown heaths in:

Long Running
Rushey Plain
Clay Road
Wanstead Flats

Heathland – removal of regenerating scrub on:

Warren Hill
Strawberry Hill
Furze Ground
Copley Plain
Crown Hill

Grassland and Glade restoration through the clearance of scrub and secondary woodland in:

Woodbury Hollow/ Drum-maids. Re-growing bramble and birch will be removed at this flower-rich site on the steep slopes above Loughton Brook.

Sewardstone Green – further work to remove trees and restore the grassland area and open up the horse-ride and path access across this historic green.

Pole Hill and Hawksrnoth
Yardley Hill and Daisy Plain
Old Church Plain
St Thomas Quarters
Sheppard's Meadows
Gilberts Slade
Lord's Bushes.

Continued ...



Scrub Coppice Rotation (project Nightingale)

Scrub will continue to be cut at:

Warren Hill
Barn Hoppitt
Whitehouse Plain
Yardley Hill.

Wetlands

The clearance of the alien invasive plant Himalayan Balsam will be continued as part of the Scout Project at Honey Lane Stream and elsewhere.

For International Bog Day the EFCV will be carrying out valuable restoration work at one of the Forest bogs and a project for the restoration of Wellington Hill Bog is to be planned and will include the felling of trees in and around the bog, that are drying out and over-shading this very important site. To supplement this work, attempts will be made to stabilise the water levels, prevent unnecessary run-off and encourage Spagnum moss to recolonise.

Funding

The work on the veteran pollards identified as keystone trees is supported with a 74% grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of the Branching Out Project and with additional match funding from the Tubney Charitable Trust.

The remainder of the habitats work programme continues to be supported by an Environmental Stewardship grant from Natural England of £175,000.

The Tubney Charitable Trust also supports the wood-pasture restoration and grazing projects, The TCT was created in 1997 in memory of Briony and Miles Blackwell (retired Chairman of the Oxford-based bookseller) to give grants in 2 main areas – Conservation of the Natural Environment and Farmed Animal Welfare. The Trust expects to allocate its funds over a period of about 3 years from early 2008.

According to their website it gave £270,658 in 2009 to support habitat restoration in Epping Forest, one of the most important wood pasture sites in the UK, Work will target 1,500 ancient pollards to extend their life and increase their biodiversity importance and naturalistic grazing will be re-introduced across an area of over 700 hectares. UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species that will benefit include Knothole moss and the fungi Oak Polypore and Zoned Rosette.

So now you know! I have the CoL papers if you would like more details.

Peggy Bitten

HELP NEEDED

Our organiser of the extensive network of newsletter deliverers **Keith Foster** needs 2 further volunteers.

Round 3 South Woodford area – Bedford/ Daisy/ Cleveland/ Elmhurst/ Lancaster/ Tavistock Roads (Long time deliverer Len Harris has moved to Hertfordshire) 8 copies and **Round 56 Woodford Green South** – Broadway/ Snakes lane west area; Charteris road/ Frating Crescent/ Glen Rise/ Linden Crescent. 7 copies.

The newsletter bundle could/would be collected from the newsletter 'centre' in Monkams Drive.

COPPED HALL



Copped Hall and its environment are important for a number of reasons. The area around the mansion is of major historic interest. Our archaeological investigations on the site of the Elizabethan mansion are already discovering pre-Roman material. The Copped Hall Conservation Area retains a complete set of inter-related estate buildings that could all be properly restored to their original form – given the will. These buildings, together with numerous landscape and garden features, are largely uncompromised by later constructions. The whole represents an excellent surviving example of the English country house and its detailed environment – which is much loved by local people. As a bonus, the 4000 acre Copped Hall estate is crossed by very few roads – as it was (until recently) all in one benign ownership. The result is a very beautiful country house estate; unique to find so near London.

However, once the M25 motorway was constructed, at the southern edge of the park, Copped Hall became visible and accessible from the motorway network. This made the site vulnerable to developers – especially as Copped Hall is near Stansted airport as well as London. This vulnerability was increased by the ruined and abandoned nature of the mansion, ancillary buildings, gardens and some of the other buildings in the park - which gave the impression that all was 'up for grabs'. The entire place was on the cusp – it could go the route of exploitation or the route of restoration.

In 1984 the District Council made Copped Hall park into a Conservation Area and some of this area was later classified as Grade II* listed landscape. This gave a clear signal towards restoration. The compelling case for restoration is that once the key parts are properly restored, according to their original identity, people will understand and appreciate the quality, history and inter-relationship of both buildings and landscape even more than they do now. Although our present age creates many wonderful things, it does not produce an equivalent. The restored site can thus serve as a comprehensive educational vehicle.

From 1986 several key local people and myself, together with the support of the Friends of Epping Forest, spent 9 years fighting an intense campaign against exploitation of the site. We outlined the restoration approach with educational, cultural and community uses. Massive enabling development schemes were proposed by developers – supported initially by all the public bodies that you would normally expect to oppose such solutions. The purchase by

the City of London in 1992, of 789 acres of the parkland surrounding Copped Hall was a wonderful act of generosity and foresight. This purchase greatly assisted our campaign and extinguished the golf course proposals which would have mutilated the historic parkland.

