

# Friends News

Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park (FORCP)

Issue 33 Autumn 2006

## It's Goodbye to her and Goodbye to him

Sue and Stacey Stoykewich have now returned home after being with us for more than four years.

I recall Sue telling me that she first became involved after a certain lady called at her house seeking signatures against proposed developments on Loughborough Road. She said she did not know anyone in the area and it was suggested she come along to *The Friends*. This she did and quickly became a valuable asset especially on the artistic side, designing and completing several artefacts, the major one being the designing of the Totem Pole for our woodcarving classes.

I know she enjoyed *The Friends* and was amused to be reprimanded for talking too much and told to get on with her work.

Stacey came along at a later stage and was a great help where a big strong man was required. The photo shows the presentation of a photo album by Jean Gray. We are all sorry to see them go but Stacey's job requires it.

I am still trying to work out how Canadians can return 'home' to Atlanta, Georgia, USA. **Norman Ecob**



## Every Cloud

Walk, walk, walk: the only way to relieve the cloud of sciatic pains. How could walking become dually beneficial? In March the rubbish was an eyesore - so I started collecting, not realising I would still be busy in August! Woods around the Business Park were a fertile source of builders' rubbish: polythene sheets, bubble wrap, plastic bags. Other rewarding woodland spots revealed the debris of orgies: water, beer and pop bottles; chip wrappers; cigarette packets and food cartons (not to mention the unmentionables).

Once the backlog was cleared, it was still a challenge to keep up with the local throwaways. The shelter of the bridge makes a fun picnic spot and a slippery mountainside excursion for me. A charge should be made for its use. Hot weather brought a plethora of cans and bottle (spot 4 bottle tops and I challenge myself to find their containers - usually within 20 yards!). Cans need special attention as twice a mouse has jumped out; best to make sure before crushing with a single well-practised stamp of the foot. Why do some dog walkers do their poop scooping then throw it into the undergrowth, tie it to a fence or hang it in a tree?

Anything valuable? Not really - one good football, a few tennis and golf balls. Never found a wallet or bunch of keys. Where to look? Ruddington side of the railway is the most rewarding place for the litter hunter. Search just into the rough vegetation beyond mown areas, that's where people jettison their containers and the wind deposits the crisp and chocolate wrappers. The booty? 120 carrier bags full to date.

A tidier Park is not a very satisfactory silver lining for my cloud, it is constantly compromised. Spotting a new flower or grass is more rewarding and I would rather be hedge laying, tree planting, equipment building or enjoying the real silver lining of the Park - the company and expertise of *The Friends*.

**John Randall**



The Staff at the Park would like to thank *The Friends* for all their efforts over the last year and wish them a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



# Swan Update



On Saturday 26th August a pair of swans landed on the lake and immediately engaged in hostilities with our resident pair. The war lasted until Monday 28th when the residents went into hiding and were prevented from gaining access to the lake.

By Tuesday 29th both were exhausted and to prevent their deaths, Keith, Zoe and myself caught them and transported them to Holme Pierrepont. On release both birds sailed off together into the sunset (well rain really). The first day of peace for four days. They have since been seen alive and happily mixing with other swans for what is hoped is a well-earned retirement.

Meanwhile back at the Park one bird was noticed to be wearing a ring - X6079. This was attached to a juvenile in 2003 at the Park and is one of the offspring of that year. Somewhat surprisingly it was caught on a road in Derby and released onto the River Trent during 2004.

It would seem to have replaced its parent as the dominant female. The male now has to be caught and ringed to uniquely identify him. Photo shows the 2 new swans.

Mike Thompson

## New Species in Gibbies Wood

The disturbed soil in Gibbies Wood is proving to be a haven for new plant species. In June, Jean spotted an unusual flower in her glade. Akin to Bugloss and Alkanets, it had an uncurling head of mauve florets, yet the leaves were pinnate and toothed rather than lanceolate and entire. Rarely featuring in books, it was identified as *Phacelia tanacetifolia* (ie Tansy-like foliage). Later a garden marigold *Calendula officinalis* appeared near the maze.