The Copped Hall Trust was set up in 1993 after the failure of the last developer owner and the Trust purchased Copped Hall in 1995. Since that time the Trust has gradually implemented the objectives fought for in the campaign. Restoration proceeds after much research. All is 'work in progress'.

From the beginning we made Copped Hall available for guided tours and open days. The public were keen to visit and welcomed details of Copped Hall's history together with explanations of how the mansion and gardens were configured. The Trust holds study days about Copped Hall itself or related subjects. Numerous primary schools use Copped Hall as part of their curriculum, with the children writing poems and producing drawings featuring the mansion and gardens. Universities, colleges and specialist courses come to Copped Hall as part of their educational programme. The locally based E15 acting school also use Copped Hall for performances as part of their course.

The site of the earlier Elizabethan mansion is the subject of bi-annual excavations by the West Essex Archaeological Group under the banner of the Copped Hall Trust Archaeological Project. This project has run a number of training digs on the site. It has also hosted a conference, an introduction to archaeology for young people and archaeological 'taster' weekends. A substantial number of recovered artefacts is available for inspection.



Recent Shakespearian play performed by the Greek Theatre Players at Copped Hall

A Midsummer Night's Dream is believed to have first been performed at the Elizabethan Copped Hall in 1594. In memory of this, the Trust has set up an annual Shakespearian play – performed in the gardens by the locally based Greek Theatre Players. We also hold concerts – mostly within the mansion – involving highly respected performers.

As well as these educational and cultural activities the Trust regularly responds to requests for accommodation to enable important societies to hold their annual general meetings at Copped Hall.

In 1998 the Trust set up a Friends organisation (Friends

of the Copped Hall Trust) which now has over 1000 supporters – mainly local people. From these are drawn about 50 volunteers who mainly work in the gardens – although some work in the mansion. The volunteers are a crucial part of the project and are also essential to the staffing of the various activities.

After a lot of hard work, the freehold of a large part of the Copped Hall Conservation Area is now held by two charitable trusts – The Conservators of Epping Forest (the parkland) and The Copped Hall Trust (mansion and gardens). We therefore feel we have an ideal ownership situation, as our trusts are set up to provide permanent protection and programmes of restoration that will honour the very special qualities of this Conservation Area for public benefit.

*Alan Cox
Vice Chairman,
The Copped Hall Trust*

To enquire about opening times and events leave a message on 01992 571657, which is the Copped Hall Trust call-minder. Or see our website www.coppedhalltrust.org.uk where you can find contact numbers.

WANSTEAD FLATS

Some of you may have heard something of the proposals by the Police to establish a temporary base on Wanstead Flats during the Olympic Games, to coordinate policing of the Olympic boroughs across east London.

The Metropolitan Police Authority wish to use the Centre Road events area on Wanstead Flats, for the temporary construction of a Muster, Briefing and Deployment Centre (MBDC) to support policing and security in the Olympic Zone for 90 days during the 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games.

The MBDC will be one of three centres supporting the Olympic, Central and River security zones during the Games. The MBDCs will feed, brief and debrief Police Officers, including Officers provided by other Services. The site would consist of a series of temporary buildings, fencing and parking for Police vehicles. Apparently over the past year, the MPA has undertaken a widespread assessment of open land in East London that might support a MBDC for the Olympic Security Zone and Wanstead Flats came top of the list.

The MPA has therefore sought permission from the Conservators of Epping Forest to utilise the Centre Road Events Area on Wanstead Flats for 90 days during 2012. The MBDC would operate on an area of just over 3 hectares of Wanstead Flats (165 hectares), on a 'footprint' a little larger than that of the current circus and fairground site.

The Epping Forest and Commons Committee have agreed to support the MPA's request in principle, **provided** that a suitable legislative mechanism could be secured; the site is fully restored after use; and most importantly that the proposal is put before a widespread public consultation process. The necessary Planning Permission required from the London Borough of Redbridge also requires a public consultation process. The initial pre-planning consultation process should commence later this summer.

The MPA proposal would require a temporary change to the Epping Forest Act's obligations placed upon the Conservators. The Home Office is currently considering the

use of a Legislative Reform Order to get round this problem for the duration of the Olympics. This would also involve an extensive consultation process, which will take place this summer.

The Conservators of Epping Forest face a difficult challenge in balancing the role of protecting the Forest with a wider national interest. The land proposed is part of the Forest, though not included within the designated Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The Friends were contacted first in early June by the Press Association, prior to the above information being available from the Conservators. I responded that any development on the Forest would in principle be resisted, given the Forest's special status under the Epping Forest Act. However what would be important with such a proposal were:

- a) Full Public consultation and that public views are taken into account
- b) Full reinstatement of the site
- c) Compensation for the loss of the site during that period
- d) No precedent to be set for such developments, i.e. this is a one off, very exceptional circumstances etc.

The Friends await the consultation period, during which we are committed to play an active part. If you have any comments, please let us have your views.

Judy Adams

STANSTED – SECOND RUNWAY

'STOP STANSTED EXPANSION' (SSE) issued a press release on 24 May 2010. This is how it began:

"Stop Stansted Expansion is about to organise the biggest party in its history following BAA's humiliating climb down over its plans for a second Stansted runway. BAA finally surrendered its position today, 24 May, formally withdrawing its planning application for a second Stansted runway which if approved would have made the airport bigger than Heathrow".

"The second runway planning application had taken BAA more than four years to prepare and cost the airport operator some £200 million. However this is just a fraction of the cost to local homeowners in terms of the property blight which has plagued the local area for the past eight years,

destroying the value of people's homes but worse still, destroying long established communities".

The issue of Stansted Airport is first mentioned in our FoEF Newsletters in March 1982 when we stated that we were members of N.W Essex & East Herts. Preservation Association, (NWEHPA) and supported their objections to the third London Airport at Stansted. We were then considering what our future attitude should be. Should we give evidence to the Inquiry ourselves in the interests of the Forest and its surrounding Green Belt?

We were concerned about the widespread development of the surrounding areas particularly the 'M11 corridor'. Already there were kites being flown about a vast housing development on North Weald Aerodrome, almost adjoining the Lower Forest and virtually joining Harlow and Epping together. We were asking for the views of our membership. Eventually two of us did give evidence before the Inspector of the Inquiry.

Now, as we all know – several public inquiries later – after the airport was finally built, the planning demands for further development did not go away. And, demands were made to increase passenger capacity by millions. Originally an increase to 7 million, but now requiring 60 million and the 'current' planning application for the Second Runway that has threatened and blighted the area for the last four years.

A few days after May 24th 2010, Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) issued another press statement:

"The people of this area have lived under the threat of a further runway or runways at Stansted Airport for almost half a century. On four separate occasions since the early 1960s we have had to mobilise, raise funds and expend enormous amounts of time and energy, fighting one public inquiry after another in order to defeat the threat. On each of those four occasions we have ultimately won the argument, but only to find that the same or similar plans for an additional runway or runways at Stansted are resurrected a decade or so later. We believe this is profoundly unfair and that it is time to say that 'enough is enough'."

So now, as part of its final campaign, SSE wants to see a commitment to a 50 year moratorium on any new runways at Stansted included in the Government's

new National Policy Statement on airports, due to be published in draft form early next year. This will largely determine the long term future for Stansted and will be finalised following public consultation in 2011.

Thus the key message of SSE's new initiative is '**NEVER AGAIN ...but we'll settle for 50 years**' and the objective is to secure a commitment that no additional runways will be permitted at Stansted until 2060 at the earliest.

Ken Hoy

THE MONUMENT

Further to the item in the Autumn 2009 newsletter there are corrections and some additional information.

Sylvia Ayling wrote to the Director of Open Spaces at the Guildhall about the Sylvia Pankhurst Anti-Abyssinian War Monument on a small strip of green at Woodford Green (hoping that it might be part of Epping Forest).

Paul Thomson the Superintendent of EF replied:

Following consultation with the City of London (CoL) Principal Historic Buildings Architect, the LBoF Redbridge Conservation Officer and the Land Registry, it is very clear that the land on which the monument sits is in the ownership of the adjacent residential property and is subject to a legal covenant in addition to the Grade II listing obligations.

The CoL committee therefore feels that the matter is clearly the responsibility of the landowner rather than the CoL. I understand that the area may be subject to redevelopment, and therefore we will encourage the Local Planning Authority to seek the appropriate section 106 agreement to secure the repair and maintenance of the monument.

The Conservators' duty to protect the natural aspect of the Forest prevents us from sanctioning a more formalised landscaping arrangement on Forest land adjacent to the monument.

Ed. So we got it wrong on 2 counts – the strip of green on which the monument stands is not EF land and the monument does have Grade II listing. Apologies all round.

Hopefully the monument will now survive the redevelopment of the former Red Cottage site.

WALK REPORTS

Sunday 28 February, Around the Furze Ground

The build up to this walk was that in the days before I received numerous phone calls and enquiries from both members and non-members asking for information and directions as a result of which I was expecting quite a number of people and indeed the day before I had gone out with my wife and young children and enjoyed a practice walk which although a little muddy was still enjoyable. We saw 75 deer, squirrels, rabbits, a fox, numerous birds as well as many other interesting sights. Come the next morning Peggy Bitten (summoned to be the back marker) and I duly turned up for the walk to stand in splendid isolation because no one else turned up except for one member - Geoff - Where were you all? It seems the mere fact that it was pouring with rain put everyone off! Geoff and I however had a pleasant walk protected from the worst of the rain by the tree canopy.

Robert Levene

Pits and Banks, Tuesday 30 March

About 20 old and new friends gathered on Piercing Hill, huddled in winter waterproofs as we were in the middle of a long spell of wet weather. However the Gods were kind, the rain held off for the morning, and we did even get a rare glimpse of the sun. My walks tend to focus on the history of the Forest and I started by explaining how the hedge up Piercing Hill and across to Little Gregories Lane can be traced back as an ancient forest boundary, mentioned in the 1301 perambulation.