Early September, at a path edge, I noticed a rare grass. Not having seen a Bristle-grass before, the book *Grasses of the British Isles* identified it as *Setaria glauca* or the perennial, close relative *S. geniculata*. Difficult to tell without examining the roots or waiting to see if it reappears next year.

A fourth species emerged in the glades in mid September: fungal-like at first glance with its thick wooden stem and large 'cap'. Closer inspection confirmed the sturdy flowers of the genus *Carvus* but it was not until the leaves appeared some weeks later that it could be fully identified as *C. Forcipii*. Six specimens have been seen to date and the fascinated public are now using them as seats!

John Randall

PHOTOS AND FRONT PAGE CARTOON BY NORMAN ECOB

## WILDLIFE UPDATE

Since the last newsletter 25 new species have been identified on the Park. This total includes those found by John Randall and Jean Gray in Gibbies Wood and comprises 3 grasses, 6 wild flowers (including the garden or pot marigold), 14 moths, 1 insect and 1 fungus. As reported by John, one of the wild flowers was eventually identified as *Phacelia tanacetifolia* or Lacy Phacelia, an American species.

A large patch of Marjoram, the culinary herb, was also found adjacent to the footbridge. This plant originally from the Mediterranean area is now widely naturalised.

Amongst the 14 moths, Heather found a Copper Underwing in a rubbish bin at the crossroads near the children's play area.

The only fungus found is adjacent to a rubbish bin in the play area. It was identified as Oyster fungus, which is edible after roughly one hour's cooking. (due to being slightly tough) although due to its location I wouldn't fancy eating it myself!

Mike Thompson

## Well Done!

Congratulations to  
Roger Byrne

who received first prize in the  
Allotments competition



## THE DREAM

Three days in Derbyshire  
in little tents.

Are we mad, or is it to be  
Heaven sent?

The aim is to build a dry  
stone wall,

Six Friends and two  
Rangers are to have a ball.  
Robert, the instructor  
said take this wall down  
And build it again securely,  
he said with a frown.

Well, on a whim and a  
prayer we did as he said.  
In no time at all the  
demolish went to our head.

No sooner it was down it was to go up again  
To look as it had for 400 years the same.

What a plethora of skills were needed here,  
Some us patient, some just wanting a beer.

As the wall grew higher we were so confident,

Only here and there it was, well, slightly bent.

Before we knew it the coping stones went on

And we all wanted to burst out into song.



What a wonderful effort  
by the team from the Park.  
Cannot wait till the  
next time for it was a lark.  
The camping was fun  
and so was the BBQ.  
Plenty of laughs especially  
after a drink or two.  
We all bonded well,  
some louder than others,  
But, hey, it was fab,  
who wants to watch big  
brother?

Dorothy

## ARTEFACTS

On his walks John Randall has produced a list of the following artefacts together with their location and state of disrepair. The intention is to produce an artefact trail/booklet.

The list was prepared prior to the latest installations of flowers and leaves in Gibbies Wood. We have a separate list of the 16 mosaic tiles in the Community Garden.

This month's competition is to find what he has left out (if anything). I can't remember whether we installed any near the 'Dragon Fly Pond'.