I was pleased to use this walk to show how the information gathered by the Epping Forest Commission in 1871 can be put to good use today. Their Map shows the area near the car park as grass. In 1884 the Superintendent bought 332,779 young trees at a cost of about a farthing each, from the Lawson Seed and Nursery Co. at Edinburgh. Some were planted near Strawberry Hill pond, adjoining the Warren Lodge, but some were planted on the bare land at Piercing Hill which explains the usual variety of tree species, including many larches.

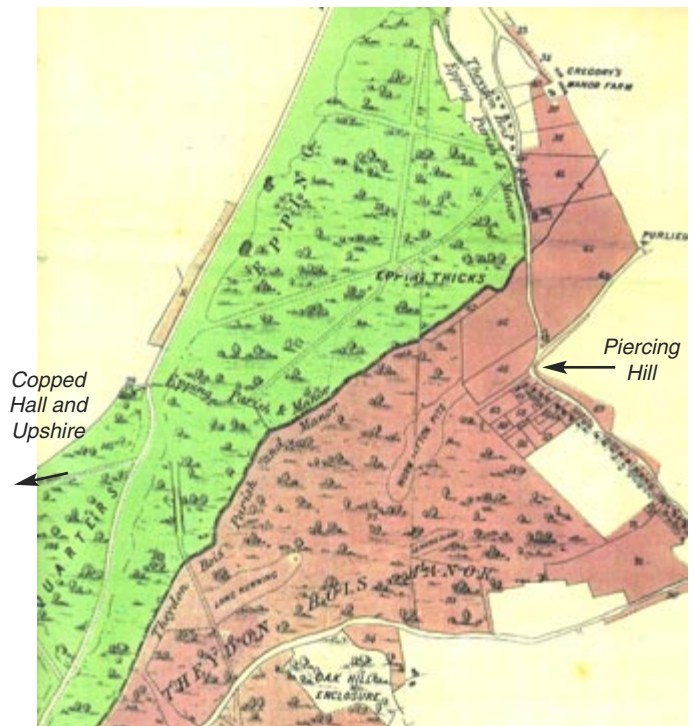
We walked on through the forest, down the 'Thames' valley (the name relates to a property company that wanted to develop this area for housing before the 1878 Act) up the other side, and across to the Pizzle Pits. The ponds here were probably made in the 18th century when gravel was dug to surface the nearby road to Epping. The forest here is quite dense in parts and it is sometimes possible to get a glimpse of fallow deer. Our next stop was Ambresbury Banks, the iron age earthwork which was written about by Peggy Bitten in the Autumn 2009 newsletter.

From here we took the Green Ride south to the area of Long Running which is now on the west of the Ride. It is interesting that the name Long Running is shown on the east side of this line on the Epping Forest Commission map and it was pleasing to find that this area is being cleared of scrub and opened up again.

We then cut through the forest, and I was rather afraid I might have got everyone lost as the forest floor had become so saturated by the rainfall of the previous day that it was underwater. I was very relieved to come out onto the ride exactly where I wanted to be. We then strolled back to Piercing Hill, passing Wormleyton Pits. Many years ago I was



Map by John Chapman & Peter André published 1777



Wake Arms Ditches Ride

Epping and Theydon Bois
Epping Forest Commission Map, 23 February 1877

puzzled why people might come out from Leyton to dig for worms, until I discovered that in 1649 the manor of Gregories was purchased by Fulk Wormleyton of Wapping, distiller, and William Hiccocks of Southwark, brewer. There is a large area of pits and banks here, probably made when gravel was extracted when the manor was held by Wormleyton's grandson in the 18th century.

Georgina Green

Birds and Bluebells in Wanstead Park, Sunday 25 April

25 walkers joined Richard Oakman and Tricia Moxey for a gentle amble to see the bluebells and hear some of the early spring migrants in this historic Park. As a result of the cold winter, the spring growth was not as advanced as expected and the leaves were just starting to unfurl on the trees, but nonetheless once the sun broke through the early cloud cover, spring had definitely arrived!

Singing chiffchaffs, blackcaps and blackbirds provided a delightful background chorus as we walked down the Glade towards the Ornamental Water where a pair of swans were displaying. Here we met up with those members of the Wren Group who had been up since before dawn to see what bird species had dropped onto Wanstead Flats. They had been fortunate to hear the 10 resident singing skylarks and some special migratory species on passage. These including 8 wheatears, 1 little ringed plover, a swift, a swallow and a male whinchat which had dropped on the Flats before moving on to other parts of the UK.

The route through the Park included walking along the raised embankment at the end of the Perch Pond where there were good views of this tranquil water with many mallard ducks and coots swimming about.

Reflections of overhanging trees delight the senses and obviously this was one of the reasons for creating such extensive water bodies within a designed landscape. All of the water bodies within Wanstead Park were all brim full with water and looked most attractive. This was especially true of the Heronry Pond.

Although not yet fully in flower, the carpet of bluebells within Chalet Wood was breathtaking and with the dappled sunshine the view summed up what makes a bluebell woodland so special at this time of year.

Leaders: Tricia Moxey and Richard Oakman

Strawberry Hill in Springtime Sunday 9 May

Started out from The Stubbles car park, twenty seven walkers in all. A rather grey but dry Sunday morning, with a cold N East wind – the persistent feature this winter – making its presence felt. Having heard a nightingale sing last spring while walking along The Gas Ride, I hoped we would be similarly rewarded but alas no such luck. Probably too cold. Then up Warren Hill, stopping briefly at Qvist's Oak before dropping down to join the Epping New Road close to the junction with Rangers Road.

We followed the pleasant meandering path leading to Connaught Waters and, after a circumnavigation of

Connaught Waters, joined the Red Path leading to Palmer's Bridge. The final leg led us across Fairmead Bottom and thence to Strawberry Hill pond. A notable feature of the walk was the absence of duck life, apart from the ubiquitous Canada Goose. We were disappointed not to see Mandarins, but probably their major preoccupation was keeping unhatched eggs warm - hence most duck life was distant, not on water but concentrated on the islands.

Alan Curran

Circular Walk via Warren Wood, Wednesday 19 May

For this walk, I stood in for Harry Bitten, who was unfortunately ill, and it was better supported than the February one with about 10 members, interestingly it was a sunny day! Are the friends becoming fair-weather walkers?

We enjoyed an interesting walk spotting deer, the start of rhododendrons in the Warren Plantation and a magnificent display of bluebells on the Copped Hall Estate near the new Trafalgar Wood. We were fortunate to have with us Peter Newton who is a guide for the Copped Hall Trust and gave us a brief history of the site. The Copped Hall Trust arranges regular open days which if you haven't attended one is well worth the effort.

Robert Levene

Thursday 17 June, Looking at Trees in Knighton Wood and Lord's Bushes

George Washington of the Wren Conservation Group had set himself the target of finding nearly all of the 35 different species of tree and shrub which grow in this part of Epping Forest and showing them to those who joined him for this sunny afternoon walk.

The vegetation at this time of the year is at its most lush and George's enthusiasm had all 30 of the group moving rapidly along overgrown paths to tick off as many as possible of the different species. These included the common ones – birch, oak, hornbeam, beech, hawthorn, hazel, holly and Scot's pine as well as less well known ones such as aspen, blackthorn, willow and yew. Naturally we were shown several wild service trees which grow well in this part of the Forest. Many young rowans are seeding into the woods as well.



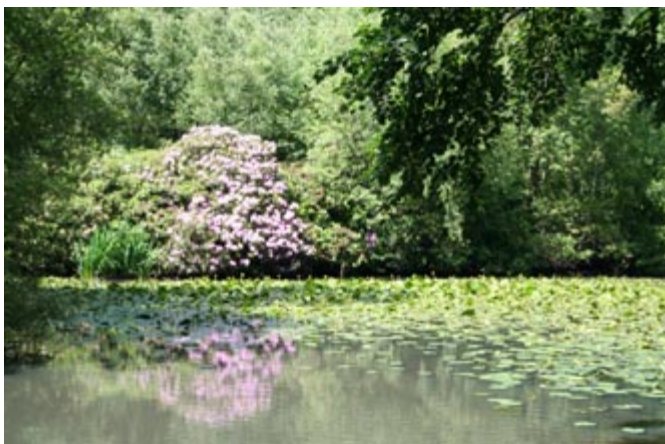
Bluebells in Wanstead Park



George Washington in Lords Bushes, June 2010

Tricia Moxey was able to explain the importance of crab apples within the Forest and why there was some clearance of the holly from round the mature trees. She also explained how to examine the tree to find clues to its past environment: a tree which grew in an open clearing has wide spreading branches and one which grew close to another has branches which grow straight up.

A couple of invertebrate traps were noticed hanging in the trees and these will provide the Forest's ecologists with useful information about the diversity of moths, flies and other winged creatures on which larger species such as bats depend. Tricia was also able to point out the colony of wild honey bees which have taken up residence within an old woodpeckers hole high up in the trunk of a white poplar not far from the easy access path.



...flowering rhododendrons mirrored in the lake provided a colourful finale to this very pleasant walk.

With the help of his GPS system, Ron Andrews refound a thriving bush of Flowering Nutmeg or Himalayan Honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*) which has reddish berries in the autumn. These get eaten by birds which void the seeds so that this alien species is now becoming established in parts of the Forest as it responds to the overall warmer climatic conditions. A native shrub of south west China it was popular in Victorian gardens and is still grown in many gardens today. However, as it is now considered an invasive weed species in Australia and New Zealand perhaps we should be on our guard here too!

We were shown several non native species such as red oaks, black pine, bamboo and rhododendron, survivors of the original garden planted by the Buxton family well over a century ago.

George had led us through many narrow overgrown tracks which had given us the feeling of being deep within a mysterious woodland. As we neared the end of the walk, the sudden appearance of the flowering rhododendrons mirrored in the lake provided a colourful finale to this very pleasant walk.

Leader: George Washington

Midsummer Eve Walk

The published theme of following the 170 year old footsteps of celebrated Victorian poets John Clare and Alfred Tennyson at Lippitts Hill High Beach for this year's 'Midsummer eve' walk saw quite a few members from the 'John Clare Society' around London joining our own members at Poets Corner, (*aka Hornbeam Lane*) at 7 pm last June 19th when the weather held dry and light for our group of about 33.