### Artefacts in Rushcliffe Country Park, May 2006

<u>No.</u>	<u>Location.</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Item(s)</u>
1	Bradmore Gate	Inside	Carving	Snake Seat
2	Gibbies Wood	Entrance	Pyrography	Gate and Posts
3	Gibbies Wood	Path	Carving	Squirrel
4	Gibbies Wood	Path	Carving	Swan Seat
5	Gibbies Wood	Path	Carving	Owl
6	Gibbies Wood	Glade	Carving	Dog Rose Seat
7	Gibbies Wood	Jean's Glade	Carving	Thistle, Bullrush and Countryside Seat
8	Gibbies Wood	Central Glade	Carving	Oak Leaf Seat
9	Gibbies Wood	Log Maze	Pyrography	Welcome to Our Log Maze
10	Gibbies Wood	Log Maze	Carving	Spider's Web Seat
11	Gibbies Wood	Path	Weaving	Crinoline Lady
12	Gibbies Wood	Path	Weaving	Half House
13	Gibbies Wood	Large Pond	Weaving	Bird Hide
14	Gibbies Wood	Path	Weaving	Lookout House
15	Gibbies Wood	Path	Weaving	Wigwam
16	Gibbies Wood	Path	Carving	Snail Seat
17	Gibbies Wood	Small Pond	Carving	Otter with Fish
18	Gibbies Wood	Path	Carving	Chrysalis Insect Seat
19	Gibbies Wood	Path	Carving	The Green Man
20	Gibbies Wood	Path	Carving	Ladybird
21	Community Garden	Fence	Carving	Owl
22	Community Garden		Woodwork	Flat Seat 1
23	Community Garden		Pyrography	Hedgehog Seat (Colin and Marcia Eden)
24	Community Garden	Centre	Carving	"The Throne"
25	Community Garden	Raised Garden	Carving	Hedgehog
26	Community Garden		Pyrography	Barleylands Seat
27	Community Garden		Woodwork	Flat Seat 2
28	Visitor Centre	Outside	Carving	Totem Pole
29	Visitor Centre	Outside	Plaster	Model of the Park
30	Visitor Centre	On Wall	Ceramics	Bird Plaque
31	Visitor Centre	On Wall	Ceramics	Fish Plaque
32	Visitor Centre	On Wall	Ceramics	Tree Reflections Plaque
33	Visitor Centre	Outside	Tile Picture	Moon and Man
34	Visitor Centre	Outside	Carving	Newt Seat
35	Visitor Centre	Inside	Papier Maché	White Dragonfly
36	Visitor Centre	Inside	Collage	Fish
37	Weggie Walk	Path	Woodwork	Log Seat 1
38	Weggie Walk	Path	Woodwork	Log Seat 2
39	Lake Side	Path	Weaving	Snake Walk
40	Lake Side	Path	Weaving	Dens
41	Tree Trail	Entrance	Fretwork	Gate
42	Tree Trail	Trail	Carving	15 Identification Posts with Numbers and Tree Leaves
43	Tree Trail	Trail	Carving	Leaf Log Seat
44	Tree Trail	Trail	Carving	Insect Log Seat
45	Memorial Wood	Centre	Carving	Leaf Bench
46	Large Amenity Area	Faces NW	Woodwork	Log Seat
47	Tree Nursery		Woodwork	Flat Seat 1
48	Tree Nursery		Woodwork	Flat Seat 2

# Rushcliffe Country Park








## ACTIVITY DAYS

Unless otherwise stated, all volunteer events are free and open to members of FORCP and non-members.



### October

Wed 4th	Gibbies Wood Grasshopper
Sat 7th	Gibbies Wood Grasshopper
Wed 11th 	Conservation Task - Coppicing/Thinning P23/25/26
Wed 18th 	Coppicing/Thinning
Sat 21st	Gibbies Wood Grasshopper

### November

Wed 1st 	Woodland Craft Workshop - Hedgelaying H20/H12
Thurs 2nd	FORCP Meeting 7.00pm. New Members Welcome
Sat 4th 	Hedgelaying
Wed 8th 	Conservation Task - Hedgelaying
Wed 15th 	Hedgelaying
Sat 18th 	Hedgelaying
Wed 22nd 	Conservation Task - Hedgelaying
Wed 29th 	Hedgelaying

### December

Sat 2nd 	Plant internal hedgerows with spares from tree nursery
Wed 6th 	Conservation Task - Collect saplings for tree nursery
Wed 13th	Mystery Task

### January

Wed 3rd	FORCP Social - Meet 11am Rancliffe Arms for New Year walk followed by a meal. (FORCP Members only)
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#### Action Plan

Although the above are set tasks, they can be subject to change. There are also a number of ongoing jobs, which can be carried out alongside the above.



*This symbol denotes the activity is working towards the Notts Biodiversity Action Plan.*

Meet at the Rangers' Office at 9.30 am.

Unless stated all events run from 10.00 am - 3.30 pm.

**Don't forget some lunch, sturdy boots and waterproofs.**

*For more information contact the Rangers' Office 0115 921 5865.*

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