Walking along the ride from Woodmans glade via Ludgate Plain to Almhouse Plain we stopped in sight of **Lippitts Hill Lodge** where John Clare was a patient, and Alfred Tennyson an investor, of Dr Allen, who ran a 'lunatic asylum' and failed wood-turning business there in the 1830s and 40s.

Peter Relph, one of our members, and author of the book '*Four Forest Years*', detailing Clare's stay there from 1837 to 1841, gave a short talk from this view-point of the building, where Clare would have walked, seen forest enclosures, met gipsies and keepers on the plain, and composed his poetry.

The current owner of Lippitts Hill Lodge had again very kindly given the 'Friends' an otherwise rare invitation to not only view the house and grounds up close, but also to explore the fabled Victorian catacombs and visit the lake, currently occupied by more bird species than could be counted.



Refreshments were also provided, where Peter Relph congratulated the owner on behalf of the John Clare Society on his enormous restoration work to the building and replanting of the grounds, before presenting him with a copy of his book, and along with another walker, the Mayor of Loughton, suggesting that a 'Blue Heritage' Plaque Commemorating Clare's stay there should be arranged by the Local Authority.

On to **Fairmead House**, about 150 yards eastward up Church Road, the second of the three buildings and grounds forming Mathew Allen's institution, and where he lived himself, along with his family and a few of his more privileged or affluent 'trusties,' paying a rate of about 6 guineas a week.

Clare would have been privileged, if not affluent, whilst he was 'Clare' but when his newly acquired London manners slipped at high table and he reverted to the pugnacious 'Peasant Poet' he was bundled through the gardens PDQ to Lippitts Hill

Lodge to sample a more debauched and basic alternative.

"Nigh Leopards Hill stands All-ns hell.. locked up from week to week".

It is possible that his publisher or Editor, with an eye to litigation, (even in those days) altered his description, if not the debauchery he describes - but at least gives us a clue where 'Leopards' Hill comes from.

The building has since been demolished, rebuilt, and renamed as 'Suntrap'.and now used as a field-study centre for school children, pioneered by our now retired past chairman, Ken Hoy.

The sign on the gate said 'Beware of children' and mindful of the current climate regarding adults loitering around school yards we swiftly returned down Church Hill to view the third building a few yards up from the foot of Lippitts Hill.

Springfield House (now Farm), is still in its imposing original old Essex style of white painted weather-board, much like the original old 'Owl' public house opposite but with its original looking interior and large box-sash windows, - and just as I was advising the group that this building would have been administered by Dr Allen's wife, as only female patients were incarcerated here, some shouted *"There's two males dancing on the window sill"!*

They plainly weren't wrong, and the owners, coming out to the porch in response to the commotion swiftly doubled back in to tuck their errant young children back into bed, whilst the notion lingered with us that the Suntrap sign may have been misplaced

Again swiftly crossing the road followed by barking dogs, and walking up to the 'Owl' we took in Clare's view of "Bucketts" Hill and far beyond, and coincidentally, with the remaining light catching the protruding tower of 'Claybury' in Woodford,

"Whilst giant London, known to all the world, was nothing but a guess amongst the trees" the half remembered lines of Clare were recalled as we headed for home;

"The sun going down with a veil on his brow, - How sweet is the gloom of the Midsummer eve".

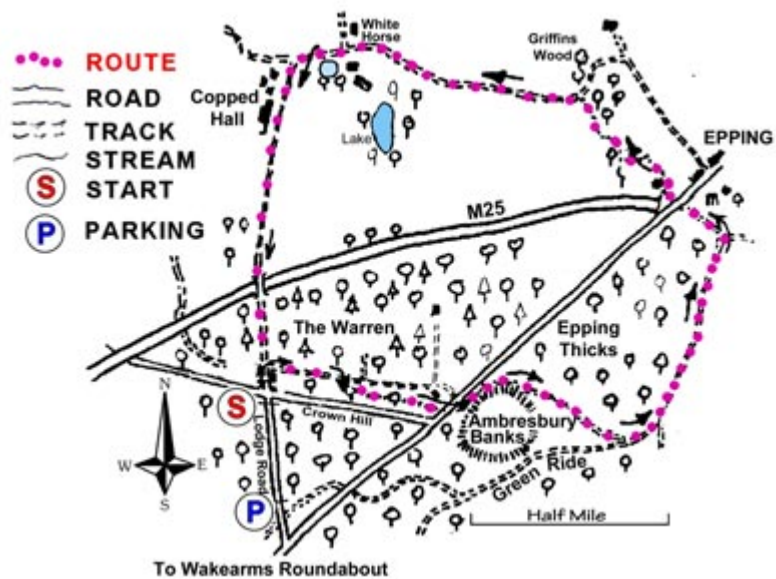
Peter Read

*Four Forest Years £6.99
ISBN 0953024024

A CIRCULAR WALK FROM COPPED HALL

(From *Short walks in Epping Forest* by Fred Matthews and Harry Bitten)

From Copped Hall gates via Ambersbury Banks and the ruins of Copped Hall, with splendid views of the hall and over the Lea Valley.



Park near the junction of Lodge Road and the B1393 and walk carefully along Lodge Road back to the London Gates to Copped Hall.

Go through the small gate on the left of the main gates and beyond the lodges turn right on a track. The mixed woodland here is the Warren Plantation and is part of the Copped Hall Estate purchased by the City of London. It was thrown into the Forest in 1992 and is therefore fully accessible to walkers. Just over 200 yards along the track take a green path on the right, which leads through a gap in the perimeter fence and then turn left and continue with the fence away to your left and a road to the right to the B1393. Cross with great care and turn left just inside the Forest with Ambersbury Banks on the right. At the end of the earthworks by a sign 'Horse Riding Prohibited' turn right along a track downhill.

After half a mile there is a junction of tracks where we meet the Green Ride which is a gravel track for horses. Turn left beside it and after half a mile come to a crossing horse ride on the top of a hill. Turn left to the B1393 and cross to wall opposite. Turn right on top of the tunnel over the M25. Beyond it turn left beside the wall and at its end is the ladderstile. Ladderstiles are rare in Essex and this one, which was removed during the building of the M25, was reinstated after the completion of the road at the request of the West Essex Group of the Ramblers Association. It has memorial plaques to two outstanding members of the group J Standon and W Govey to whose work and dedication to the protection and improvement of our footpaths we owe much of our present day enjoyment of our walks in the area.

Cross the ladderstile and go ahead through former garden centre and then head in same direction across field. Shortly path turns left downhill and joins hedge where turn right then cross stile. Here there is a memorial seat to Bill and Phyllis Govey. Here you have a magnificent view of our objective, the shell of the Copped Hall away on the hill. The present building was preceded by Medieval and Tudor Halls a little further to the North and was gutted by fire in 1917. Turn right downhill following the wood on the right to a hedge gap leading into a drive.

Turn left and follow the drive, which is not a public road, through pleasant undulating countryside uphill. Ignore a drive on left and a crossing track just beyond a house and go straight on past a very pleasant duck pond. Beyond the pond there is a path to the left and you go through a white wicket gate past what is left of Copped Hall. Continue for about a mile with views to the left and gradually climbing through woodland after passing over the M25 to the main gates.

Continue through the smaller gate to the right of the main gates back to the car park.

Harry Bitten

MEMBERS LETTERS

Janet Garwood writes about Redpolls:

We back on to Wanstead Park (Shoulder of Mutton pond). I have 11 bird feeders plus what I put out on the ground. I've been accustomed to goldfinches coming in the winter and early Spring to my large Nyger feeder. This year they were joined by 5-8 small birds, which I took at first to be very small chaffinches. One of our daughters is a very keen birdwatcher and excitedly told me they were redpolls. These have more or less taken over from the goldfinches now (the latter usually disappear in the breeding season). Their numbers have now (mid March) decreased, so I assume that they too will disappear in the breeding season. They are very amusing little birds to watch – always so busy!

We are accustomed to 'our' greater spotted woodpecker coming to peanuts but I was thrilled the other day to see a lesser spotted.

Pat Lloyd writes from Brampton, Cambridgeshire:

On the mention of Redpolls, in all the 10 years we've been here in Brampton, this has been the first winter that 'our' Goldfinches have been joined by regular groups of Redpolls on the Nyger feeders, very nice to hear you've got them too.

I'd like to add that the Newsletter goes from strength to strength, and looks better each issue, long may Ken's articles and photographs continue.

Ed. What interest and enjoyment we get from our garden bird feeders! Damn the expense!

Ken Jones writes from Strabane, Northern Ireland:

We live a long way away and have nothing like Epping Forest in Northern Ireland. We lived in Epping Way (Chingford) for 40 years. I ran in the Forest nearly every day and know every inch of it. There is no place in the world to compare with your wonderful Forest – we miss it!

Jenifer Pitman writes from Welwyn Garden City:

Recently I heard from my cousin in Australia how much he had enjoyed wandering in the Forest from Buckhurst Hill as a boy in the 50's.

So I am wondering whether you have any photos and newsletters that I could send him (I normally send our copies to some ex-Chingford friends living in Norwich).

Ed. You'd be surprised how far flung the word travels!

And finally, **Ron Budd** writes to suggest that we dispense with the expense and the time spent putting newsletters in envelopes for those that

are hand delivered and just write the address on the newsletter itself. We feel the handwriting could be equally time consuming but sticking labels straight on to the outside of the newsletter appeals and we shall try to implement this great idea either this edition or the next. So for those of you who get your newsletter by post, look out for a blank label sized patch on the back page!

Thanks Ron

FofEF ITEMS FOR SALE



FofEF Mugs

Having sold out of mugs some time ago, we have had some more produced, same designs as in the photo but slightly larger covering more of the mug's surface in bone china (but no gold trim in deference to microwaves!) **£4.50 each.**

FofEF tea-towels

We have had our very first sale item – a very popular tea-towel designed by Ken Hoy and successfully produced and sold in 1976 for £1 by Georgie Green – updated, the design slightly lightened and sharpened up a bit. Costs have gone up somewhat after 33 years! **£4.00.**

We still have the Chingford Calligraphy Circle green on white t-towels Trees of Epping Forest for £3.

Shopping Bags

We also have some shopping 'bags for life' - beautifully made jute canvas bags in either off-white or natural biscuit with our name and logo in green. They measure 300mm square with a 200mm gusset (approximately 12" x 12" x 8") - price **£2.50.**

Greetings Cards – packs of 8 small or 5 larger @ £2.50

All the above items will be on sale at the AGM and also available from me, Peggy Bitten, 9 Frederica Road, Chingford, London E4 7AL. Cheques should be made out to Friends of Epping Forest (adding £1 for p&p).

Peggy Bitten



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Advance Notice

FOREST SUPPER 2010

Thursday 25th November 7.30pm

We need help with our stall

Forest Festival on Chingford Plain

Sunday 5th September,
12noon – 5pm

If you could spare an hour (or two) to help sell goods and talk to anyone interested in Epping Forest and the Friends, please get in touch with me on 0208 529 8594. Thanks!

Peggy Bitten

Guided Walks

Saturday 10 July 2.00 – 4.00pm

A Stroll Around Highams Park

Come and enjoy a walk around this historic lake and see some of its wildfowl and other features.

Meet at the end of Tamworth Avenue, off Charter Rd., London E4.
Grid Ref: TQ 394 919

Leader: Robert Levene

Sunday 8 August 10.30am – 12.30

Mills, Quarries and Woods

Discover how the Forest has thrived, through changing times.

Meet: Corner of Oakhill and Forest Drive, Woodford Green.
Grid Ref: TQ 392 914

Leader: Peter Adams

Sunday 19 Sep 9.00am – 5.00 pm

EPPING FOREST CENTENARY WALK

Join us for our annual celebration, arranged by the Friends of Epping Forest with support from the Ramblers Association and the Corporation of London, to mark the centenary of the passing of the Epping Forest Act in 1878. Walk the full day covering the Forest south to north, join us for a section of the walk or try a shorter circular walk on the day. For more details, contact 020 8418 0730 or check the website www.friendsofepppingforest.org.uk

Sunday 24 Oct 10.30am – 12.30pm

An Autumn stroll in Gernon Bushes for Fruits and Fungi

A chance to examine some of the fruits and fungi growing in this Nature

Reserve and to consider their important roles.

Meet at the entrance to the Reserve in Garnon Mead, Coopersale. Turn off B181 Epping to North Weald Rd into Coopersale Common Lane and then left into Garnon Mead beyond railway bridge. Grid Ref: TL 476 031

Leaders: Tricia Moxey and Brian McGhie (in conjunction with Essex Wildlife Trust)

Wednesday 10 Nov 10.30am – 12.30

A Landscape Redesigned

A brisk walk through Warlies Park to look at the recently created flood relief scheme in the Cobbin's Valley. Meet in the car park of Upshire Village Hall, Horseshoe Hill, Upshire. EN9
Grid Ref: TL 415 011

Leader: Sue McKinley

USEFUL CONTACTS

Epping Forest Visitor Centre

http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/LGNL_Services/Environment_and_planning/Parks_and_open_spaces/Epping_Forest/

020 8508 0028

The Centre is open seven days a week including Bank Holidays. It is closed on Christmas Day.

Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge

Opening hours:

Summer: (29 March - 26 Sept 2010):
everyday 10.00am - 5.00pm

Winter: (27 Sept 2010 - 27 March 2011):
everyday 10.00am - 3.00pm
020 8529 6681, E4 7QH

The Temple

Opening hours:

Summer: (29 March - 26 Sept 2010):
Saturdays and Sundays 12.00 noon - 5.00pm
Winter: (27 Sept 2010 - 27 March 2011):
Saturdays and Sunday 10.00am - 3.00pm

Epping Forest Centenary Trust

www.efct.info Email: enquiry@efct.info
Tel: 020 8508 9061

Epping Forest Centenary Trust, The Warren Lodge, Loughton, IG10 4RN
Help to improve habitats in the Forest and learn some practical conservation skills. All welcome.

Conservation Volunteers

<http://efcv.uel.ac.uk/efcv.html>
tel: 020 8529 3060

Doing practical work in Epping Forest.

British Naturalists Assoc. Epping Forest Branch

www.bna-naturalists.org/branches/eppin/eppin.htm
020 8529 7307

Epping Forest Field Centre

Paul's Nursery Road, High Beach. Loughton, IG10 4AF

www.field-studies-council.org/eppingforest/

Tel: 020 8502 8500, PC: IG10 4AF

Email: enquiries.ef@field-studies-council.org

Suntrap

www.lgfl.net/lgfl/leas/waltham-forest/schools/suntrap/

Email: suntrap.centre@walthamforest.gov.uk

Tel: 020 8508 0611

Suntrap, Church Road, High Beach, Loughton, IG10 4AJ

West Essex Ramblers Association

Secretary: Mike Whiteley
020 8524 2737

Essex Wild Life Trust (Epping Forest Group)

www.essexwt.org.uk/

Email: admin@essexwt.org.uk

All meetings are open to non-members as well as members. Contact Tricia Moxey on 01277 364522

Lee Valley Park

01992 702200 or see

www.leevalleypark.org.uk for details.

Copped Hall Trust

Guided tours third Sunday every month.

www.coppedhalltrust.org.uk/index.html

Call 01992 571657 for details

ADDRESS LABEL